Stores and Consumers –
Two Perspectives on Food Purchasing

STOCKHOLM SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Address: Sveavägen 65, Box 6501, S-113 83 Stockholm. Tel.+46 8-736 90 00

Basic Orientation

The Economic Reserarch Institute, at the Stockholm School of Economics (EFI) is devoted to the scientific study of problems in management science and economics. It provides research facilities for scholars belonging to these disciplines, training advanced students in scientific research. The studies to be carried out by the Institute are chosen on the basis of their expected scientific value and their relevance to the research programs outlined by the different sections of the Institute.

Research Divisions

A	Management and Organization
B	Accounting and Managerial Finance
C	Managerial Economics
CEE	Center for Ethics and Economics
CFR	Center for Risk Research
CHE	Center for Health Economics
D	Marketing, Distribution, and Industry Dynamics
ES	Economic Statistics
FI	Finance
F	Public Management
IEG	International Economics and Geography
I	Information Management
P	Economic Psychology
S	Economics
T	Industrial Production

Research Programs:

Man and Organization
The Foundation for Distribution Research
Policy Sciences

Additional information about research in progress and published reports is described in our project catalogue. The catalogue can be ordered directly from the Economic Research Institute, Box 6501, S-113 83 Stockholm, Sweden.

Stores and Consumers –

Two Perspectives
on
Food Purchasing

Carina Holmberg

STOCKHOLM SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS
THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE
FOUNDATION FOR DISTRIBUTION RESEARCH

A Dissertation for the
Doctor's Degree in Philosophy

Stockholm School of Economics 1996

ISBN 91-7258-418-1

Printed by Graphic Systems i Stockholm AB, 1996

Keywords:

Consumer behaviour
Retailing
Customer orientation
Ethnography
Scanner data

Distributed by:

The Economic Research Institute at the Stockholm School of Economics,
Box 6501, S-113 83 Stockholm, Sweden

PREFACE

This report is a result of a research project carried out at the Foundation for Distribution Research at the Economic Research Institute at the Stockholm School of Economics.

This volume is submitted as a doctor's thesis at the Stockholm School of Economics. As usual at the Economic Research Institute, the author has been entirely free to conduct and present her research in her own ways as an expression of her own ideas.

The Institute is grateful for the financial support provided by the Torsten and Ragnar Söderbergs Foundations and by the sponsors of the Foundation for Distribution Research.

The present volume would not have been possible without the cooperation with the owners and personnel of the ICA store where data were collected, and with the households participating in the interview study. The Economic Research Institute wishes to warmly thank all involved for their generosity and openness.

Sven-Erik Sjöstrand
Professor,
Director of the Economic
Research Institute at
the Stockholm School of Economics

Claes-Robert Julander
Professor,
President of
the Stockholm School of Economics

Food for thought ...

on the Art of Thinking,

"The Old Grey Donkey, Eyeore, stood by himself in a thistly corner of the Forest, his front feet well apart, his head on one side, and thought about things. Sometimes he thought sadly to himself, 'Why?' and sometimes he thought, 'Wherefore?' and sometimes he thought, 'Inasmuch as which?' – and sometimes he didn't quite know what he was thinking about."

(Milne, Winnie-the Pooh)

on the Value of Theory,

"Every theoretical explanation is a reduction of intuition."

(Høeg, Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow)

and on the Joy of a Good Meal.

"They had stilton soup to start with, and a glass of dry sherry. This was followed by lamb chops and new potatoes and what the Admiral called 'a robust claret'. Selma and he then ordered trifle. 'None of this nouvelle stuff,' the Admiral sniffed, 'a fellow could starve to death.' He hailed the waiter, 'Be liberal with the cream.' And he winked at Selma who giggled happily.

'You are a dreadful man.' Her chubby shoulders heaved with laughter."

(Cobbold, Guppies for tea)

Acknowledgements

How strange it feels to have come to this part in my life, actually writing upon the acknowledgements for my thesis! I pinch my arm, and I am still here! I have better continue writing and take this chance to express my gratitude to all those people that in different ways have helped and supported me and my work.

The empirical parts would not have been possible without co-operation from the store where data was collected, the day-care center allowing me to use it for contacts, and the households that opened up their homes and let me peek into their shopping baskets. Not only did they all co-operate, but they also did it in the smoothest ways, which I am very grateful for.

I am also grateful for the financial support I have received from Torsten and Ragnar Söderbergs Foundations and through the sponsors of the Foundation for Distribution Research. The Foundation was founded by Nils-Erik Wirsäll, the energy and drive of whom has been a source of inspiration for me. Our many discussions about grocery retailing have also inspired me in my work.

While I have been a PhD student at the Stockholm School of Economics, a large number of people at the school have been my collegues and friends, providing both enjoyable distractions and intellectual nourishment of high class.

My everyday context during this time has been the Foundation for Distribution Research; a group of creative, unprestigious and intellectually stimulating researchers. Seminars, lunches, workout, get-togethers of different kinds have been characterised by warmth, brilliance, openness, and laughter, allowing the heterogeneity of our different personalities to prosper. Many thanks thus go to former and present collegues and friends at the Foundation: Anne, Case, Fredrik, Jonas, Magnus, Maria, Micke D, Micke H, Odd, Patricia, Pegepe, Per, PG, Richi, Simon, Ulla, you are wonderful! Special thanks to Maria, Per, and to Anne with the red pen.

I have been fortunate enough to have Professors Claes-Robert Julander, Barbro Anell and Dag Björkegren in my advisory committe. I have appreciated our discussions and hope that I in this thesis have managed to incorporate at least some of all your intellectual integrity and clarity.

My thanks go also to Jörgen Sandberg, for time, interest, and comments which I probably did not understand,

to Anna Wahl for help and inspiration in the first nervous phase of my household studies,

to Titti Unckel, for the verbal "kick-in-the butt" that brought me to this point, and

to Rune Castenäs, for altruistic solutions to financial problems and for constant encouragement in a genuine and personal manner.

A remarkable friend of mine, Birgitta Nessen, on her own inititative, generously took of her scarce spare time to read and comment on version after version of my manuscript. Biggis, your interest in my work and support during the process have been extremely valuable to me, maybe more than you understand, and certainly more than I can express. Thank you!

The most important person for me, and the stable point in this sometimes shaky road to the PhD, has been my advisor and boss Claes-Robert Julander, now President at the Stockholm School of Economics. Thank you Case for the open door and the listening ear, for laughing at me when I took myself too seriously, for trusting me when I did not trust myself, and for always being there ready to argue and/or support. Combining in one person an un-prestigious sports-fan in the low teens, the intellectual "know-it-all" of the owl in the fairy-tales, with empathy for and trust in the people around you, is not only charming, but brings out the best in the people around you.

In this moment I also think with gratitude upon all those people that over the years willingly and with great interest discussed food, purchasing, and grocery stores with me. This confirmed the importance of the issue to me, and was helpful in moments of despair.

This, however, is a moment of great joy!

Stockholm, April 1st, 1996

Carina Holmberg

OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

This book consists of three parts. Two empirical studies are presented in the first two parts and an overall discussion of the emerging findings is presented in the final part. The common topic is consumer behaviour related to food purchasing and grocery stores. An emerging theme is the relation between grocery stores and their customers.

An empirical study on effects of promotions in grocery retailing is presented in the first part. The study uses more than three years of POS scanner data from one store and analyses effects of different kinds of promotions for fourteen product categories. This first part was also published as a licentiate thesis in 1992.

The second part contains an empirical study of households' purchasing and planning behaviour. Some ten households were accompanied to the grocery store and interviewed while grocery shopping. The study gives a consumer perspective on grocery stores and provides insight into decision making related to food planning and purchasing.

In the third part, the two empirical studies are discussed, both separately and taken together. The discussion focuses both on aspects of the methods used and of the contribution to knowledge in the field of consumer research.

Table of Contents

Part One - Effects of Feature Advertising and Other Promotions

1 Introduction **1**
1.1 Background *1*
1.2 Purpose of the study *2*
2 The promotional system for groceries in Sweden **3**
2.1 The Swedish grocery retail market *3*
2.2 Marketing and promotions *5*
2.3 A system under discussion *7*
2.4 Different actors – different viewpoints *9*
3 Consumer behavior and effects of promotions **11**
3.1 Theory of consumer behavior *11*
3.2 Research on effects of promotions *14*
3.3 Summary *21*
4 A proposed model of effects of promotions **23**
5 Design of the study **27**
5.1 The dataset *27*
5.2 Method *31*
5.3 Description of products chosen *34*
6 Results **39**
6.1 Type of problem *40*
6.2 Type of promotion *43*
6.3 Type of product *46*
6.4 Type and level of analysis *50*
6.5 PLS-analyses *53*
7 Discussion and conclusions **71**
8 Managerial implications and suggestions for further research **77**
8.1 Managerial implications *77*
8.2 Further research *78*
References **81**
Appendices

Part Two - The Role of the Grocery Store in the Problem Solving of Households — a Study of Food Purchases and Food Habits

1 Introduction **83**
1.1 Purpose and Delimitations of the Study *85*
1.2 Outline of the Report *86*
2 Theoretical Framework **87**
2.1 The Importance of Food *88*
2.1.1 Empirical Studies Illustrating the Importance of Food *91*
2.2 Consumer Decision Making *93*
2.2.1 Decision Making as Problem Solving *93*

2.2.2 Information Processing in Decision Making *94*
2.2.3 Different Levels of Involvement *95*
2.2.4 Empirical Studies on Consumer Decision Making *96*
2.2.5 Consumer Decision Making: Summary *98*
2.3 Other Aspects of Consumer Decision Making ***99***
2.3.2 On the Influence of Others *102*
2.3.3 The Household as a Social System *104*
2.3.4 Everyday Life as Context *106*
2.3.5 Empirical Studies on Other Aspects of Consumer Decision Making *109*
2.3.6 Other Aspects ..... : Summary *109*
2.4 The Store as a Promotional Instrument ***110***
2.4.1 Empirical Studies on Store-related Behaviour *112*
2.5 Theoretical Framework Summarised ***115***
2.6 Themes From Theory ***117***
3 Method **121**
3.1 The Object under Study (Clarifying the Purpose) ***121***
3.2 The Road to a Method ***122***
3.2.1 First Stop: Grounded Theory *122*
3.2.2 Second Stop: Naturalistic Inquiry *123*
3.2.3 Third Stop: Culture Analytical Methods *126*
3.2.4 Fourth Stop: Ethnographic Methods *127*
3.2.5 Fifth Stop: Criteria for Evaluation *128*
3.3 Method Used in this Study: Participant Interviewing ***130***
3.3.1 The Method, Applied in this Study *132*
3.3.2 Sampling *132*
3.3.3 The Themes, Once More *133*
3.3.4 Chosen Perspective, and Preconcieved Notions *134*
4 The Empirical Study **137**
4.1 Prestudies and Preparations ***137***
4.2 The Main Study ***137***
4.2.2 About the Household Visits *139*
4.2.3 Experience of the Method *140*
5 Results **143**
5.1 Meet the Households ***143***
5.1.1 A; One Adult with Three Children, Label: Money *144*
5.1.2 B; Two Adults and Two Children, Label: Husband's Schedule *145*
5.1.3 C; Two Adults and One Child (One on the Way), Label: Taste *147*
5.1.4 D; Two Adults and Two Children; Label: (Over)Weight *148*
5.1.5 E; Two Adults and One Child, Label: Everything's OK *150*
5.1.6 F; Two Adults and Two Children; Current Label: Time *151*
5.1.7 G; Two Adults and Two Children; Label: Food is Boring *152*
5.1.8 H; One Adult, and Every Other Week Two Children, Label: Lack of Money and Interest *153*
5.1.9 J; Two Adults and One Child; Label: Food as a Main Interest *155*
5.1.10 K; Two Adults and Four (or Three) Children, Label: Large Quantities *156*
5.1.11 The Households Compared: on Some Characteristics *158*

5.2 The Themes *160*
5.2.1 Resources and Demographics *160*
5.2.2 The Ideal Picture *161*
5.2.3 The Social Role of Food *162*
5.2.4 Attitude towards Food *163*
5.2.5 Knowledge about food *164*
5.2.6 Food Habits and Preparation *164*
5.2.7 Planning and Logistics *166*
5.2.8 The Store as a Tool *168*
5.2.9 The Purchase *169*
5.2.10 Ideas for Change *171*
5.2.11 What Else *172*
5.2.12 What Was Not Said *173*
5.3 Two Extreme Pictures of Everyday Behaviour ***174***
5.3.1 The Knowledgeable Planner *174*
5.3.2 The Uninvolved Eater *175*
5.4 How the Themes Relate ***176***
5.5 ... and, the Role of the Store ***179***
5.6 Comments Related to the Theoretical Framework ***180***
6 Concluding discussion **185**
6.1 ... and, Back to the Purpose ***191***
6.2 Suggestions for Future Research ***192***
References **195**
Appendices

Part Three - Stores and Consumers — Concluding Reflections

1 Introduction **201**
1.2 Where Supply and Demand Meet ***201***
1.3 The Store as a Micro Market ***202***
1.4 The Two Empirical Studies ***203***
1.5 Outline ***204***
2 Dual Methods in consumer research **205**
2.1 POS Scanner Data ***206***
2.2 Participant Interviewing ***209***
2.3 Combining the Methods Used: Synergies and Contrasts ***211***
3 Dual perspectives on consumer behaviour **215**
3.1 Consumer Behaviour from a Store Perspective ***216***
3.2 The Store from a Consumer Perspective ***217***
3.3 Combining the Empirical Studies: Synergies and Contrasts ***219***
4 Concluding Comments **223**
4.1 Discussion ***223***
4.2 Contributions ***224***
4.3 Implications for Research ***225***
4.4 Marketing Implications ***225***
4.5 "Consumer Ombudsman" Implications ***227***
References **229**

List of Figures

Part One

Figure 5.1 The relation between empirical and theoretical variable *33*
Figure 6.1 PLS, spaghetti 165 weeks *55*
Figure 6.2 PLS, Spaghetti 165 weeks *57*
Figure 6.3 PLS, macaroni 165 weeks *59*
Figure 6.4 PLS, macaroni 165 weeks *60*
Figure 6.5 PLS, other pasta 165 weeks *63*
Figure 6.6 PLS, other pasta 165 weeks *64*
Figure 6.7 PLS, ground coffee 164 weeks *66*
Figure 6.8 PLS, ground coffee 164 weeks *68*

Part Two

Figure 1. Outline of the theoretical framework *87*
Figure 2. "An illustration of our choice of food" *91*
Figure 3. Quality seekers, nutrition/health-aware, and hobby cooks *97*
Figure 4. Quality seekers, price focusers, and hobby cooks *98*
Figure 5. Model by Engström & Hartvig Larsen, my visualisation *105*
Figure 6. Themes from theory *117*
Figure 7. Naturalistic inquiry *125*
Figure 8. Themes from theory *133*
Figure 9. Involvement *177*
Figure 10. Planning *177*
Figure 11. Planning and involvement *178*
Figure 12. The studied households in terms of planning and involvement *178*
Figure 13. How the themes relate to the model by Engström & Hartvig Larsen *181*

Part Three

Figure 1. Outline *204*

List of Tables

Part One

Table 2.1. Market share and number of stores in Sweden 1990 for the largest actors *4*
Table 6.1. Average volix for the chosen product categories under different, mutually exclusive, promotional conditions *41*
Table 6.2. Multiple regressions results, category level *43*
Table 6.3. Multiple regression results, category level *44*
Table 6.4. Relative effects of promotions *45*
Table 6.5. Comparison of effects of promotions for food products and non-food products *46*
Table 6.6. Comparison of effects of promotions for products with more or less impulse consumption atttractivity *47*
Table 6.7. Comparison of effects of promotions for products with higher or lower storability *48*
Table 6.8. Comparison of effects of promotions for products with higher or lower purchase frequency *48*
Table 6.9. Average volix for the chosen products when ranked after promotion frequency *49*
Table 6.10. Multiple regression results, item level *51*
Table 6.11. Multiple regression results, item level *52*

Part Two

Table 1. The households compared, on some characteristics *159*
Table 2. A retailer perspective on planning and involvement *180*

PART ONE

EFFECTS OF FEATURE ADVERTISING AND OTHER PROMOTIONS

A Study of
Swedish Grocery Retailing
using Scanner Data

1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter contains the background and the purpose of this study.

1.1 Background

Grocery expenditures amount to approximately twenty percent of private expenditures in Sweden and in 1990 amounted to 17.448 SEK per inhabitant (Supermarket 5-6/91). Sales promotion is a widely used marketing tool in the grocery retailing industry. The largest advertisers in Swedish newspapers are the grocery retail chains (see appendix 1). Considering the amount of money spent on sales promotion each year, remarkably little research has been done to study the long- and short-term effects of these promotional activities.

With the opening towards the common market the discussion in Sweden about market structure and food prices has been intensified. New low-price store chains are entering with different concepts and emphasize the question of which mix of assortment and services consumers are willing to pay for.

In this thesis the question of effects of sales promotion in the grocery retail trade is adressed. The study focuses on effects of feature advertising and uses scanner data from one Swedish store to measure effects of promotions.

The system of promotions used in the Swedish market is similar to how promotions in the American grocery market and most western European markets work. The share of budgets allocated to this kind of marketing as well as the intensity might differ among the countries. The relations in use between the different promotional tools might also vary. Coupons are for example much more common in the U.S than in Sweden, and the trend has been towards increased distribution of coupons on the American market (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990).

The perspective held here is from the point of view of the consumer. Other alternatives could have been to see promotions through, for example, the eyes of a brand manager or a retailer. The reason for the choice of the consumers view is that the consumer is the target of the promotions and has the opportunity to act and react to them. By using the consumers eyes we try to visualize the amount of promotion and other information that is aimed at the consumers. Considering also the interest of the retailer or the brand manager makes a consumer viewpoint a good choice, as the actions undertaken by retailers and brand managers are intended for the consumers to respond to.

Different kinds of data could be used to study this from a consumer viewpoint. In this kind of focus the aim is to know the behavior of the consumers, and it would therefore be best to study the consumers directly. As it

is complicated to find out how consumers process information and make choices when they purchase groceries a more accessible approach is chosen in this study.

The increasing use of scanners and modern technology in the stores have made scanner data readily available. This type of data has several advantages, one of which is the low cost involved in accessing data. Apart from that, it is of good quality, and a very good measurement of actual aggregated consumer behavior.

When scanners were introduced arguments were raised and expectations were high regarding the analytical use of scanner data. The first scanner check-out was installed in Sweden in 1973. Experience has up till now shown us that it is a more complex matter than expected to use scanner data as a tool for better decision making. The amount of data available give us great possibilities to take advantage of the data, but demands certain competences, for instance knowledge in statistics. Many questions can be answered by using the data, but it is difficult to start searching for answers without knowing how to, and maybe not even knowing the questions. Explicitly stated models can be good maps into data exploration, and prevent the analyst from getting lost.

One of the arguments when the data collection began, was that it should be used to illustrate how scanner data can be used in different ways to create bases for improved decision-making.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is threefold:

1. to measure effects of feature advertising
2. to explain variations in effect between different products when comparing in-store vs out-of-store promotional activities
3. to discuss and apply various methods of analyzing scanner data

Feature advertising here means the advertisements in the daily newspapers where the retail chains are the senders. Feature advertising does not include image advertising from the manufacturers. (See also glossary in appendix 4, and examples of feature advertising in appendix 5.)

2 THE PROMOTIONAL SYSTEM FOR GROCERIES IN SWEDEN

This chapter is mainly descriptive in character. It shows how the grocery retail market is structured and how the promotional system works today and how it evolved. Towards the end of the chapter some critical voices are given space. The concluding part contains questions about the promotional system that need to be answered.

2.1 The Swedish grocery retail market

The Swedish market is highly structured with easily identifiable actors. Four major retail groups cover 75% of the market.

ICA HANDLARNAS AB, a voluntary chain, is the largest one, with 36% of the wholesale market and 34% of retail volume (Svensk Dagligvaruhandel 1990-91). It is owned by the store owners through their common organisation which also delivers to their stores. ICA started, in 1939 (Wirsäll, 1988), as a purchasing organization for its members. In 1964 signs with a red-and-white logo-type were put up above the stores, that had earlier worked as independent retailers.

ICA now performs many more functions as well, such as marketing, financing, consultancy services and many others. Figures from 1986 show that 65% of the orders from the stores were delivered from ICA warehouses and 15% came directly from manufacturers (like bread and beverages). In the ICA group we also find manufacturing companies, clothing stores, china and glassware stores and a mailorder company.

The second largest actor, with a market share of around 18% in wholesaling and 20% in retailing (Svensk Dagligvaruhandel, 1990-91) is owned by the Swedish consumer cooperative movement, KF. KF dates back to 1899, and runs their own retail stores as well as a chain of nationwide department stores, clothing stores, shoe stores and a number of diversified manufacturing companies. The blue-and-white Konsum symbol of infinity was put up in 1964. KF are in a reorganising and restructuring stage. About 80% of the orders from the stores were processed through the KF warehouses. Store managers are employed instead of owners of the stores as is the case in the ICA-organisation. A couple of years ago the cooperatives opened up for private brands, after having been more restrictive earlier.

The third and fourth groups of grocery stores are organized by D-gruppen and Axel Johnson with, together, 20% of retailing volume. They use DAGAB, with 16% market share, as their wholesaler (Svensk Dagligvaruhandel, 1990-91). DAGAB was formed in 1974 when 6 regional wholesalers were united, and

since 1982 they have been distributing nationwide. They deliver to all non-ICA or non-KF stores, which means a number of smaller and more independent chains, some regional. Within this wholesaler's distribution network we find most of the low-price (low-cost) stores. Dagab is now owned by Axel Johnson AB, after a turbulent history of ownership.

Also on the manufacturing side a fairly high degree of concentration is prevalent. Some product categories are monopolies, or oligopolies with very few actors and a tight structure. Barriers to entry are high in many businesses on the supplier side as well as in wholesaling. Manufacturing of groceries are mostly large-scale operations, and in many industries oligopolies or even monopolies (LMU, 1987). Tight bonds exist between suppliers of raw materials (like farmers) and some producers. The cost of entry is high for a newcomer, as is the cost for distribution and "buying" shelf-space for new products. Local or regional manufacturers can however obtain distribution through wholesalers and be competitive locally. Retailing has lower barriers, and there are new stores opening up. Regulations for store locations have however been considerable and acted as barriers.

Sweden subsidizes farming and has a number of import restrictions and trade quotas that traditionally have influenced competition and pricing. With the opening up towards the European markets, a new Swedish government as well as intensive Swedish discussions about the high food prices, deregulation has taken place in this area and more is expected.

Also on the retailing side concentration seems to have been a trend with polarisation in store structure as a result. The tendency has been towards larger stores as well as smaller stores (Hultén, 1990). The smaller stores can be so called traffic stores, located at gasstations, or service stores, with smaller assortment and extended opening hours. The larger stores are supermarkets with for example wide assortment, parking lots, more deli and manual service. In 1985 10% of the stores had 40% of the sales (LMU,1987). This relation was true also in 1989 (Eliason & Julander, 1991).

In 1990 the market shares and number of stores for the four dominating retail groups were divided as follows:

ICA	34% of sales	3 391 stores
KF	20%	1 722
D-gruppen	13%	1 136
A Johnson	7%	566

Table 2.1. Market share and number of stores in Sweden 1990 for the largest actors (Source: Svensk Daglivaruhandel 90/91)

2.2 Marketing and promotions

Knowledge of how the marketing system evolved gives an understanding of how it functions today. As this study uses data from ICA, the example given here will be how promotions are carried out by ICA. When there are regional differences examples are from how marketing is done in the Stockholm area. The other large actors in the grocery market use similar systems.

Marketing and promotions today

The most common form of advertising and promotion in the Swedish food distribution is SA/VA or weekly store promotions. This stands for "SamAktivitet/ VeckoAnnonsering" which means "joint activity/weekly advertising". Joint means in this case that suppliers, wholesalers and retailers are participating. This system evolved in the late 1950's and is now a complicated but smoothly working large scale operation.

Marketing within ICA is planned on three different levels. The geographical top level concerns activities that are aimed at the whole population, like TV-advertising and sponsoring. These are planned centrally.

Production of weekly leaflets is planned regionally. ICA makes a preliminary plan and invites the suppliers to comment on the plan and come in with requests. The preliminary plan is for dry products done for a year, and for fresh products on a six months basis. The marketing plan for dry products is revised after six months.

The regional office receives comments and requests from suppliers and try to form a good marketing plan. Costs for suppliers of participating is negotiated as well as the extent of participation. The suppliers contribute to the wholesaler for being promoted to retailers and for the products being shown in leaflets.

On the local level planning is based on the information included in the regionally produced leaflets. The most interesting products in the leaflets are included in the weekly advertisement together with products where the local marketers have made own negotiations with other suppliers. Prices for fruit and other fresh products are not known very long in advance why their appearances in leaflets are decided at a much later stage.

On both the regional and the local level retailers are involved in decision making and price setting as ICA is organized as a voluntary chain where the retailers own their wholesaler.

The feature advertisements in the daily newspapers are still quite similar today to what they looked like in the beginning (see appendix 5). The leaflets have changed appearance more over time. Since the beginning of 1991 ICA, in the Stockholm area, weekly produces leaflets in four-colour print that are eight to twenty-four pages long and distributed to all households. This leaflet

contains a large number of products on deal but also includes a few recipes and smaller stories of seasonal or other interest. In the leaflets the products are photographed which make them more easily recognisable when the consumer comes to the store. The total number of leaflets produced and distributed by ICA in a year is 217.000.000. This covers each household each week of the year.

In appendix 2 you find tables that illustrate the extent of the marketing program. For each week is shown number of items in ICA's feature advertising in Stockholm as well as number of reduced prices and items on special display found in the studied store. Approximately five hundred to seven hundred items are price reduced each week.

Suppliers also have sales representatives who visit the larger stores in order to ensure that the stores order the items in the campaigns, and try to increase the volumes ordered. Some companies sales representatives also help the larger stores with unpacking and displaying promoted products. The level of discount is often connected to the volume ordered by each store, and the stores can also order more than is expected to be sold during the campaign period, in order to strenghten their margins by selling the remaining at regular price. For some products a certain minimum volume is necessary to order to be able to display the product in an attractive way.

The advertisements are intended to communicate the profile of the stores in the chain, their assortment and wide range of deal prices. Some products in the assortment are considered to attract the consumers to the store, examples are large packs of detergent, minced meat and ground coffee. These often get large space in the advertisements.

The advertisements and the leaflets are to a large extent organised by department, in the same way the wholesalers and the retailers are. The frozen products department always gets its spot, and should always have something to offer, etc. This means that every week each department of the wholesaler has something to offer their clients, the respective departments in the stores.

It is a common belief in the trade that newspaper advertisements serve to attract consumers to the store and they are also considered to have long-term impact.

How it started

In the late fifties and early sixties profiling of the emerging store chains became important. From a number of earlier independent retail stores it was necessary to create chain profile and chain identity among the retailers. According to Wirsäll (1988) todays advertising and promotion programs were taking form during this period. Logo-types, centrally planned marketing and large campaigns were means to have the stores follow the common identity and

program as well as something to communicate to the consumers. Another aspect was to ensure that the stores carried the same assortment, and campaigns were a way to make them interested in having it. It could be negative for a retailer not to carry the product that a consumer asked for and that was in the weekly advertisement. For the wholesaling organisations it was easier to negotiate better prices and other conditions if all stores in a region followed the marketing program, and the wholesaler could act as representative for the whole region.

For manufacturers it became important to be represented in as many of the large chains as possible. It could of course be seen as easy to handle a few large clients instead of dealing with each store separately. Distribution to a few nodes facilitated for the manufacturers to reach nationwide. In today's tightly structured market with three major wholesalers, a loss of one client certainly makes a difference. The number of deliveries from manufacturers directly to larger stores has increased, even though invoicing might be done through the wholesalers (LMU, 1987).

Some companies are not represented through the wholesalers and therefore use their own salesforce and distribution network. Independent wholesalers are also working in the market, especially with regional or niche profiles. Modern technology installed in stores today has facilitated purchases from the chain wholesaler even more than before, and as a consequence made separate ordering and handling from outside suppliers relatively more complicated.

2.3 A system under discussion

A picture of a system for distribution and marketing that evolved under a period of major changes in the market is shown above. When comparing how the system works today with how it functioned when it was new, the difference does not seem apparent. An institutionalized system is easier for the consumer to learn and to know how to use best. The consumer's situation has changed since SA/VA evolved. The housewife that the chains targeted in the 1950's and 1960's is not at home as much as before and has a lot less time to spend on household chores.

With a market of such tight structure, and that seems to function well, the incentives for the participants to initiate changes are limited.

For an outside observer, studying the promotional program over the years, it seems quite repetitive. Of course this is an expected outcome for products with seasonal characteristics. It is quite puzzling to see that in some product groups there is at least one campaign each single week. There are product groups where more than half of sales from the suppliers were at reduced prices when investigated by SPK in 1985 (LMU, 1987). Julander (1984) referred to another study with panel data from 1982 where share of hot dogs purchased at

reduced price was 81%, ground coffee 71% and frozen poultry 89% to show a few of the higher figures.

For the manufacturer it is essential to be the supplier of the items sold in the category. Participation in the promotion program is one way of maneuvering to block the market for the competition. Who the competitor is depends of course on the type of product. Sometimes it is important to remember that competition can come from a different product category. Manufacturers might be selling a brand when the consumer is buying a solution to a problem or a particular function. Manufacturers might also hope that their brand will be the choice the next time the category is in the shoppers mind, as the package already is familiar.

Julander (1984) discusses the Swedish SA/VA system from the perspectives held by the different actors; producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. Starting from a consumer perspective he concludes that it is not possible to unambigously state what kind of changes in the system would be optimal. In his opinion this is more a question open to discussion for all the involved parties.

For the manufacturer the SA/VA system leads to swings in demand and deliveries. As these are planned long in advance this does not have to lead to inefficiency in production, handling and distribution, but it probably takes very good planning not to increase costs. How the manufacturer manages to handle costs on his side is something that will show in the price to the consumer, and there is a risk that the regular price level could be higher because of SA/VA (Julander, 1984).

Manufacturers complain about SA/VA as they think it is too costly and uses too large a share of their marketing budgets. Costs for SA/VA were estimated to 61,7 per cent of total costs for marketing, with image advertising, brand advertising and consumer oriented coupons using 16,1 per cent (LMU, 1987). This takes, according to manufacturers, resources away from more brand oriented campaigns that could work to strenghten the image and not be concentrated on price alone. The manufacturers fear that SA/VA reduces consumer brand loyalty (Julander, 1984).

Wickström (1989) discussed how the increased spread of SA/VA has led to the retailer taking on a role as a guide for the consumer when deciding what to buy. The map consists of red-marked price reduced items that lead the way. The extension of the promotional program has led the consumer to change buying behavior and more routinely search for price deals.

The large frequency of reduced prices may contribute to reduced importance of the weekly advertisements. If the consumer knows that s/he will always find a large number of reduced prices in any store, the incentive to seek information in the advertisement may not exist any more (Julander, 1984).

In a study by DLF (1981) criticism against the SA/VA system was raised both from suppliers and retailers. Suppliers complained that the cost of participating was higher than the revenue and that it was difficult to know if the price reductions reached the consumers. The system leads to high variations in sales and suppliers fear that many products do not get increased sales in the long run. It is difficult for the suppliers not to participate and they worry that the focus on price might lead to decreased brand awareness.

The retailers worry about how much of competition that is focused on price. It would be desirable if quality, service, opening hours etc were used as means to attract consumers to the stores. For smaller stores the system has too many campaign periods and too many products. Retailers complain that they have to contribute too much by reducing margins on deal products and that it is difficult to plan buying quantity and get a good turnover rate. They also see a risk that low price brands of inferior quality enter the market and that products in season or old products with low sales are on campaign.

The wholesalers argue that they cannot leave the system as long as their competitors are working in this traditional way. They feel that they would risk losing valuable market share. Retailers enjoy benefits of the system and like being able to provide their consumers with a "new" store each week.

2.4 Different actors – different viewpoints

All actors participating in this system seem to benefit from being in the system and still complain about parts of it. It also seems that all participants find it difficult, or even impossible, to leave the system. The whole SA/VA-system contains different parts which can be beneficial for different actors. The complaints raised by each participant concern the parts that are seen as negative, for that participant, which is important to remember when the system is discussed.

The manufacturers can plan their production and marketing in advance and know that a certain amount of activities will take place. They know for sure that their competitors will not be having a campaign in the same chain at the same time, and that there are strong incentives for the retailers to participate in the program. Their complaints regard the high share of their marketing budget that is allocated to participating in this program, and they also fear that the focus on price might reduce brand loyalty.

The wholesalers create an attractive mix of promotions over the year to offer the retailers, as well as help to communicate their respective chain profiles. They believe that campaigns with feature advertising and/or leaflets attract consumers to the store and maintain image. They also feel that the only way to abandon this system is for everybody to do so at the same time.

Retailers receive a rich campaign program, supported by advertising, that help them create 'a new store' each week. Retailers receive this support in building up an attractive store and to offer their customers varying assortment and interesting activities in all departments. Salesmen from the manufacturers also offer extra kick-backs and other incentives for larger orders. Smaller retailers complain however that the promotional program contains too many products for them, and larger retailers complain that the program is not enough.

Consumers complain about too many leaflets and a system of price reductions where some product's regular price seems to be the reduced price. But, after all, the consumers respond to the promotional programs and do a lot of their purchases when products are on campaign. For those customers using the store as inspiration and reminder, in-store activities can be of great help.

Is this system, as described above, really effective and adapted to the current environment? This study is focused on feature advertising, even though it tries to show that feature advertising exists as one part in a larger promotional system. The question is, considering the amount spent, if this is the optimal way to allocate marketing budgets? Something worth considering is also what the consequences can be when a system is "fixed" like this, meaning the extent of repetition and institutionalization. When the consumers have learnt the system, is it still possible that feature advertising attracts consumers to the store? Or, should there be more activities in-store?

3 CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND EFFECTS OF PROMOTIONS

The Swedish promotional system was developed in a time when structure and demographics were different. The system seems surprisingly similar to what it used to be in the sixties. To know in what direction changes should move, we need to gain a better understanding of how the consumers react and respond to promotion. It is important to know the consumer's response or lack thereof as this is a guide to how well the system works.

This chapter starts with the theoretical framework on consumer decision making and how information is processed. This serves as a basis for the following section where results from earlier studies on effects of promotions are presented.

The consumer lives in an environment full of information fighting for attention, and with two major restrictions: budget and time.

3.1 Theory of consumer behavior

Several authors have concerned themselves with developing models of consumer decision making. The focus of this part is on three of the more prominent models: Bettman (1979), the EKB-model from Engel & Blackwell (1982) and Howard (1989). They are different and at the same time have much in common. All models to a great extent deal with information processing, although this is most visible in Bettman's model. His model should be seen more as a framework for building up a theory of consumer decision making than a directly applicable model.

Engel et al divide decisions between decisions where the products purchased are of high personal relevance for the consumer and purchases where products are of low or no relevance, i.e. little perceived risk that a wrong decision will be made. The first type is called decision making under *high involvement*, and the second kind is logically called decision making under *low involvement*.

Howard makes a similar distinction but divides processing into three kinds. The first is called *extensive problem solving*. This occurs when we are facing an innovation – a new brand or service in a new product category. The consumer in this case needs a lot of information. For very low priced items this might not be true, the consumer may simply try it and learn by trying.

The next kind is called *limited problem solving*. An example is when a consumer is confronted by an unfamiliar brand in a familiar product class.

The third kind is called *routine problem solving*. This is a process that is used for many brands that are at a mature stage of the product life cycle. The consumer needs to recognize the brand. Internal memory search is quite limited.

Engel et al say that *low involvement* means no active search for information. Attention is more involuntary. The products can be recognized even though the consumer not necessarily can recall them from memory. The products are presold by advertising, but the most crucial role is played at *point-of-purchase*. Brand names are important.

Low involvement purchasing differs from high involvement for these reasons:

(1) lack of high personal relevance;
(2) low perceived risk;
(3) little relationship between consequences of purchase and one's self-concept;
(4) low anxiety about outcome

The consumer purchasing products with high involvement is actively searching and processing information to be able to make a good decision.

According to Van Raaij (1988) *social norms* affect the decision when level of involvement is high.

The background for Bettman's theory is viewing the consumer as a *processor of information*. The capacity to process information is *limited*. There is no possibility for us to process everything around us. This makes us use *heuristics* or rules of thumb that enable us to handle complex situations.

According to Bettman a goal hierarchy guides the consumer choice process, with interruptions for conflicting stimuli, unexpected events, etc. The process is goal-directed, requiring active consumer participation. Memory retrieval is crucial in interpreting perception, guiding and interpreting the results of external search.

Bettman also stresses the fact that the consumer is not always consciously making decisions about every choice and every piece of information encountered. Although conscious decision processes are often involved, there are also many situations in which learned rules and procedures are simply applied, in which reactions are in essence automatic. The choice process will take different forms for different people and even for the same person in different situations.

In an attempt to very briefly summarize what is said above we can say that information processing is limited and a very important ingredient in consumer decision making. Some kinds of decisions are of higher importance to the consumer, who then more actively seeks information and evaluates alternatives before the purchase. Other decisions have less impact and are more of routine

character. In these cases recognition and in-store stimuli are important. Most purchases of groceries are seen as low involvement decision processes, which lead to routine behavior. Engel et al state that for low involvement items the real impact on the purchase takes place at point-of-purchase. This is supported by Bowman (1987) who reports that POPAI (Point-of-Purchase Advertising Institute) in a study on the American market found that 80 per cent of all brand purchase decisions were made in the store. Unplanned purchases represented over 60 per cent of all buying decisions. Bettman stresses how it is important for brand managers to create the right informational environment. A quotation from Van Raiij is a good description of how decision making in-store can work:

> *"Consumers may use stores ... as external memories." ...*
> *"Instead of preparing a shopping list, consumers may walk through the supermarket to recognize the products that are needed."*
> (Van Raaij, 1988, p. 99)

A fourth model, less well-known, of the consumers involvement in the buying process is presented by Wickström (1989). Involvement is here divided into two components; "personal relevance of the purchase" and "degree of involvement in the buying process". Personal relevance is defined by three variables; perceived risk, importance of the usage of the product and experience of the product. The personal relevance will influence the consumer's involvement in the buying process which is defined by behavior and attitude variables, like information seeking, cognitive dissonance, etc. Different consumers perceive different levels of involvement for the same product, and will therefore engage in different behavior. In 1954 Gregory P Stone (also related in Sellerberg, 1977) suggested a typology of shopping orientations for consumers:

- the *economical*, where the buying situation is considered just as buying, it has no further social value. Quality, assortment and price are important criteria
- the *personalized*, where buying is also interpersonal interaction and an important social process, less focus on assortment, price and quality
- the *ethical*, where the consumer feels a moral obligation for example to support the small, local retailer
- the *apathetical*, totally uninterested in buying, not differentiating between different stores or type of stores

Wickström (1989) discusses consumer buying behavior in a future perspective and means that consumer behavior can be divided into *consumption behavior* and *buying behavior*. Consumption behavior is the allocation of consumption over a certain period of time as regards for example consumption,

saving and dissaving, or the allocation of consumption between durable vs non-durable products. For a given consumption structure buying behavior consists of the purchases distribution over a certain period of time as regards time, frequency, place and way (decision strategy, rate of service, means of payment). It is more realistic to assume that buying habits also partly change as a response to the different kinds of innovations that appear in the retail trade.

3.2 Research on effects of promotions

A quotation from Julander gives a good description of what the consumer's reality looks like:

> *"At the heart of the decision process for food lies the general problem for households to produce meals; two to three meals per day, year after year. Not only that, these meals should satisfy the needs and wants of all members of the household. A missing product can ruin a meal and being out of stock can strongly affect the satisfaction of the household members. These decisions not only are highly frequent but also extremely important for the general welfare of the household."*
>
> (Julander, 1989, p. 2)

The consumer's interest is in *buying as problem solving* and at the same time getting value for money. The consumer has many restrictions to consider. Beside *budget* constraints, *time* constraints are important. Consumers want to buy cheap groceries but cannot spend too much time shopping around for them. For many households one problem has to be solved daily – what to serve for dinner. The food has to be nutritious, not take too much time to prepare, cost less rather than more and everybody in the family has to like it. A large number of products are of the kind that many households want to have at home. There are also a lot of products that are consumed every day like milk, bread and butter. Other products are used only occasionally and purchased infrequently when needed.

The time constraint works in two ways. One is that there is little time to spend on shopping and searching. The other is that preparation time must be short, ie the leadtime to have the dinner on the table cannot be too long. The easy option would be to serve the same thing every day, but we all know that that does not work for a longer period of time. Meal preparation time has been reduced by new technology like household appliances and microwave ovens. The suppliers have also taken over a lot of preparations and a large assortment of food can now be bought ready to heat and eat.

A small study showed that average time spent on grocery shopping is 8 minutes per day while food preparation and serving takes 38 minutes per day of the seven day week (Swedish Census, 1988).

Consumers' store choice depends on how the stores' strategies in both long-run and short-run perspective corresponds to the consumers needs and preferences (Julander & Holmberg, 1987).

The consumer's time constraint is important also when we consider the consumer's possibility to engage in *store-switching*. It could be seen as an investment in time to go to a new store. Localizing the different items and finding out specialties and be certain about quality of goods offered takes time. Many of the stores have similar concepts. On average two to three trips to the store are done each week. There are, however, surprisingly many people that report that more than a week passes between shopping trips (Dagens Konsument, 1991). The smaller the household, the more often the store is visited. In order for in-store activities to have effect the consumers must get to the store. 77 per cent of the consumers visit one particular store to make most of their food purchases (Dagens konsument, 1991).

Stores are seldom organized after how we serve items in a meal. They are mostly planned after what kind of storage the products need and how the wholesaler's departments are organised. It can be quite time consuming to identify where spices are shelfed and where to return empty bottles in an unfamiliar store. Therefore we can assume that a consumer has to reach a certain level of dissatisfaction in order to go through the hassle of store switching.

Many consumers also use different stores for different purposes and have a set of stores that they are familiar with, like an evoked set of stores for varying purposes – one neighborhood store for purchases of complementary items, and more milk during the week, and a larger store for the once-a-week shopping trip with car where most groceries are purchased.

We can say that the *consumer's choice is restricted*, both for reasons of individual constraints in time and money, but also because there is no wide variety to choose from.

The consumer is in need of simplifying grocery shopping, and use different shopping strategies. One way is to use *choice heuristics*, for example using one store because its assortment, price and quality are perceived to be satisfactory. The decision rule can be eating pea-soup and pancakes every Thursday, or always buying the same brand of detergent. It can be buying whatever product is on sale in a particular category, or always buying ground meat or a certain brand of coffee whenever they are on sale.

Grocery shopping might be a *high involvement* process for consumers on some occasions, for example if the boss is coming for dinner. Planning and preparing for this is probably high involvement, as well as purchasing the groceries needed for the occasion. Another example might be a household where a microwave oven has just been installed. Seeking information about

what products are suitable makes the process one of high involvement. The third example might be a household where an allergy has been discovered with one of the members. Search for new and unfamiliar products that are possible solutions makes this also high involvement.

Overall it might seem more realistic not to talk only about low involvement as opposed to high involvement. A continuous scale might be more appropriate and the decision process seen as changing, both over time and over consumer.

Grocery shopping involves processing a large amount of information. One indication of the extent of information is shown in appendix 2 which contains the number of articles with price reduction and the number of products displayed and advertised each week for the researched store. This is a good illustration of the number of points of information that the consumer has to relate to, and how necessary choice heuristics are as simplifying rules. The consumer has an option of using out-of-store information and/or information displayed in-store. Out-of-store information can be advertisements, recipes and recommendations from friends. In-store is using information on packages, watching other consumers, reading signs and using special displays.

Many trends endorsed by mass media also effect how we choose food. Environmental aspects and debates about what is nutritious or not has sometimes strong impacts. Other issues, what the sausage really contains and what chickens eat, can also influence how we choose.

The promotional program is intended to influence our choice processes, and the different actors – suppliers, wholesalers, retailers – have their own (and differing) reasons for participating in the common marketing program.

The suppliers

For the supplier it is important to increase and maintain brand awareness, as well as to be chosen before the competitors. Many studies have used a brand or category manager perspective (for example Woodside & Waddle (1975), Cotton & Babb (1978), Dodson, Tybout & Sternthal (1978)) and studied effects of different promotional activities.

Brand loyalty was the dominating variable in explaining response to promotions in a study using bathroom tissue (Tellis, 1988). This study also found that feature, display and price in particular had a stronger impact on response than TV-advertising. For frozen orange juice (Shoemaker & Shoaf, 1977) the probability that the consumer will repurchase a brand is lower if the last purchase was on deal. A consumer panel study (Dodson, Tybout & Sternthal, 1978) found that coupons distributed on packages for margarine and flour stimulated brand loyalty, which was maintained when they were retracted.

Media distributed coupons and cents-off deals induced switching and reduced brand loyalty.

In a study of how coupons interact with price and store promotions (Henderson, 1988) two different groups of consumers were identified. One group makes decisions from coupons alone, another group is hunting for low price and use coupons together with shelf price to minimize cost. This suggests that it is important for the manufacturers to find out what kind of coupon users their consumers are.

The wholesalers

For wholesalers negotiating deals the aim is to provide retailers with a wide and attractive assortment of deals. They are concerned with their image towards the retailers as well as how the retailers are perceived by their customers. It is important to give the retailers an overall interesting profile compared to the competitors, and to offer a good mix of products each week.

The retailers

For the retailers it is important to attract consumers to the store by offering specials. When in the store the consumers should hopefully also purchase items where the margin is higher than on the deal products. Another important aim is to make the store interesting and varied for the regular customer. A study from Chicago (Blattberg, Eppen & Lieberman, 1981) showed that sales increase is a result of consumers who stockpile and not because new consumers are attracted to the store. Inventory is moved from the retailers to the consumer's home. If promotion serves to attract consumers to the store we should find a pattern of store-switching consumers. This is of course related to type of competition and pricing. It is expected that if the market is highly competetive few consumers would benefit from switching.

Other studies that have focused on the retailers perspective (Walters & Rinne, 1986, Walters & McKenzie, 1988) have concentrated on loss leader promotions. These are found to have no effect on short-run store profit, even when they lead to significant increase in sales.

Blattberg & Neslin(1990) divide promotions effects on sales in four mechanisms; (1) brand switching, (2) repeat purchasing, (3) purchase acceleration and (4) category expansion. A study of ground coffee (Gupta, 1988) showed that 84 per cent of increase in sales due to promotion came from brand switching, while purchase acceleration in time accounted for only 14 per cent of sales increase due to promotion.

Another approach when thinking of effects of promotions is considering what effects consist of. One reason for increase in volume sold is that number of buyers increase as a result of a promotion. Depending on type of product

quantity purchased can increase when products are promoted. The highest effect on volume sold is expected for products where both number of buyers and quantity purchased increases when the products are promoted.

Effects of promotions

Several studies have examined effects of different kinds of promotions, and found varying effects for different categories (Curhan, 1974, Wilkinson et al, 1981, Chevalier, 1975, Blattberg & Wisniewski, 1986, 1987). One explanation proposed is that response might depend on the products stage in its life cycle (Wilkinson et al, 1982).

It has been showed for some products that there are patterns within product groups where the percentage increase in sales is the same within each group (Chevalier, 1975). By using UPC scanner data one study (Blattberg & Wisniewski, 1987) found differing response to combinations of price deals and advertising for different product categories.

Several studies have tested the effects of special display and found that this caused high increases in sales. Curhan (1974) experimented with fruits and vegetables and found increased sales for all categories. Price reductions gave significant effects only for soft fruit. Advertising showed significance for hard fruit and cooking vegetables.

Another study used data on instant coffee (Woodside & Waddle, 1975) and found that point-of-sale promotion in the form of a sign has a great effect on sales. This effect was increased when combined with price reduction, but the result showed that point-of-purchase promotion was more effective than price reduction alone. This could however be a result of consumers being used to price-reduction and displays appearing together. An experiment with dairy products (Cotton & Babb, 1978) also showed that promotion tend to increase sales, but response was lower for more familiar products, like fluid milk.

Several studies talk of assymetries in brands sensitivity to competitors promotional acctivities. Walters (1991) reports that there exists a difference among brands in how vulnerable they appear to be to losses in sales due to the price promotion activities of other brands. He also found promotions to be a more effective tool for brands with larger market shares. They expand sales at the expense of competitors, but the opposite pattern does not seem to be prevalent. Wittink et al (1987) studied tunafish sales and found clear asymmetries in cross price elasticities. A French experimental study (Bemmaor & Mouchoux, 1991) found high price deal elasticities for six non-perishable consumer goods categories. Smaller brands had higher elasticities. The price deal cross-elasticities were found to be smaller for higher priced brands than for lower priced brands.

The idea that competition works within price-tiers is discussed by Blattberg & Wisniewski (1986, 1987). Using scanner data they found that when a lower price brand was on deal it did not take a significant share away from higher-price tier brands. Higher-price, higher quality brands stole share from other brands in the same price-quality tier, as well as from brands in the tier below. Their results also imply that there is a larger effect on unit sales of special in-store than from newspaper feature advertising. These results are also supported by Swedish scanner data on detergents (Blomqvist, 1988). Significant effects were found from price deals, display and coupons. Newspaper advertising was not significantly effective, which is an intriguing result as detergent price deals are assumed by the trade in Sweden to cause store traffic.

Chevalier (1975-76) studied substitution patterns when one item in the product group was on display. In the week of the promotion there was a slight drop in sales of other sizes of the same brand and for competing brands, but most of the increase was additional sales.

Experimenting with four products – soap, apple juice, rice and frozen pie shells – (Wilkinson et al, 1981, 1982) gave very interesting results. Treatments were three different levels of price, three different levels of display and advertising/no ad. Changes in price and display were significantly effective in all cases. The effect of special display was impressive for all products, leading to between 90 and 270 per cent increase in sales. Advertising worked for only one of the products, rice, where sales increased by 24 per cent.

Perception of price-deals

A large number of visits to the store did not result in purchase of any of the promoted products (Julander, 1989). More than half of the shoppers were unaware that they had selected an item that was selling at a reduced price. Less than half of the shoppers could recall the price of the item they had just placed in their shopping basket, and only a small minority of those who bought a product on special knew both its price and the amount of the price reduction (Dickson & Sawyer, 1990). Another study found that promotion made the selection of the promoted brand more likely (Inman et al, 1990).

Consumers' response to price discounts for ground coffee has been studied by Lattin & Bucklin (1989). Their results show that consumers relate an activity to what their expectations of an activity on that kind of product is. The consumer has in his mind a reference price discount that is used to evaluate the activity in focus. The highest response is then assumed to be received when the consumer has not been exposed to a discount in the category before.

Another study (Krishna, Currim & Shoemaker, 1991) found that there is great awareness of deal frequency among consumers. There is also a tendency to underestimate frequency for products with high frequency and overestimate

for products with low promotion frequency. These results were for soft drinks, ice cream, paper towels and potato chips. Krishna (1991) found in a Manhattan study that the price the consumers were willing to pay for a brand was correlated more highly with perceived deal frequency than with actual deal frequency. When a brand was dealt more regularly (vs randomly) the perception of deal frequency was more accurate.

Categories with differing response

A different perspective is used in a recent study of category structure and promotional activity (Fader & Lodish, 1990). With scanner data for 331 product categories and 20 000 panel households in 12 markets their aim has been to find out what retailers, manufacturers and consumers actually do. They find patterns of promotional behavior by using cluster analysis and identify groups of product categories that are treated in the same way but where the clusters differ from each other. The authors mean that many of the earlier studies have used few products, due to data availability, and that they do not show the whole spectrum of market behavior. Their analysis is extended by using structural variables for the same product categories and they find that the most important variables in explaining category purchasing is household penetration and purchase frequency.

In order to understand why different product groups have different promotion sensitivity Julander (1984) suggests some dimensions for classification of product groups. The suggested dimensions are characteristics of the products and Julander suggests storability, purchase frequency and impulse consumption attractivity. These dimensions should be seen as a way to make structured analyzes of effects of weekly advertising schemes. Consumers' response to promotions is assumed to be related to how the products are perceived along these dimensions.

Storability has changed over the years with more freezers in the homes, as well as more frozen products offered and other production techniques that have made products more easy to store.

By *purchase frequency* is meant how often the category is part of the shopping for groceries. High frequency means products that are part of the basic supplies, and thereby something that should be of more interest to the consumer to buy at a reduced price.

Products with a high degree of *impulse consumption attractivity* are products that tempt the consumer to more consumption just because they are available, this can for many households be exemplified by ice cream, candy and snacks.

The assumptions are that products with low *purchase frequency* are such that they need to be supported by special display in order to be perceived by the

consumers. Otherwise it is very likely that those consumers who would have bought the product anyway buy it at reduced price. The more *storable* a product is, the more likely that a higher volume can be purchased at deal price without a following increase in consumption. For products with lower storability, purchased on deal, consumption must increase until expiration date. For products with higher *impulse consumption attractivity* a price deal can be what brings down the consumers barriers to purchase, and for these products consumption is likely to increase.

Under the assumption that the consumer is rational and learns from experience, she will learn the promotion schemes for different product categories that are of interest to her (Persson, 1990). *Promotion frequency* is therefore added to the three above-mentioned dimensions.

In a small experimental study (Jansson, 1988) Julander's dimensions were tested. They were found to be useful as a base to start analyses from. However questions were raised about what the role of advertising is, and if dinner planning is made after studying the advertisement. The results also show increased sales for market leaders of certain categories that are on campaign, even when these market leaders are not included in the activity. Does this mean that the campaign just serves as a reminder of the product group and that the consumer is brand loyal?

3.3 Summary

As shown above many studies have concerned the effects of promotions. Many different questions have been discussed in those studies, but few attempts have been made to go into the issue of identifying coherent patterns of effects of promotions.

The empirical data used in many studies have been for non-food convenience products. The market for coffee has also been the focus of much research, probably due to data availability. Data-collection is both complicated and time-consuming, which might have served as a restriction and made usage of available data-sets more tempting.

Much of the research has used a brand-manager perspective, and very little takes the consumer's situation into account.

4 A PROPOSED MODEL OF EFFECTS OF PROMOTIONS

In this chapter the theoretical framework concerning the consumer is tied together with the consumers situation and related to the expected effects of promotions. This will form the background for the empirical testing that is presented in chapter six.

Starting from the consumers situation we are well aware of the major constraints in budget and time. This leads to a balancing act between obtaining most value for money and not spending too much time searching for it.

From the theoretical framework on consumer decision making we learn that it is useful to distinguish between the type of problem being solved. The type of problem can then explain how information is processed. The type of problem can also tell us which type of information is processed. The terms used here when problem solving is discussed are those from Howard (1989) related in chapter three.

Studying feature advertising in the daily newspaper shows that most advertisements contain a large number of products, and processing all of these would of course be quite time consuming. This should also be seen in the whole context of the daily newspaper and the circumstances under which it is read. The total number of points of information in the daily newspaper is impressive, and includes not just one but several advertisements apart from everything else that is competing to attract the reader's attention.

Attention is assumed to be higher when the problem to be solved is perceived as more important. Many of the grocery purchases made by consumers are routine purchases. For example when the household has almost run out of something and repurchases without searching for external information. This refers to the type of products that are basic in the sense that households want to have them available most of the time.

For the kind of products that are included in this routine purchasing behavior in-store activities can serve as reminders and get the consumers to repurchase at an earlier stage than they would have done otherwise. For these products low effects of feature advertising are expected as consumers are not expected to search external information beforehand.

In many cases grocery purchasing is not just the purchasing of groceries – it involves solving different problems, like feeding hungry kids. Some of these problems concern us at a higher level of involvement, one example is the problem of what to serve for dinner. For most households this problem occurs frequently and by deciding the main ingredient the rest is, so to speak, given. The process of searching for the main ingredient(s) is thereby expected to be

one of active information processing, and one where feature advertising should have effect. In Howards terms we call this *limited problem solving.*

The expected effects of advertising could then be related to what kind of problems the product category can help to solve for the consumer. More important problems, *extensive or limited problem solving*, lead to external search for information and feature advertising, as well as in-store activities, are expected to lead to increases in volume sold. *Routine problem solving* on the other hand leads to internal information search and in-store promotional activities have affect sales by reminding the consumers of the category.

The division of reasons for grocery purchasing into different kinds of problem-solving as is suggested above, is not thought to be strict in form. It is expected to vary, over situation and over consumer. The same consumer will react differently when circumstances are different, even if both promotion and product are exactly the same. Overall, on an aggregate level it is still possible for us to identify patterns of consumer behavior where individual differences even out.

The problem solving dimension discussed above is suggested as a way to understand why certain products receive higher sales effects from participating in feature advertising than others do. To discuss the *magnitude of the effect* Julander's dimensions can be helpful. *Storability, purchase frequency and impulse consumption attractivity* are all expected to effect how much is bought when a category is promoted. The same is also true for *promotion frequency* (Persson, 1989). The magnitude of the effect is expected to be higher when storability is higher, as it is easier for the consumer to store the products at home. The same effect, higher magnitude, is also expected for products with higher impulse consumption attractivity. Higher purchase frequency is expected to give higher magnitude of effect (but might temporarily, for the period after promotion, lead to reduced purchase frequency).

Promotion frequency should be interpreted as the consumers expectations of promotion frequency. If a category is expected to be promoted frequently the expected effect is probably lower as the consumer expects to be able to purchase the category on promotion within short. If the promotion frequency is perceived as low, or maybe even irregular, the magnitude of the effect is expected to be higher, as the consumer is not expecting to be able to purchase this category on promotion within a certain period of time.

To these dimensions I would like to add *expenditure*. What is the cost of the product? If it is perceived to be high, the magnitude of the effect can be expected to be higher, as the price reduction is perceived as more valuable to the consumer.

Another way to classify products can be to distinguish between *food* products and *non-food* products. The reasoning is then that edible products are

involved in meal-planning and thereby are objects of much more active information search. This leads, however, back to the issue of the different types of problems that need to be solved and that use different kinds of information processing in search for satisfactory solutions.

So, to summarize the consumer is expected to engage in grocery purchasing as extensive, limited or routine problem solving.

When *extensive or limited problem solving*, active search for information takes place, feature advertising lead to higher increases in volume sold as the consumer is planning purchases beforehand. In-store promotional activities are likely to serve as reminders and have effects for products that can help to solve these problems as well.

When a *routine*, or uncomplicated, *problem is being solved*, information is mostly searched internally and feature advertising is likely not to be observed, but in-store promotional activities can serve as reminders and thereby increase sales.

As another way to sum up what is suggested in this chapter, expectations of differing effects of promotions are stated under three headings:

Type of problem

Feature advertising is more likely to be used in information search and processing when the consumer tries to solve problems of *extensive* or *limited* character. Products that can help in solving those problems are therefore much more likely to receive increases in sales from participation in feature advertising.

Products that can help solving such problems are also expected to receive sales increases from *in-store* promotions, as many consumers are expected to use the store as a source to search information from.

For products that are basic in the household, products that can serve as solutions to routine problems, out-of-store promotions are less likely to lead to sales increases. In-store activities, on the other hand, are expected to lead to increases in sales, as they serve as reminders for the consumer when in the store.

Type of promotion

Many purchase decisions are made by consumers when they are in the store. Promotions in-store serve as reminders, of the category, and give high impact on sales for most products. In-store promotions are expected to lead to higher increases in volume sold than out-of-store promotions.

Type of product

Edible products are part of the meal-planning, which should make them more important to the household. Food products are thus expected to receive higher effects of promotions on volume sold than non-food products do.

The magnitude of effect of promotion is assumed to be related to combinations of certain product characteristics:

Higher storability, higher impulse consumption attractivity and higher purchase frequency are all expected to lead to a higher effect on sales. Higher promotion frequency is expected to give lower effect on sales, as the consumers are used to promotions in the category and can plan purchases also with reference to promotion frequency.

These expectations of effects will be tested by looking at actual sales, under different promotional conditions, for products that are judged as more prone to respond to promotions and products less prone to respond.

The chosen products, and how they relate to the presented expectations, are introduced in chapter five. In chapter six the effects are analyzed, using different methods, and compared to expectations thereof. Chapter seven discusses the results and to what extent expectations and data match.

5 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents how data were collected and discusses sources of error and other quality aspects. Analytical methods are presented and discussed. The final part is a presentation of the products chosen for analysis and how they are assumed to relate to the model proposed in chapter four.

5.1 The dataset

Data Collection

The data have been collected since 1987 by the Foundation for Distribution Research and consists of check-out scanner data from one store in the ICA-chain. The store is wellkept, situated in suburbia, south of Stockholm, with yearly sales of SEK 90 Million. Collection of data started in March 1987, and has been continued on a weekly basis. The first 32 weeks were a trial period with focus on four product groups; soups, snacks, detergent and soap. Since week 41 (October) in 1987 we have been collecting information on the whole everyday commodity assortment, excluding specialty items like kitchenware and flowers.

The collected data are generated from several sources. The store's internal computer system generates, weekly and by item, information on total volume sold, total amount paid, price charged, if the price is regular or sale price. If the price is a deal price we also have a note of the regular price, and for each product there is a description of the product. Information is also available on what the price paid for the product by the retailer is, but we have found this to be unreliable and therefore hesitate to use it. It can be used as an estimation of markup, but many times other deals in the trade affect price paid.

From the cash register and price files we get data on when an item is on deal, and both deal price and regular price. Apart from that, we collect the chain's feature advertising, leaflets and the store's advertising, when occurring. Every week a visit is paid to the store to register those items on display. Display is in this case defined as items that are found on another place in the store than their regular shelf space. First this was done by writing the EAN-number by hand on a paper and later punching it into a computer. We now have access to a handscanner that is meant to be used for ordering and price inventory. The handscanner is used for registering of display and feature advertising. Routines for data collection became much simplified when we started using the handscanner. The risk of writing and punching errors has also been eliminated as data from the handscanner is feeded directly into the computer.

The items in the advertisements are coded with EAN-numbers and used to be punched into the database. The handscanner is now used to scan codes from materials that is received weekly and that contains codes of all promoted products in the Stockholm area.

Quality and research potential

What we end up with is a unique database of good quality, where, for each item, it is known, for each week how much was sold and under what promotional circumstances. Aggregations make it possible to see what happens over a period of time, over a campaign cycle, to the brand, to the product group, or whatever one could be interested in. Our policy has been to keep the database on an item level even though it is quite byte-consuming. This, however, gives us the possibility to aggregate on many different levels. The database has been used for research purposes and in teaching. Different uses and users put different demands on data.

Scanner data of longer time series mean a wealth of potential information for the researcher. Compared to many other forms of data on consumer behavior, scanner data has the advantage of being unobtrusive. The researcher cannot influence consumer behavior when collecting data. The researcher's influence in this case is in how products to analyze are chosen.

It should be remembered that if time-series get too long consumer behavior might be changing and it is therefore wise to check if patterns change over time. One good way to use time-series data to check models is to specify models on part of the data and use it for prediction of the rest. If the prediction is good, behavior seems to be the same, otherwise changed behavior might be a reason for a misfit of the predicted model.

For some product groups it has been complicated to collect data. Fresh bread is one example. Bread is baked and delivered on a daily basis and the display also changes every day. To get good quality data on bread, display and sales should be measured daily. As this has not been possible for us, data on promotions for bread are not included in the database.

The best quality data are on items that are not price marked at all. With these items the cashiers do not have the option to register the price manually, but are forced to scan the products. Some product groups are problematic in this sense, which is a reason for us not to use these in our analyses, or at least to handle them with extreme care. Fresh bread as mentioned above, deli and manual cheese are examples of this.

The price register of the store contains approximately eleven thousand items, not all of them actually for sale in the store. Every week five hundred to seven hundred items are sold with price reduction. The number of items in the register increases every week, mostly because many new products are entering

the market, but also because the register is not always reduced when products disappear from the shelves (see appendix 2).

Sources of error

Potential sources of error in the data exist. When a product is read in the check-out the price from the files will be the price paid. What might be a problem is when the price is on the item and the cashiers have an option to punch the price directly into the system just noting a category number that tells if it is fish or meat or dairy. If the cashiers experience problems when scanning a code on a product they are more likely to punch the price next time, if they know it, instead of trying to scan the code with impatient customers standing in line.

Some packages are problematic, for example frozen products, if icy, as well as fresh bread, if steamy. Candy and beverages are other groups that can be difficult, as are all packages that do not have a really smooth surface. Sometimes the suppliers change codes or have several codes for the same product depending on which country it has been produced in. With respect to displays our handscanner reads the same code that the cashiers do, which makes this collection of good quality. Coupons is an area that might be easier to handle in the future with more technological development. Today the cashiers receive the coupons together with payment and just register a sum for the coupons. That makes it impossible to know which coupons have been used, and to relate fully to the consumers situation. We have however information on which coupon campaigns that have been running in which media at what period of time. This makes it possible for us to, when an unexplained variation in sales is found, check for the possible occurrence of a coupon.

The store chain sometimes issue their own coupons, and mostly for products with high penetration. These coupons offer specially good discounts, and we have been able to collect and register them.

Data from one store

One question that needs to be discussed is to what extent the results from this study are generalizable. The store used is not chosen to be representative. If the purpose had been to draw conclusions for how the Swedish population reacts to feature advertising the question of how many stores and which stores to sample would be a very complicated one. The generalizability in this study lies in the approach chosen.

Each store is an actor in its own marketplace with a particular environment. This environment consists of consumers and competition. The store is adapted to its environment, and all stores do not look the same or offer the same mix of products and services. The demographic profiles of the consumers differ, as does the competition in the area and infra-structure and

means of communication which effects which stores should be regarded as competitors.

This makes sampling of stores a very complex issue, as the comparison of the stores is a difficult matter when above mentioned dimensions are included. The issue of sampling is easier solved if just variables such as size and sales of store plus income distribution and average household size in the area are considered. When all the other factors are considered the problem is not so easily managed. Another obstacle is that not all stores have scanner check-outs.

On the other hand, we can of course question if there should be expectations of great differences among consumers. Do we really think that the behavior of consumers in one area, with one type of market place, differ so much from consumers in other areas? There might of course be differences in what type of products are served for dinner, but the type of behavior per se might actually not differ so much.

Another approach in studies like this, is to design experiments to test behavior. We lack for example, in this study, display for all categories. On the other hand, this is because manufacturers and retailers normally do not display these products. The findings of this study show how consumers normally react to what they normally face.

To be more specific about the aims of this project, it was never intended to identify patterns of behavior that could be accepted as general truths. The methods and data that we use give great insight into local patterns and the strenght of the data, apart from the good quality, is how well disaggregate behavior is shown. Upon aggregating and adding stores the variation that is store specific is not regarded in the same way, and for the retailer it might be the most important result.

More data collection

The next step in data collection is to collect receipts, which we are also doing in the same store since August 1991. The receipt can inform us of the combinations of products that the consumer demanded, and which day and time. These data are absolutely unpersonal, we do not know who the consumer is. However, this kind of data, together with the weekly sales data that are described above, should be an excellent tool in our striving to understand the consumers, and possibly identify different consumer types. The collection of receipts does not mean that we have given up on weekly sales data, it still continues with a weekly visit to the store to register products on display.

5.2 Method

For quantitative data such as those described above different statistical methods are useful analytical tools. Three different analytical methods are used: averages, multiple regressions and PLS (Partial Least Square).

The database contains time series for each product for 150 – 200 weeks. With this much data there are in many cases high enough frequencies of different promotional activities to use averages to study effects. Such descriptive data contribute to a good and intuitive understanding of the dataset. This is a good way for the researcher to get a feeling for what data look like. Averages are included also to show practitioners how much information can be found in data, even by using relatively simple methods that are easily understood. Disadvantages are mostly concerned with the low sensitivity of averages to variations in data. Two sets of data can give exactly the same means even if included series of data are totally different. Standard deviations from the mean are then a way to see if the series differ.

On basis of the averages and with knowledge of how products differ along the dimensions described earlier, it is possible to compare effects of different combinations of promotions.

To reach a deeper understanding for some group of products multiple regression analysis is used to estimate the impact of different promotions on volume sold in selected product groups. In multiple regression analysis multivariate (linear) direct effects of a set of explanatory variables on one dependent variable is analyzed.

The assumptions behind regression analysis (Lewis-Beck, 1980) can be presented in three main groups;

1. No specification error
2. No measurement error
3. Assumptions of the error-term
    a) zero mean
    b) homoskedasticity
    c) no autocorrelation
    d) the error term should be uncorrelated to the independent variables
    e) normality

Regression analyses would probably not be used very much if all of these assumptions were rigorously followed. They must however be remembered when the results from the regression models are used in interpretations of how consumers react.

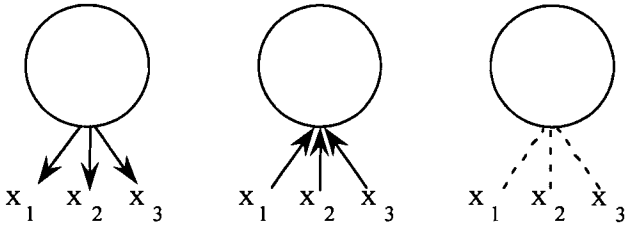
For comparison of some of the regression results and to give a clearer picture of the causalities involved PLS (Partial Least Square) analysis (version 1.8) was used for a few of the product groups. This gives us possibility to see

the causal connection between promotion and effect in sales on different levels and dimensions of analyses. Fornell (1987) includes this in the "second generation multivariate methods". The important features of PLS (sometimes in comparison with LISREL) have been described by Davidsson:

> *"1. As the name says , it is a* **Least Squares***(LS) technique. LISREL, on the other hand, applies Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation (although least squares options are available).*
> *2. The method is very general and embodies several earlier LS methods such as Regression, Principal Component, and Canonical Correlation as special cases.*
> *3. Like LISREL, the method is applicable to analysis of causal systems of variables that are measured directly (manifest variables, MV's) or indirectly with a number of directly measured indicators (latent variables, LV's).*
> *4. LV's in PLS are linear combinations of their indicators (like in principal component analysis). LV's in LISREL are not defined by their indicators (like in ML factor analysis).*
> *5. Indicators of LV's in PLS are of two types.* **Reflective** *and* **Formative** *(explained below). In LISREL only reflective indicators of LV's are permitted.*
> *6. The estimation procedure optimizes the explanation of specified variances. LISREL, on the other hand, aims at explaining all covariances among the variables included in the model.*
> *7. The technique thus is* **prediction-oriented**, *i.e. optimal prediction – not optimal parameter accuracy – is the goal. ML-techniques are parameter-oriented and cannot at the same time achieve optimal prediction in the LS sense. PLS estimates are consistent-at-large, i.e. approach consistency as sample size and number of indicators of a LV increase.*
> *8. LISREL can handle (small) non-recursive systems. Bi-directional causality is not permitted in current versions of PLS.*
> *9. PLS can be applied to large models and small samples. LISREL estimation requires large samples and becomes intractable if the number of variables and structural relations is large.*
> *10. PLS can be used with correlational data or raw data. If raw data are used, the results can be tracked back to effects in term of units on the original scale (unlike LISREL, since LISREL LV's are not defined by the indicators).*
> *11. In PLS, only very mild assumptions are made. The method is "distribution-free" and "independence-free". LISREL makes strong distributional assumptions.*
> *12. PLS models can be evaluated by examination of R^2 measures for endogenous variables and the size of path coefficients, regression weights, loadings, and (certain) residuals. Over-all measures like average communality etc. can also be used. With raw data, jack-knife standard errors of coefficients and Stone-Geisser's over-all test of predictive relevance can be used. As is the case with LISREL, however, good and simple criteria for model acceptance or rejection do not exist.*

13. Unlike LISREL, parameter estimates outside the admissible parameter space do not occur in PLS analysis."

(Davidson, 1989, pp. 60-61)



a. Reflective Indicators b. Formative Indicators c. Symmetric Indicators

Source: Fornell (1987)

Figure 5.1 The relation between empirical and theoretical variables.

Fornell (1987) describes the relationship between empirical and theoretical variables. The analyst has to decide how the theoretical constructs should be measured.

Reflective indicators (a in figure 5.1) suggest that one or more underlying unobservables "cause" the observables. A marketing example might be consumer attitude and personality, which are unobservable and typically considered underlying causes of overt behavior or of measured scores on attitude and personality scales.

If on the other hand formative indicators (b in figure 5.1) are used, the unobservables are conceived of as effects rather than as causes. The example given from marketing is how "marketing mix" as an abstract construct is composed of observables such as price, number of retail outlets, advertising expenditure and so forth.

The third kind of relationships is symmetric (c in figure 5.1) where there are no assumptions of causality or directionality.

Loadings and weights are important in PLS-analysis in interpreting the relations between latent and manifest variables. Loadings for each manifest variable approximately equals the correlation between the manifest variable and the latent variable.

$$MV_i = l_i * LV + e_i$$
$$LV = \Sigma(w_i * MV_i)$$

where LV = Latent Variable
MV_i = Manifest Variable i
l_i = loading for manifest variable i
w_i = weight for manifest variable i
e_i = residual

Davidsson (1989) discusses how the PLS-model can be evaluated. A "strong" PLS-model is characterized by high explanatory power, small residual correlations within the causal systems, exclusion of many of the possible structural relations (since model fit is trivial if no relations are excluded), and high loadings which makes interpretation of the LV's easy. Note that while weight, not loadings, are model parameters for formative LV's the loadings can still be used for interpretation of the LV. This is important if the indicators are multicollinear, as the regressions' weights are unreliable in such situations.

5.3 Description of products chosen

The following list of products were selected from the empirical data for analysis. These products are chosen with several criteria in mind. One was to have a list of products that is representative as solutions to the different types of problems mentioned earlier. The products are also expected to vary on the dimensions (storability, impulse consumption attractivity, purchase frequency and promotion frequency) discussed earlier. Another criterion is that the data quality should be as good as possible. This selection will hopefully be a better representation of what kind of decisions the consumer faces over a period of time, instead of as many of the earlier studies that use one product, or products with similar characteristics.

This should be the best possible mix of interesting products and good data quality. Each category is selected to represent itself as well as to add to the diversity in the total sample. There are other products that would preferably have been included for theoretical reasons, but where quality of data acted as a hindrance. All fresh meat products are examples of this.

First comes a description of the products, starting with the ones that are food and might be included as main products on a dinner table.

Falukorv is a typical and traditional dish on a Swedish weekday dinner table. It is a lightly smoked and boiled sausage, which is mostly sold prepacked, and it is bought in pieces, not in number of sausages. Most kids like it and it can be prepared quickly.

Prinskorv is a small sausage, often served fried, also very popular with children. It is served for lunch or dinner, and can be combined with eggs for a bigger breakfast.

Bacon doesn't need too much of a presentation. In Sweden it is mostly sold prepacked and a Danish supplier has the largest market share. Newer types with lower fat rate have entered the market in recent years.

Pasta is wellknown, easy to store and with short preparation time. This category includes spaghetti, macaroni, tortellini, etc. Some products are more likely to be served to guests than others, but there are probably many people among the elders that would never consider pasta as something to serve to a houseguest.

Frozen potatoes include french fries and other prepared kinds. These need time for defrosting and frying or oven time. This category contains products that can be bought for holiday meals and that can be served to guests.

The presentation continues with products that are not included as solutions to the dinner problem.

The next categories have lower storability than many of the others.

Yogurt, in the dairy group, is a quickly expanding assortment. Number of brands has increased, and each brand offers a variety of flavors and sizes. Light products is a growing sub-category. Yogurt is served for breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as between meals. Prices vary depending on content. Products are marked with last consumption date which is one to two weeks ahead.

Bananas and ***kiwis*** are chosen partly because very few studies use any perishables. Pricing of these products vary and the product is not the same all the time. Size and country of origin as well as supply is changing and influencing prices. Bananas are something that we are used to in Sweden, while kiwi is a more recently introduced fruit and still has a slightly exotic touch to it.

A few more edible categories have been chosen, where storability is a lot higher.

Coffee, where only regular ground coffee has been selected for analysis, is a classic product in studies like this. Coffee is a heavily promoted category in Sweden, and has high household penetration. Coffee sales are to a large extent made with price reduction. Several studies show that 70-80% of sales are made at deal price. Almost every week of the year consumers can find coffee on sale, and brands are promoted on regular bases. It seems likely that consumers learn the schedules and can be brand loyal even though buying almost all coffee on sale. The consumers can plan their purchases and buy enough to keep them provided until next campaign period. Some major brands with large market share dominate the market. Two manufacturers have two brands each, directed at different segments. Average consumption per person and year has lately been 9 kilos, which is a reduction by almost 2 kilos from 1970 (Konsumtion i förändring, 1991).

Mustard and ***catsup*** are separate groups in the analyses, but are otherwise treated together on many occasions. The catsup-category also includes chili-

sauce. Mustard has a Christmas season that catsup is not part of. The assortment on this shelf increases with additional products that are merely new spice-variations of the old products. This is particularly visible among the catsup products.

The next category is chosen as it is particularly representative of impulse consumption attractivity, but impulse consumption could also be true for example for fresh fruit.

The number of products in the ***snack*** group is constantly increasing. Peanuts and chips are the main subcategories, and there are two main suppliers in this group. New tastes, roasts and lighter products add to the number of items in the assortment. Special for this group is that much of regular display is not done on the store's shelves. The boxes from the manufacturers are used as regular display, and adds to making regular look special.

The two non-food products, ***soap*** and ***toothpaste***, are similar on many dimensions which might help in interpretation of the results. Both soap and toothpaste are items that most of us want to have at home, they represent small outlays and therefore can be bought in larger quantities to last a longer period.

The following part discusses how the selected products are related to the model proposed in chapter four and what kind of effects that are expected for out-of-store and in-store promotional activities when the products are divided along different dimensions.

Type of problem

Some of the product categories are chosen to be examples of products that can help to solve ***limited problems***. These are:

Falukorv
Prinskorv
Bacon
Pasta
Frozen potatoes
Yogurt
Banana
Kiwi

The first five represent products that can be purchased as part of a solution to the dinner-problem. Yogurt, as well, but yogurt can also be consumed at breakfast, lunch or as a snack. Fruit is consumed with high frequency, and considering the low storability, purchases of fruit occur often.

The other products in the dataset are classified as solutions to routine problems.

Type of promotion
Out-of-store promotions are expected to lead to increases in volume sold for products that are possible solutions to the dinner-problem, and for products with high purchase frequency, as they are often part of problem solving for the consumer. In-store promotions are expected to lead to higher increases in volume sold, than out-of-store promotions, for all categories in this sample.

Type of product
Kiwi, bananas and yogurt are products that are low on storability, they should be consumed within a limited period of time after purchase. This could also be said about falukorv, prinskorv and bacon, if not frozen. All other products are easily storable. Coffee is high on promotion frequency, followed by falukorv and fruit. Snacks and fresh fruit rate high on impulse consumption attractivity. Falukorv, prinskorv and yogurt are possible to snack and eat without preparation, why they are assigned medium impulse consumption attractivity in relation to the other categories in the sample. The level of expenditure is not very varied among the selected products, why this dimension can not be tested in this dataset.

In table 5.1 the expectations of relative effects of out-of-store and in-store promotions for the chosen product categories are presented. Effects are expected to be low, high or medium. Only in-store promotions have been expected to receive high effects in the table. The table also shows whether the product categories are food or non-food and what type of problems each category is expected to help solving. It also contains a schematic classification of how the categories vary on relative storability, impulse consumption attractivity, purchase frequency and promotion frequency. The classifications are subjective when relative storability, impulse consumption attractivity and purchase frequency are concerned. This is also true, of course, for type of problem. Promotion frequency is estimated from the database by using share of volume sold when promoted for each category. The products are also ranked after how high the share of volume sold on promotion has been. The division into food and non-food products is uncomplicated.

The two columns to the far right of the table should be regarded as weighted summaries of how the products are classified along the other dimensions in the table.

Each products classification along the different dimensions – as food or non-food, limited or routine problem solving, relative impulse consumption attractivity, purchase and promotion frequency – lead to an expected overall effect of out-of-store and in-store promotions for that product.

Some dimensions, such as problem to solve, storability and purchase frequency, are considered as being of higher importance.

Table 5.1: Summary of expectations on effects of promotions and how the chosen product categories vary on different characteristics.

Product Category	Food or non-	Problem to solve	Relative storability	Relative impulse cons.attr.	Relative purchase frequency	Promotion* frequency	Expected effects of promotions: Out-of store	Expected effects of promotions: In-store
Falukorv	FOOD	Limited	Low	Med	Low	# 2 (54%)	Med	Med
Prinskorv	FOOD	Limited	Low	Med	Low	# 5 (34%)	Med	Med
Bacon	FOOD	Limited	Low	Low	Low	# 5 (34%)	Med	Med
Pasta	FOOD	Limited	High	Low	Low	# 12 (20%)	Med	High
Fr Potato	FOOD	Limited	High	Low	Low	# 9 (24%)	Med	High
Yogurt	FOOD	Limited	Low	Med	High	# 14 (11%)	Med	High
Banana	FOOD	Limited	Low	High	High	# 4 (36%)	Med	Med
Kiwi	FOOD	Limited	Low	High	High	# 3 (39%)	Med	Med
Coffee	FOOD	Routine	High	Low	High	# 1 (74%)	Med	High
Mustard	FOOD	Routine	High	Low	Low	# 9 (24%)	Low	High
Catsup	FOOD	Routine	High	Low	Low	# 7 (30%)	Low	High
Snacks	FOOD	Routine	High	High	Low	# 12 (20%)	Low	High
Soap	NON-	Routine	High	Low	Low	# 8 (25%)	Low	High
Toothpaste	NON-	Routine	High	Low	Low	# 11 (22%)	Low	High

*Promotion frequency is measured by share of the volume sold on promotion in the category. Ranks and share are noted for each category

6 RESULTS

This chapter presents results from the analyses. The structure of the presentation is similar to how expectations of effects were summarized in chapter four. Table 5.1 will also be referred to, as it contains the translation of the theoretical concepts of problem solving, etc into the products chosen.

The aspect of the type of problem is first discussed to see if that is a way to identify different effects of promotions. It is followed by a discussion of the type of promotions, out-of-store vs in-store. The third part is related to the dimensions referred to earlier and discusses if patterns are identifiable. The first three parts use data from descriptive analyses and from regressions whilst the fourth part discusses the value of these methods, and different levels of analysis. In the final part results from PLS-analyses are presented for a few categories.

A presentation of each of the analyzed categories is placed in appendix 3 to facilitate the reading of this chapter. The brief description of the market for each category includes number of brands, total volume sold etc.

Sales results are measured in volume sold (litres and kilos). The reason is that it is easily comparable. From a consumer's viewpoint the sense of satisfaction that products in a category give is better illustrated by volume sold than for example by sales in SEK or number of items sold.

All the calculations presented in the first parts use an index of volume sold, volix, where, for each product, each week's volume sold is related to average volume sold for that product under the no promotion condition. This index makes comparisons between products possible even though their market shares might differ very much. The models are therefore not driven by market share. The technique of using sales when not promoted as baseline means that products that are only sold on promotion are excluded from the analysis. This is however not frequent and has only occurred in a few of the selected product categories.

The first regression model used is:

$$VOLIX_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 * PRIX_{it} + \beta_2 * DISP_{it} + \beta_3 * FEAT_{it} + \beta_4 * COUP_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \qquad \text{(Equation 1)}$$

$VOLIX_{it}$ is a volume index for product i in week t. Each products volume sold per week is divided by average volume sold of that product when the product is unpromoted.

$PRIX_{it}$ is a price index for product i in week t. It mirrors the size of a possible price reduction. When price is regular PRIX is 100. If for example price is reduced by 15 per cent PRIX is 85.

$DISP_{it}$ shows display for product i in week t. It is coded as 1 when the product is displayed in another area in the store than just regular shelf space, otherwise coded as 0.

$FEAT_{it}$ shows feature advertising for product i in week t. It is coded as 1 when the product participates in feature advertising, otherwise it is coded as 0.

$COUP_{it}$ shows if there exists a coupon for product i in week t. It is coded as 1 when a store chain coupon campaign is running for the product, otherwise as 0.

Promotions are often done as combinations of activities, for example display and advertising at the same time. This leads to multicollinearity among the independent variables and is the reason for testing another version of the model for some products. There still exists multicollinearity between the price index and the other promotional variables as price reduction is common in combination with display and/or feature advertising. Few occurrences of each mutually exclusive promotional combination makes further recoding hazardous. The variables for display and feature advertising are in this case recoded, and a new independent variable is added:

$$VOLIX_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 * PRIX_{it} + \beta_2 * DISP\text{-}ONLY_{it} + \beta_3 * FEAT\text{-}ONLY_{it} + \beta_4 * COUP_{it} + \beta_5 * DISP\ \&\ FEAT_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \qquad \text{(Equation 2)}$$

$DISP\text{-}ONLY_{it}$ is coded as 1 when the product is on special display but not in advertising, otherwise coded as 0.

$FEAT\text{-}ONLY_{it}$ is coded as 1 when the product participates in feature advertising but is not on special display, otherwise coded as 0.

$DISP\ \&\ FEAT_{it}$ is coded as 1 when the product participates in feature advertising ***and*** is on display, otherwise coded as 0.

Level of significance is in all regression models set to 5 per cent. Most coefficients are however significant at the 0.000 level. All regression coefficients presented in tables are standardized b. Non-significant coefficients are notated with n.s., and a blank space indicates that this type of promotion has not been included in the model.

6.1 Type of problem

From chapter four we quote:

"Feature advertising is more likely to be used in information search and processing when the consumer tries to solve problems of *extensive* or *limited* character. Products that can help in solving those problems are therefore much more likely to receive increases in sales from participation in feature

advertising. Products that can help solving such problems are also expected to receive sales increases from *in-store* promotions, as many consumers are expected to use the store as a source to search information from.

For products that are basic in the household, products that can serve as solutions to routine problems, out-of-store promotions are less likely to lead to sales increases. In-store activities, on the other hand, are expected to lead to increases in sales, as they serve as reminders for the consumer when in the store."

From table 5.1 we know which products were chosen as example of products that can help to solve limited problems. In table 6.1 they are the eight categories presented above the line. Those products that are presented below the line are assumed to be examples of products that can serve as solutions to routine problems.

In this table no regard is taken to the other dimensions and varying characteristics presented in table 5.1. They will be discussed later in this chapter, under appropriate headings. Table 6.1 contains average volix for each product category under varying and mutually exclusive promotional combinations. The table shows that all promotional combinations have not occurred for all categories. Results from regression analysis will be presented later.

Product	**None**	**Deal**	**Disp**	**Ad**	**Deal/Disp**	**Deal/Ad**	**Deal/Disp/Ad**
Falukorv	1000	4071			3400	3914	
Prinskorv	1000	2406				2358	
Bacon	1000	5724				2411	
Pasta	1000	1954	3227		4620	2478	4784
Fr potato	1000	3112		1074	3865	2781	1832
Yogurt	1000	4137	8196	1565	8816	3841	
Bananas	1000	1070	884	1361		1360	
Kiwi	1000	1192		2007		2010	
Coffee	1000	4953	6330	2515	15460	8319	13040
Mustard	1000	5134	3647		5532	1857	9511
Catsup	1000	3319	6887		8129	2647	8940
Snacks	1000	2042	2274	1403	4393	1805	2677
Soap	1000	2004	2632	1543	3566	2422	7681
Toothpaste	1000	2759	2833	1256	6074	1831	4398

Table 6.1. Average volix for the chosen product categories under different,mutually exclusive, promotional conditions. Volix 1000 represents average volume sold under no promotion. Deal, Disp and Ad respectively show average volix when the category is price reduced, on display or in feature advertising. Deal/Disp shows average volix when the category is price reduced and on display. Deal/Ad shows average volix when the category is price reduced and in feature advertising. Deal/Disp/Ad shows average volix when the category is price reduced, on display and in feature advertising.

Feature advertising was expected to lead to higher increases in volume sold for the products above the line, as they are assumed to be examples of products that can help in solving limited problems.

Feature advertising by itself, Ad, has occurred in half of the categories above the line. Volume sold for those is a little higher, when advertised, than when unpromoted. The highest result is found for kiwifruit, that doubles its sales.

When feature advertising is combined with price reduction higher increases in volume sold occurs for all categories except the fruits. Volix for price reduction only, Deal, is compared to volix for price reduction and feature advertising, Deal/Ad. Adding advertising seems to give no extra effect on volume sold for the products above the line. Bananas and kiwi are exceptions to this. Feature advertising seems, in those categories, to be what is leading to increases in sales.

Feature advertising was not expected to give increases in volume sold for the products below the line in table 6.1. The results, however, show increases in volume sold for coffee and slightly higher sales of snacks, soap and toothpaste. Comparisons of price reduction with or without feature advertising show increases in volume sold only for coffee and soap when advertising is added.

In-store promotions were expected to lead to effects on volume sold for products that could be solutions to limited problems and routine problems. All product categories, except bananas, respond with increases in sales when they are displayed in-store. When price reduction is supported by display the increase in volume sold is higher for all categories, except falukorv, than when the category is price reduced and found in its regular place.

The next step is to look at the same questions with results from multiple regressions. The dividing line is in the same place as in table 6.1, i.e., below the product categories that are chosen as examples of products that can help in solving limited problems.

Product	(n)	R^2	Prix	Disp	Feat	Coup
Falukorv	750	0.40	-0.24	n.s.	n.s.	0.53
Prinskorv	367	0.06	n.s.		0.18	
Bacon	441	0.22	-0.61	n.s.	-0.20	-0.18
Pasta	6576	0.41	-0.30	0.34	0.05	0.23
Potato	3011	0.32	-0.57	0.05	-0.07	0.10
Yogurt	10065	0.39	-0.40	0.34	n.s.	
Bananas	197	0.36	-0.54	n.s.	0.14	
Kiwi	196	0.38	-0.52		0.21	
Coffee	6071	0.55	-0.53	0.34	n.s.	-0.11
Mustard	3861	0.26	-0.33	0.24	n.s.	
Catsup	2565	0.41	-0.44	0.28	n.s.	0.11
Snacks	14603	0.25	-0.38	0.26	-0.05	
Soap	8181	0.33	-0.15	0.47	0.05	
Toothpaste	4987	0.28	-0.27	0.36	n.s.	

Table 6.2. Multiple regressions results when equation 1 (p. 39) is used on category level. Data are pooled across products within the category.

The coefficients for feature advertising are very varied in the models presented in table 6.2. Higher coefficients were expected for the products above the line and lower coefficients for the products below the line. Six of fourteen are non significant and three even have negative signs. As mentioned earlier the results should be interpreted with caution due to risk of multicollinearity.

In-store promotional activities were expected to have effects for both products above and below the line. The coefficients for price are negative and significant, as expected, in all categories but one. Display is significantly positive in nine out of twelve categories. The expectations about in-store promotions having effect for products that help to solve both limited and routine problems are supported by the data.

6.2 Type of promotion

In chapter four was said that:

"Many purchase decisions are made by consumers when they are in the store. Promotions in-store serve as reminder, of the category, and give high impact on sales for most products. In-store promotions are expected to lead to higher increases in volume sold than out-of-store promotions."

From the regression analyses in table 6.2 we see clearly that price reduction has strong effect on volume sold for all categories but prinskorv. The price coefficient varies from low -0.15 for soap to high -0.61 for bacon. Display is also significant in most categories, which is not true for feature advertising. As explained earlier, this might be due to multicollinearity and for some

categories the second regression model is tested. The results are presented in table 6.3. It would have been preferred to test this kind of model on all categories, but all promotional combinations have not occurred in all categories.

Product	**(n)**	**R^2**	**Prix**	**Disp-only**	**Feat-only**	**Coup**	**Disp&Feat**
Pasta	6576	0.42	-0.27	0.32	0.05	0.23	0.23
Coffee	6071	0.55	-0.48	0.28	0.05	-0.11	0.26
Mustard	3861	0.26	-0.33	0.22	-0.03		0.07
Catsup	2565	0.41	-0.44	0.26	-0.03	0.11	0.11
Snacks	14603	0.25	-0.38	0.26	-0.03		0.02

Table 6.3.Multiple regression results when equation 2 (page 40) is used on category level. Data are pooled across products within the category.

For five dry categories we can in table 6.3 distinguish between the effect of display and feature advertising when combined and the effect of each of them separately. The effect of the in-store promotion, display, is here much higher than the result for out-of-store feature advertising, which was an expected result.

It is interesting to see that the combinations of display and feature advertising for coffee and pasta have lower coefficients than the coefficients for display alone. The other three categories have the reversed pattern where feature advertising and display in combination give higher effect than display alone. Another finding is that the coefficients for display only are on similar levels, which is also true for feature advertising only. The combination of display and feature advertising gives more varied effect for those categories.

To study relative effects of different promotional combinations volix can be divided as will be shown in table 6.4.

Product	Disp	Ad	Deal/Disp	Deal/Ad	Deal/Disp/Ad
	Deal	Deal	Deal	Deal	Deal
Falukorv			0.84	0.96	
Prinskorv				0.98	
Bacon				0.42	
Pasta	1.65		2.36	1.27	2.45
Fr Potato		0.35	1.24	0.89	0.59
Yogurt	1.98	0.38	2.13	0.93	
Banana	0.83	1.27		1.27	
Kiwi		1.68		1.69	
Coffee	1.28	0.51	3.12	1.68	2.63
Mustard	0.71		1.08	0.36	1.85
Catsup	2.08		2.45	0.80	2.69
Snacks	1.11	0.69	2.15	0.88	1.31
Soap	1.31	0.77	1.78	1.21	3.83
Toothpaste	1.03	0.46	2.20	0.66	1.59

Table 6.4. Relative effects of promotions. The value of volix for each promotional combination when divided with the respective value of volix for deal only.

When comparing the results from table 6.4 we see that feature advertising gives lower effects on sales than price reduction for all products, except fruits. It is surprising to see that price reduction and feature advertising gives lower effects on volume sold than price reduction alone for many of the categories. Is this because consumers go to the store unaware of its feature advertising?

It is also interesting to see that, for all categories, display, by itself, gives higher effect than just price reduction, where occurring, except for mustard and bananas. This can also be related to the combination of price deal and display that gives notably higher effects than price reduction alone. Display here seems to give high effects on volume sold.

Display gives higher effect on volume sold than feature advertising in five of six categories. Comparisons of effects of different promotions in table 6.4 show that the value for price reduction in combination with display is much higher than price reduction combined with feature advertising in nine of ten categories.

Comparing price reduction and display of product categories when supported, or not supported, by feature advertising show that half of the eight categories increase their sales when advertising is included. The other four categories have higher sales when they are not advertised.

All products have not been displayed during these three years. It would certainly be of interest to know if all products respond in the same way to promotions. Does the consumer today use the store as a larger replica of the household and as an external memory for reminders?

6.3 Type of product

In chapter four it was suggested that food products are expected to receive higher effects of promotions than non-food products.

Table 6.5 presents effects of promotions for six products that are similar on level of storability and impulse consumption attractivity. Promotion frequency differs among the categories, with one extreme category, coffee. The first four categories in the table are food products and the last two are non-food products.

Product	None	Deal	Disp	Ad	Deal/Disp	Deal/Ad	Deal/Disp/Ad
Pasta	1000	1954	3227		4620	2478	4784
Coffee	1000	4953	6330	2515	15460	8319	13040
Mustard	1000	5134	3647		5532	1857	9511
Catsup	1000	3319	6887		8129	2647	8940
Soap	1000	2004	2632	1543	3566	2422	7681
Toothpaste	1000	2759	2833	1256	6074	1831	4398

Table 6.5. Comparison of effects of promotions for food products and non-food products. Average volix for mutually exclusive promotional combinations.

The dividing line in table 6.5 separates food products from non-food products. The effect of price reduction alone is higher for three out of four food products. The effect of display only is higher for all food products. Feature advertising alone has occurred only for coffee and the non-food products. The effects are lower for soap and toothpaste. The highest effect on sales for toothpaste comes from price reduction in combination with display. Coffee receives extremely high effects from this combination of promotions, and this is also the highest result for the coffee category.

The effects of price reduction in combination with feature advertising are lower in all categories than when price reduction is supported by display. Mustard and toothpaste receive similar results, as do pasta and soap. The value for coffee is extreme also in this case. When it comes to the full combination with price reduction, display and feature advertising volume sold of pasta and toothpaste increase less. Coffee has again the highest results.

Overall the results tell us that food products' response to promotion seems to be higher than that of non-food products'. Coffee is an outlier among these products, which probably is due to the high promotion frequency and its character as a loss-leader product.

In chapter four was discussed the expectations on how effects of promotions were related to product characteristics and promotion frequency:

"Higher storability, higher impulse consumption attractivity and higher purchase frequency are all expected to lead to a higher effect on sales. Higher promotion frequency is expected to give lower effect on sales, as the consumers are used to promotions in the category and can plan purchases also with reference to promotion frequency."

In order for products to be comparable on one of the dimensions, they need to be similar on all others. We saw how response to promotions for coffee seems different from that of other storable products with low impulse consumption attractivity.

Impulse consumption attractivity

When studying the importance of impulse consumption attractivity the results for mustard and catsup are compared with the results for snacks. All three categories have high storability and low impulse consumption attractivity as well as low purchase frequency. The categories differ slightly on promotion frequency, but are all in the second half.

Product	Deal	Disp	Deal/Disp	Deal/Disp/Ad
Mustard	5134	3647	5532	9511
Catsup	3319	6887	8129	8940
Snacks	2042	2274	4393	2677

Table 6.6. Comparison of effects of promotions for products with more or less impulse consumption atttractivity. Average volix for mutually exclusive in-store promotions.

Contrary to what was expected the results show that higher impulse consumption attractivity does not lead to promotion having a higher effect. Mustard and catsup have notably higher effects of promotions for all the in-store combinations that are shown in table 6.6.

Storability

The expectation was that higher storability leads to higher effects of promotions. Products suitable for this comparison are chosen from table 5.1. The two sausages are compared to frozen potatoes and pasta.

Product	Deal	Disp	Deal/Disp	Deal/Ad	Deal/Disp/Ad
Pasta	1954	3227	4620	2478	4784
Potato	3112		3865	2781	1832
Falukorv	4071		3400	3914	
Prinskorv	2406			2358	

Table 6.7. Comparison of effects of promotions for products with higher or lower storability. Average volix for mutually exclusive in-store promotions.

When looking in table 6.7 higher storability does not seem to lead to increases in volume sold. The expectation of how storability relates to effects of promotions does not seem to be supported in these data.

Purchase frequency

In chapter four was expected that higher purchase frequency would lead to higher effects of promotions.

Four categories are classified as having high purchase frequency: yogurt, bananas, kiwi and coffee. When testing purchase frequency as an explanatory variable, other dimensions should be kept constant. Coffee will be compared to pasta. These two categories differ also on promotion frequency. Therefore we will also compare the results for yogurt with those for the two kinds of sausage.

Product	Deal	Disp	Ad	Deal/Disp	Deal/Ad	Deal/Disp/Ad
Coffee	4953	6330	2515	15460	8319	13040
Pasta	1954	3227		4620	2478	4784
Yogurt	4137	8196	1565	8816	3841	
Falukorv	4071			3400	3914	
Prinskorv	2406				2358	

Table 6.8. Comparison of effects of promotions for products with higher or lower purchase frequency. Average volix for mutually exclusive promotional combinations.

Coffee and yogurt are classified as having higher purchase frequency than pasta and the two kinds of sausage. The impression from table 6.8 is that products with higher purchase frequency seem to receive higher increases in volume sold when promoted.

It would have been preferable to use another product than coffee here, because of its loss-leader character. Still the results imply support for purchase

frequency as a factor that can contribute to explaining variations in volume sold between products on promotion.

Promotion frequency
Higher promotion frequency was expected to give lower effects on volume sold, as consumers would be expecting promotions to occur frequently in the category and adjust their behavior accordingly.

As promotion frequency is measured in this study, it encloses effects of promotions. This makes interpretation of results complicated, as it could be said that this means trying to explain effects of promotions with effects of promotions.

Product	None	Deal	Disp	Ad	Deal/Disp	Deal/Ad	Deal/Disp/Ad
Coffee	1000	4953	6330	2515	15460	8319	13040
Falukorv	1000	4071			3400	3914	
Kiwi	1000	1192		2007		2010	
Bananas	1000	1070	884	1361		1360	
Prinskorv	1000	2406				2358	
Bacon	1000	5724				2411	
Catsup	1000	3319	6887		8129	2647	8940
Soap	1000	2004	2632	1543	3566	2422	7681
Mustard	1000	5134	3647		5532	1857	9511
Fr potato	1000	3112		1074	3865	2781	1832
Toothpaste	1000	2759	2833	1256	6074	1831	4398
Snacks	1000	2042	2274	1403	4393	1805	2677
Pasta	1000	1954	3227		4620	2478	4784
Yogurt	1000	4137	8196	1565	8816	3841	

Table 6.9. Average volix for the chosen product categories when the products are presented ordered by promotion frequency

Coffee, that has the highest share of sales on promotion, also has high effects on volume sold in table 6.9. Four out of six promotional combinations rank highest for coffee, results for the other two, price reduction and display are also high in comparison.

Falukorv, second on promotion frequency, and kiwi, third, each rank second on one promotion type. Volume of falukorv sold increases a lot when falukorv is price reduced and advertised, and kiwi sales are sensitive to advertising.

Yogurt, with the lowest share of volume sold on promotion, have high relative increases in volume sold for all promotions used in the category.

The high share of volume sold on promotion for many products tell us that promotions are important and influential on volume sold. The explanatory value of promotion frequency, though, seems low in this study.

6.4 Type and level of analysis

Both kinds of analyses used in this first part give an intuitive understanding that is helpful. Depending on who is posing the questions different analyses can be done, and the data aggregated at different levels.

The two types of analyses seem to give similar results, but the simpler method might be easier to interpret for the user unfamiliar with statistical methods. The regressions can be specified to give a better fit than the models presented here, and maybe the models should be different for different products. That will not be elaborated on in this study.

Another way to obtain a better fit is to reduce the variation in the data. This can be done by reducing the number of data points, which is done in the models for single products that are presented next.

Product	(n)	R^2	Prix	Disp	Feat	Coup
Bacon	164	0.27	-0.26	n.s.	n.s.	0.33
Spaghetti	165	0.95	-0.20	0.40	0.18	0.54
Potato	165	0.49	-0.54	0.44	-0.37	
Potato	164	0.57	-0.33	0.46	0.26	
Yogurt	165	0.67	-0.26	0.62		
Yogurt	164	0.58	n.s.	0.68		
Yogurt	165	0.58	-0.41	0.42		
Yogurt	165	0.59	-0.22	0.64		
Coffee	165	0.79	-0.22	0.33	0.47	-0.22
Coffee	165	0.79	-0.25	0.31	0.47	-0.25
Coffee	165	0.70	-0.53	0.37	n.s.	n.s.
Coffee	165	0.86	-0.36	0.56	n.s.	
Coffee	165	0.79	-0.55	0.27	0.15	
Mustard	165	0.30	-0.34	0.28	n.s.	
Mustard	125	0.37	-0.40	n.s.	n.s.	
Catsup	165	0.70	-0.41	0.58	n.s.	
Catsup	164	0.57	-0.63	0.32	n.s.	
Catsup	165	0.59	-0.17	0.61	n.s.	0.14
Peanuts	196	0.58	-0.56	0.34	n.s.	
Peanuts	197	0.40	-0.37	0.47	n.s.	
Peanuts	196	0.16	-0.31	0.18	0.05	
Chips	196	0.28	-0.48	0.13	n.s.	
Soap	193	0.44	-0.56	0.20	n.s.	
Soap	193	0.41	-0.46	0.29	n.s.	
Soap	191	0.23	-0.31	0.28	n.s.	
Soap	194	0.52	n.s.	0.70	n.s.	
Soap	190	0.73	-0.40	0.52	n.s.	
Soap	195	0.06	-0.23	n.s.		
Soap	196	0.42	n.s.	0.58		
Toothpaste	164	0.47	-0.34	0.42	n.s.	

Table 6.10. Multiple regression results when equation 1 (page 39) is used on item level.

From table 6.10 is found that percent of variance explained increases for most product groups when models are built on item level. The most extreme value is for the spaghetti product where 95% of variance in volume can be explained by those variables. This indicates that sales of this product are almost completely driven by promotions. Overall high results can also be noted for the different coffee products. This is not a surprising result as we already know that a high share of the sales in this category are made when the products are promoted.

Price reduction is significant in twenty-seven out of thirty models, and most price reduction coefficients are high. The variable for display is significant for all but three models. The sizes of the coefficients indicate high increase in

volume sold when the products have been displayed. The results for feature advertising are difficult to interpret, but as earlier, the occurrence of multicollinearity might confuse the results. The effects of coupon are interpretable in three out of eight models. This result can be explained by how high the price reduction of the respective coupons have been.

Just by comparing percent of variance explained for each product can give an idea of how important promotion is for the categories. When variance explained differs within categories it shows how products differ in how they are more or less sensitive to promotion, part of the explanation is also that they differ in how much they have been promoted.

To deal with multicollinearity and go further into item-level analysis some new models are presented in table 6.11.

Product	**(n)**	**R^2**	**Prix**	**Disp-only**	**Feat-only**	**Disp&Feat**
Macaroni	165	0.61	n.s.	0.39		0.64
Macaroni	165	0.76	-0.79	n.s.		n.s.
Spaghetti	164	0.79	-0.51	0.38	n.s.	0.32
Lasagne	164	0.20	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.38
Tagliatelle	161	0.57	-0.58	n.s.	n.s.	0.18
Tagliatelle	163	0.71	-0.30	0.43	0.09	0.46
Potato	165	0.93	-0.30	0.82	-0.05	-0.05

Table 6.11. Multiple regression results when equation 2 (page 40) is used on item level.

The models in table 6.11 show that some high values of explained variance can be found. All but one of these products come from the same category, namely pasta. This is a good illustration of how promotion sensitivity can vary between products.

Lasagne seems to be less responsive to promotions than other pasta products. Could this be because this product is used in one particular type of meal, which is time consuming to prepare and thereby needs more planning in advance?

To sum up the issue of type of analysis the two methods presented here can both be helpful in providing a background for better decision making. Using two types of analyses provides a better understanding than relying on only one. Both methods shown here can be used to give even more sophisticated information than what has been done in this study.

Optimal level of analysis depends on who is posing the questions. Item-level seems to be closer to the consumer than product category, but there might be a level in-between that on the average is comparable to how the consumers

make their choices. Exploring different levels of analysis can give intriguing insights when seeing how models on different levels give different results.

6.5 PLS-analyses

The main advantage of using PLS for these data is the possibility to see how important promotions are for sales of a category or sub-group. This can be seen as one way to study a market, and relations among products within a category.

PLS enables studies of each products importance for the total variation in volume sold. It also shows how much of each product's variation in volume sold that can be explained by the promotion of each different product.

The assumption behind those models is that the consumer makes choices between products from the same category and that promotions influence consumer choice. PLS allows us to see patterns where different products are of different importance, and shows that consumers vary in how they value products within a category.

Eight different PLS-models will be introduced in this part. Six of them are models of subgroups from the pasta category. The last two models show the market for ground coffee. Data used in these models are the same as in the earlier analyses, the exception is price reduction which is here coded as 1/0. This means that when price is reduced, the variable is coded as 1. (Weights are thus expected to be positive if price reduction is influential.) Volume sold in kilos is the dependent variable in these models, and not volix that was used in the earlier analyses. The reason to use volume sold in kilos here is that when a market and its competition are studied the results become unrealistic if market share is excluded from the variables.

The data from the pasta group have been divided into three main categories; spaghetti, macaroni and other pasta (tagliatelle, lasagne, etc). Each spaghetti product is then compared only with other spaghetti products. The six pasta models can be divided in pairs.

First a model of spaghetti is presented where variation in total volume sold is explained by promotion for each spaghetti product.

In the ***second*** model variation in volume sold for each spaghetti product is explained by promotion for each spaghetti product. The difference between the first two models is in the dependent variables.

The ***third*** model is of the macaroni market, where variation in total volume sold is explained by promotion for each macaroni product.

The ***fourth*** model is similar but it explains variation in volume sold for each macaroni product by promotions for each macaroni product.

The ***fifth*** model explains variation in total volume sold of other pasta products by promotions for each product in the group.

The ***sixth*** model explains variation in volume sold for each of those products by promotions for each product in the group.

The ***seventh*** and the ***eigth*** models explains variation in volume sold for each brand of ground coffee by promotions for each brand of ground coffee. The difference between the seventh and the eight model is found in how the manifest variables are coded.

In the presentation of models where variation in total volume sold is explained, all path coefficients have been written into the figures. For sake of clarity and readability the other models have only those path coefficients with a value over 0.2.

In the output from PLS-analysis several important coefficients are found. Path coefficients show the relations between latent variables in the model. These can be compared to beta coeffiecients in regression analysis. Percent variance in the dependent variable(s) is illustrated by R^2, which in the figures is written into the circle(s) of the dependent variables. The relations between latent variables and manifest variables are measured by weights and loadings (see also 5.2). In the figures weights are written on the arrows from the respective manifest variables to the latent variables. When loadings indicate that a manifest variable has a low correlation with the latent variable, the weight for that manifest variable is written within parentheses.

The first of the eight models is shown on the next page. Explanations and comments are found on the following page.

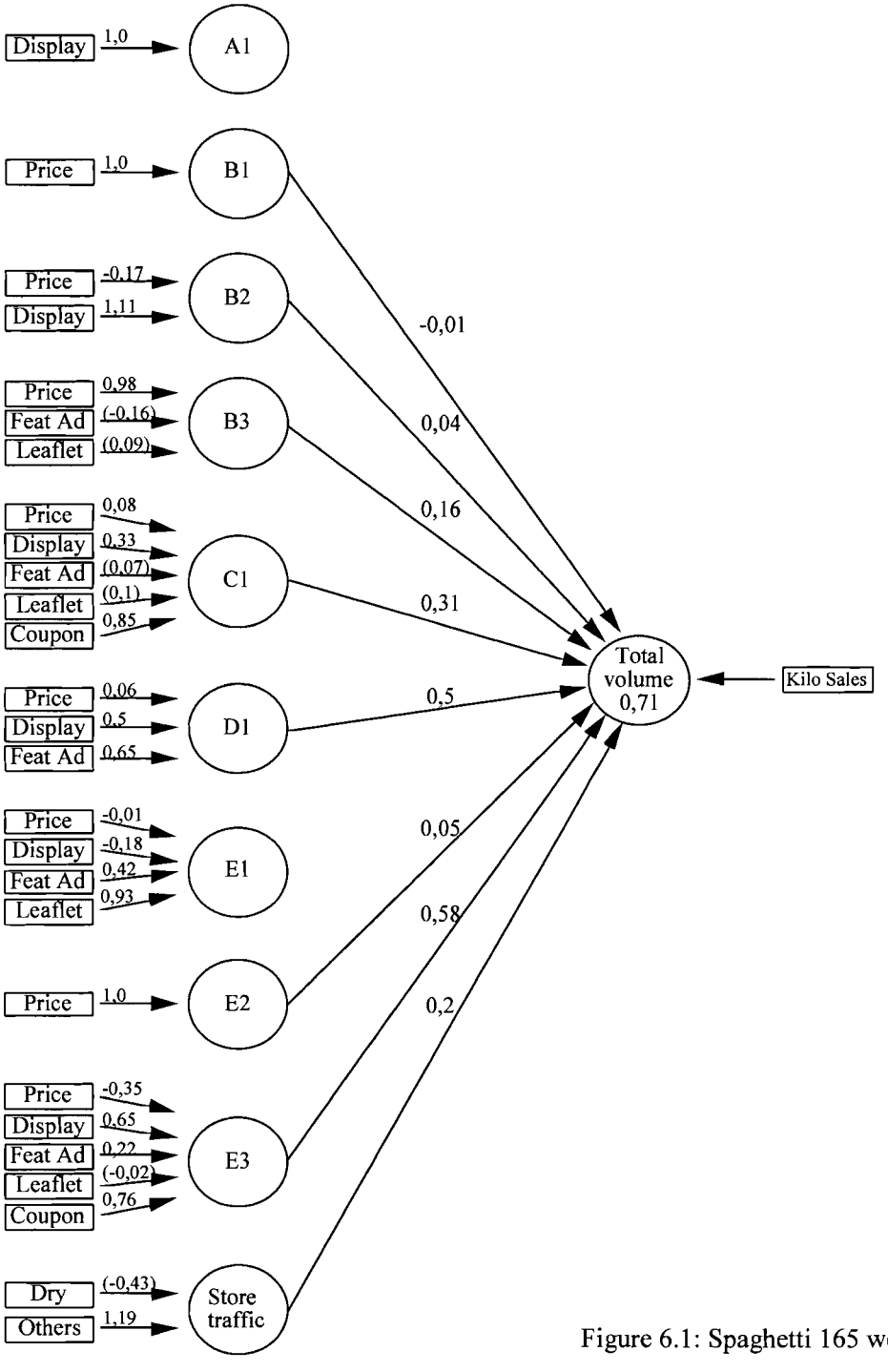


Figure 6.1: Spaghetti 165 weeks

Figure 6.1 presents a model of spaghetti sales for 165 weeks. The model shows to what extent variation in total volume sold of spaghetti each week can be explained by each product's promotion.

A1 means brand A, product 1. In this model 71 percent of variation in volume sold is explained. Promotion for products C1, D1 and E3 have higher influence on the total volume sold than promotion for the other products. Store traffic is also influential on variation in the volume sold. This latent variable is estimated by sales of the department for dry products and sales of all the other departments. It is surprising that there exists no influence on sales by promotions of product E1. This product has been promoted but sales seem to be very low anyway.

The products that strongly influence the dependent variable have substantial promotions, which also seem to give effect on volume sold. It is a good result to be able to explain as much as 71 per cent of variation in volume sold just by using dichotomous promotion variables. This indicates that the spaghetti market is promotion sensitive.

On next page is shown an expansion of the model we have just seen. Figure 6.2 also shows a model of spaghetti sales for 165 weeks. The difference from figure 6.1 is in how the dependent variables are constructed. The model in figure 6.2 tries to explain variations in volume sold for each spaghetti product. The explanatory variables, on the left side in the model, are the same as in figure 6.1, promotions for each spaghetti product. Per cent of variance explained for each product falls within a wide range, from a low 12 per cent up to a high 94 per cent. This shows that some of the products are much more sensitive to promotions.

Path coefficients with values below 0.2 are not included in the presentation of the model. Products A1, B1 and E1 only respond to their own promotions and their promotions affect sales of the own product only. To see a different pattern, look for example at product B3. Promotions of product B3 increases sales of product B3 but also steal from product C3 which is of a competing brand. B3 on the other hand is sensitive to when products C1 and D1 are on promotion. B3 is also sensitive to store traffic. E2 is positively sensitive to promotions by E3, of the same brand, but not to own promotions.

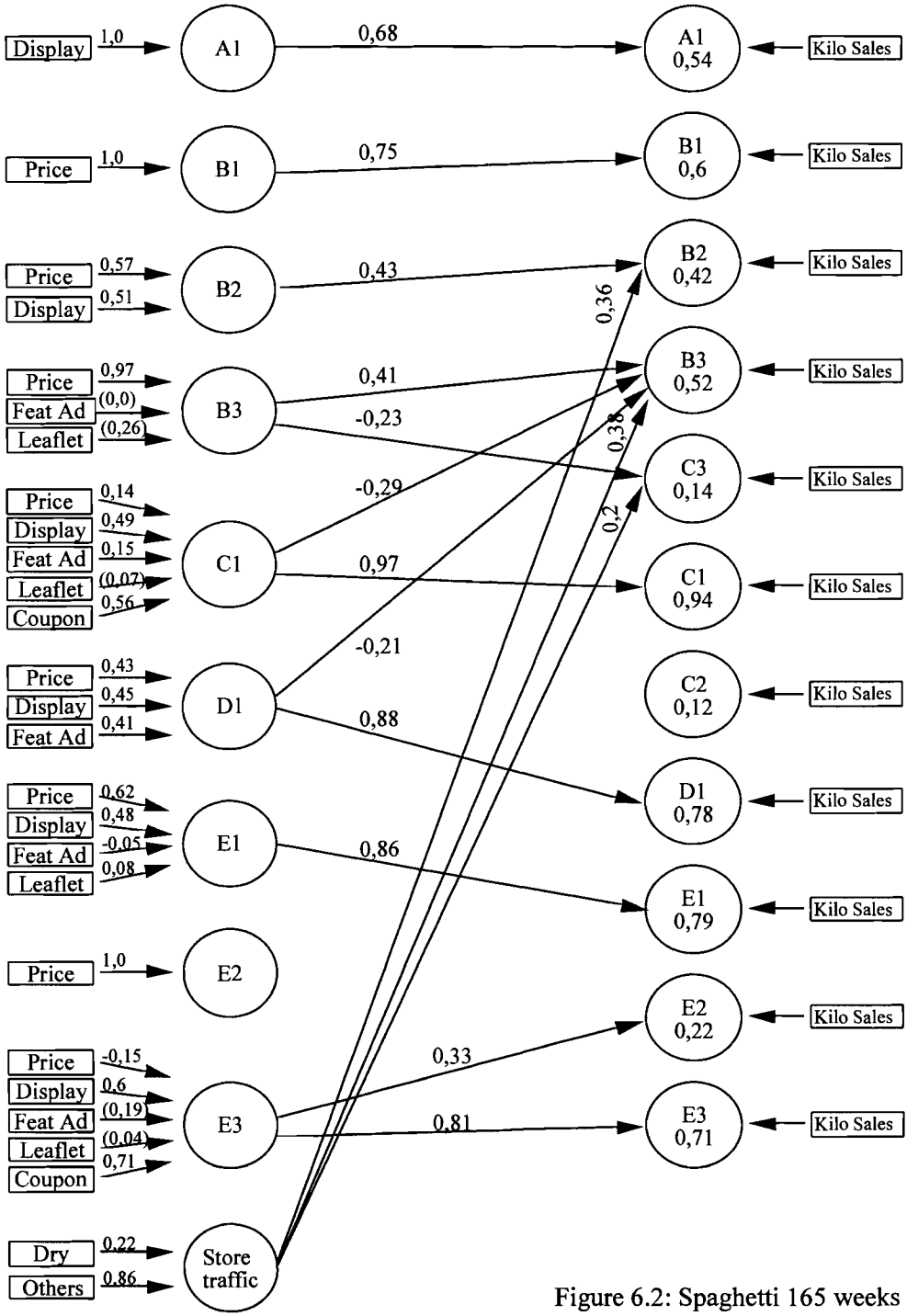


Figure 6.2: Spaghetti 165 weeks

When comparing the models in figures 6.1 and 6.2 we can see that the products with high influence on total sales in figure 6.1 also have a high percentage of explained variance in figure 6.2. One interpretation could be that these products have higher shares of the market and are promotion sensitive.

The next figure, 6.3, is a model of macaroni sales for 165 weeks. Nine different macaroni products have been promoted during this period. One brand, A, dominates the market, and has seven of the nine macaroni products. In this model, 63 per cent of variation in the total volume sold is explained by those promotions. Promotions for product A5 contribute most to explained variance. Promotions for product A6 seems to be counter-cyclic with variation in total volume sold. All products in this model contribute to volume sold, and six of the nine path coefficient values are in the 0.18-0.28 range indicating that these products are equally sensitive to promotions.

Figure 6.4 is accordingly a model where the volume sold for each macaroni product is explained by promotion of each macaroni product. Coefficients with values below 0.2 are not presented in the figure. Percent of variance explained varies from a low 5 per cent to 100 per cent as the most extreme value. Four products, A2, A3, A5 and B1 have an R^2 as high as 0.8. The pattern of influences in this model is more complex than what we saw in the spaghetti group. Promotions of all products but A6 influence their own sales. Promotions for product A6 have a negative influence on products A1, A5 and A7. These are all products of the same brand who seem to be competing with each other. This is not so strange as one brand is dominating in this sub-category. Looking closer at the model we see that products from brand A influences sales of products from brand A. The other products representing brands B and C react to their own promotions, but not to promotions by brand A. Is this brand loyalty ?

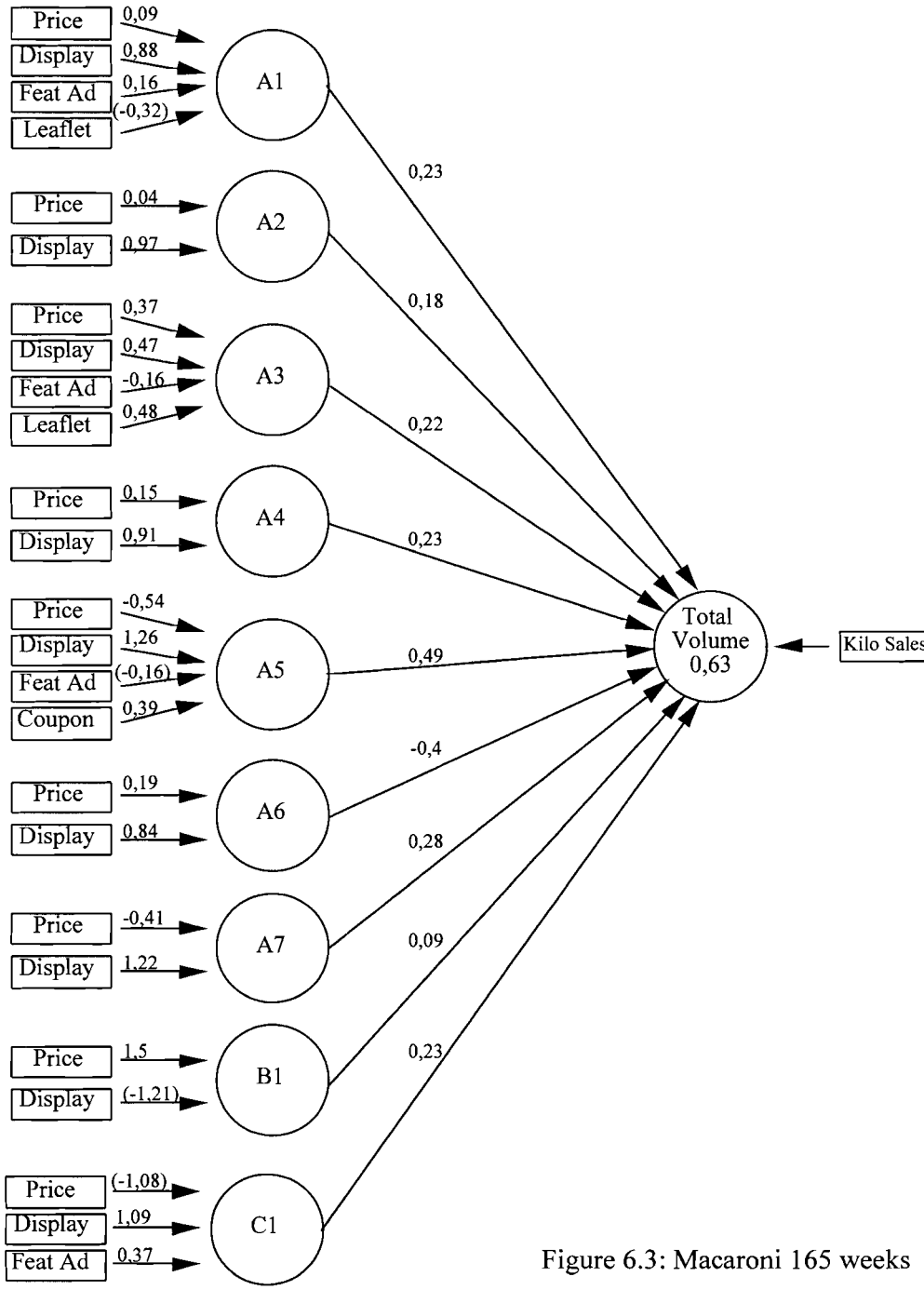


Figure 6.3: Macaroni 165 weeks

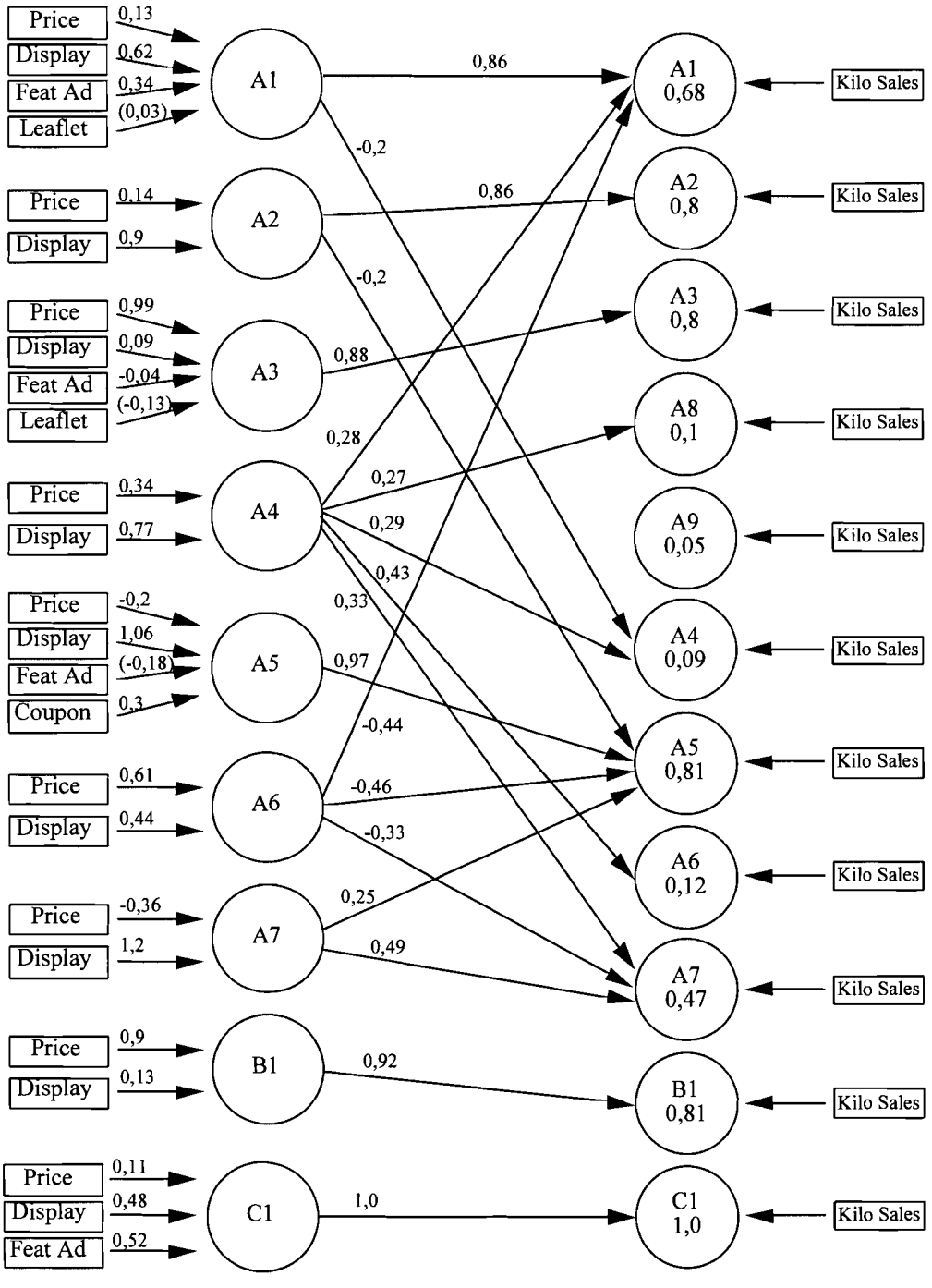


Figure 6.4: Macaroni 165 weeks

In figure 6.5 a model of the group "other pasta" is presented. The model covers 165 weeks of sales and 53 per cent of the total volume sold in this subgroup is explained by promotions of the included products. This sub-category seems less sensitive to promotions than both spaghetti and macaroni. The influence of promotions from each product is lower in this model, the value of the highest path coefficient is 0.35 for product C4. Four products have coefficients in the 0.19-0.22 range. The rest of the coefficients are lower.

Figure 6.6 contains more information, even though it may look quite dense at first sight. This model explains volume sold for each product in the group "other pasta" by promotions for each promoted product in the same group. All products have not been promoted, and therefore some products appear only on the right hand side of the model.

Per cent of variation explained in the volume sold for these products vary between a low of 4 per cent up to a high of 83 per cent. R^2 for the unpromoted products are the lowest, which is an expected result. For all products the promotion of that product is important as explanation of variation in volume sold. Many of the signs of the coefficients in this model are positive, which means that those products, instead of stealing sales from each other, help each other, or are promoted at the same time.

No distinct patterns of brand behavior can be identified in this model. Looking at the coefficients for product A4 produces new questions. Promotion by product A4, which only is price reduction, increases sales of A4, but also sales of B2 which is another brand. Volume sold of A4 is influenced positively by promotions for A4, as said above, but it also reacts positively to promotions for product C4 and negatively to promotions for product C7. What does this teach us about consumer decision making ? What is a manufacturers reaction when promotions steal from own products, or help other brands?

After these six first PLS-models it is time to connect back to the expectations presented in chapter four.

Pasta is assumed to represent limited problem solving, high storability, food, low impulse consumption attractivity and both out-of-store and in-store promotions were, for this category, expected to lead to increased sales. What is discovered in the PLS-analyses is certainly that promotions have effect for the pasta products. The promotion sensitivity seems higher for spaghetti and macaroni products than for the group of "other pasta". The models are suffering from multicollinearity, which makes it difficult to compare the effects of in-store vs. out-of-store promotions.

Price and display generally have higher values on the weights than feature advertising and leaflets. In those cases where loadings indicate that a manifest variable is uncorrelated with its latent variable, this concerns mostly one of the out-of-store variables. We can again see that promotion sensitivity differs

between products within a category. These models are not constructed to distinguish between the effects of different promotions. They tell about the overall value of and sensitivity to promotions in the category.

The last two PLS-models give more insight into the different possible ways to code promotions, and how model building can be done.

After six models of pasta, sales of ground coffee is waiting to be explained. Neither of the last two models tries to explain total volume sold in the category. Both models use the same data and try to explain the same dependent variables. The difference in the models is in how the manifest variables of promotion are coded. In the first model, figure 6.7, dichotomous variables for each occurring promotion type are used, price deal 1/0, display 1/0, feature ad 1/0 and coupon 1/0. This is the same way of coding promotions that has been used in the PLS-models of different types of pasta. The problem with this type of coding is that it gives multicollinearity between the manifest variables.

The second model, figure 6.8, is coded by using combinations of promotions, compare with equation 2 in the regressions. De/Di/Ad is coded as 1/0, meaning that if the brand is on price ***de***al, is ***di***splayed and included in feature ***ad***vertising, all in the same week, the manifest variable is 1, other-wise the manifest variable is 0. The combinations occurring in the data set are mutually exclusive, which eliminates the effects of multicollinearity. This type of model is best built for categories where a lot of promotion has occurred, otherwise the models are hazardous to interpret.

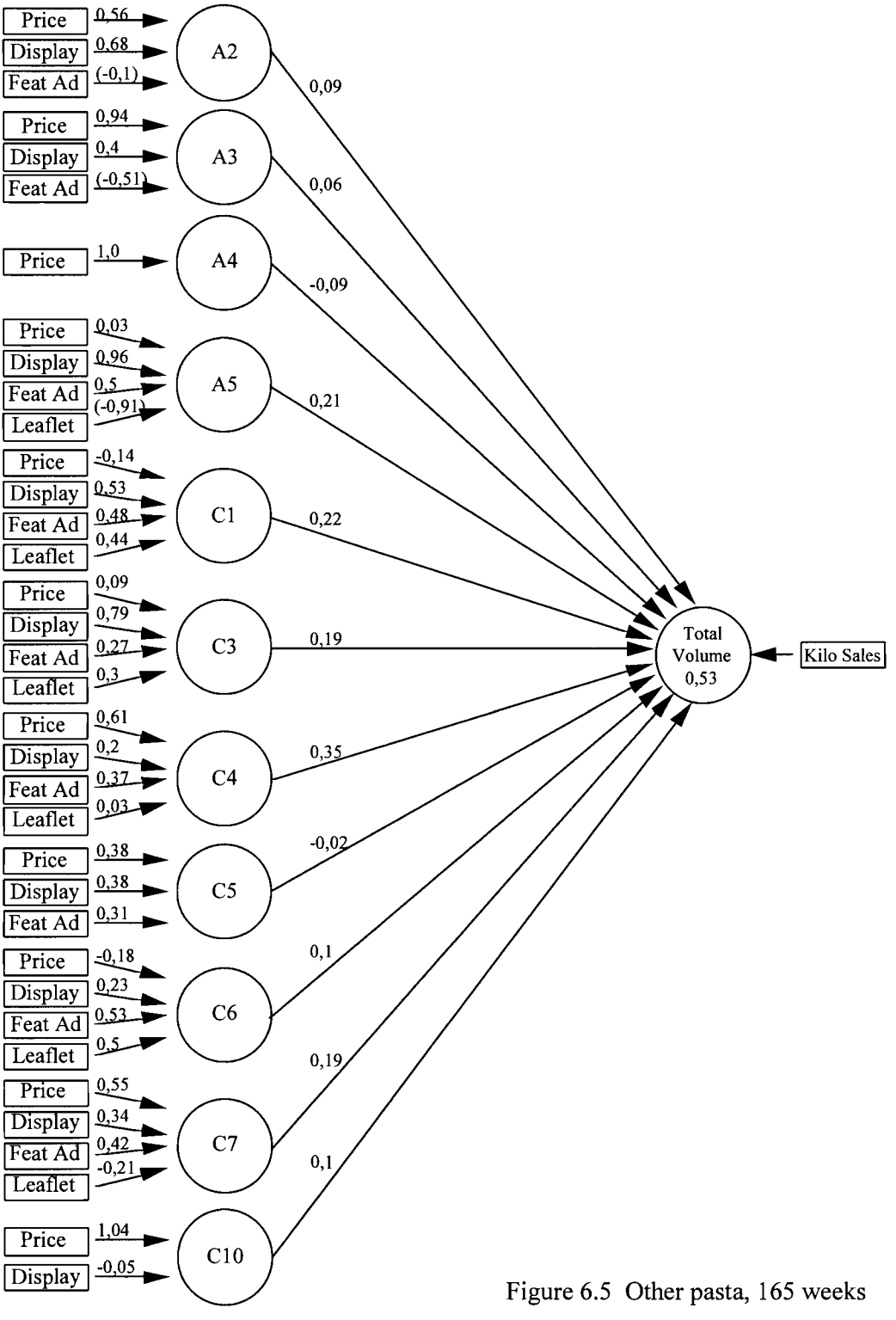


Figure 6.5 Other pasta, 165 weeks

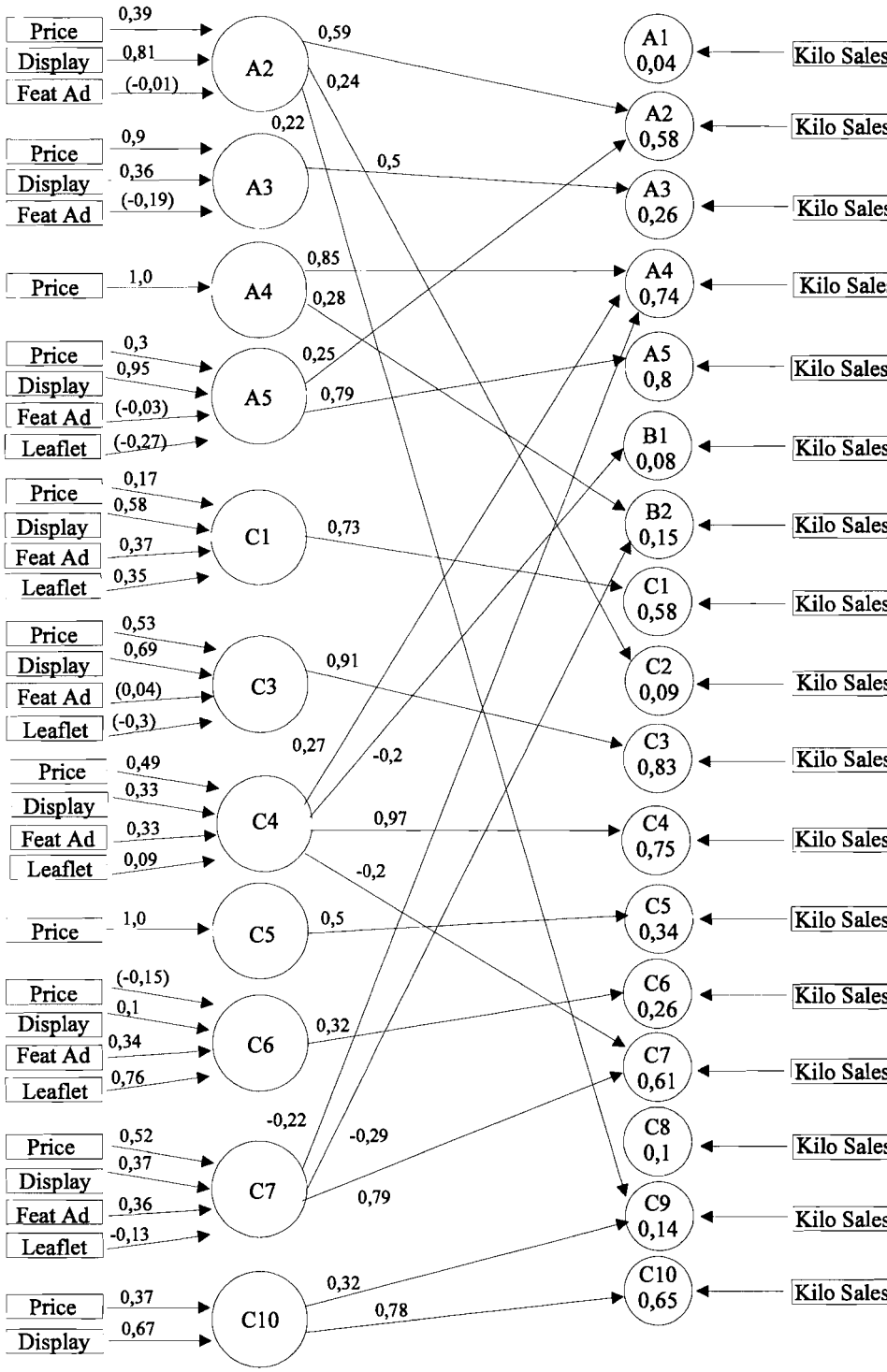


Figure 6.6 Other pasta, 165, weeks

Starting with figure 6.7 the per cent of variance explained varies between 45 per cent and 88 per cent. The results here are higher than in figure 6.8. Coffee is traditionally a frequently promoted category. Promotion of all products but brand F affect own sales. Store traffic is influential only on brands E and F. Two brands, B and D, have a negative influence on sales of brand F.

The weights in figure 6.7 suggest that one type of promotion is more influential than the others for all brands but brand E. Display has the highest value of the weights for brands A, B and G. Coupons seems most important for brand C, and price reduction for brand D. Brand E has equal values for price reduction and display.

Going on to figure 6.8 the percent of variance explained varies from 35 per cent up to 88 per cent. Ranking among the brands in percent of variance explained is slightly changed when models are compared. Also in this model promotion of all brands except brand F affect their own sales. Store traffic has positive influence on brands F and G this time. Brand F is negatively influenced by promotion from three brands in this model, brands B, D and E.

It is somewhat surprising that store traffic does not influence more than a few brands. After all coffee is treated as a loss leader product and promotions are assumed to attract consumers to the stores.

The mutually exclusive promotional combinations in figure 6.8 give much more useful information compared to what could be learned from the models in figure 6.7.

Price reduction, display and feature advertising is the single most important combination for four of the brands. The combination of price reduction and display is most important for one brand, and ranks second for three others. Price reduction and feature advertising is the second most important promotional combination for one of the brands.

From the PLS-output it is found that loadings indicate that most of the other variables are unimportant in the model, why the weights for those are shown within parentheses in figure 6.8.

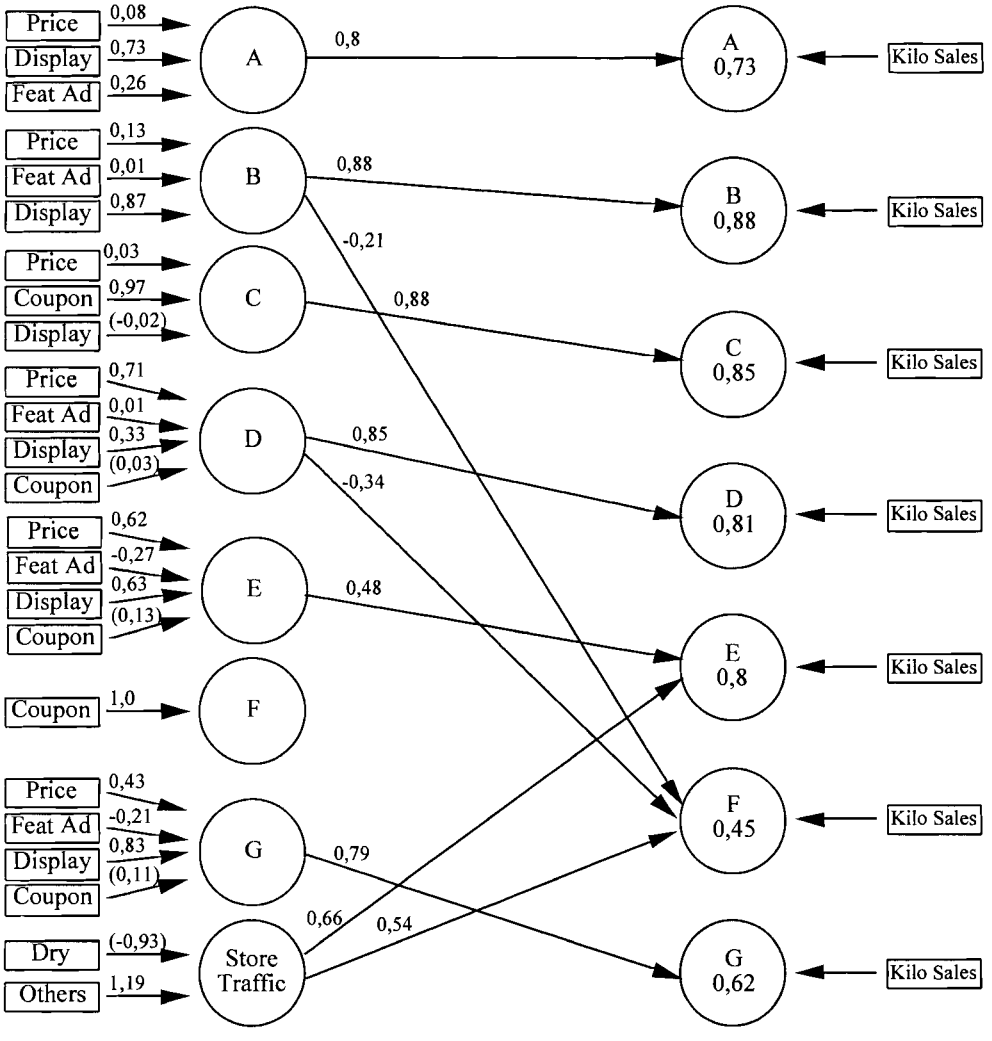


Figure 6.7 Coffee, 164 weeks

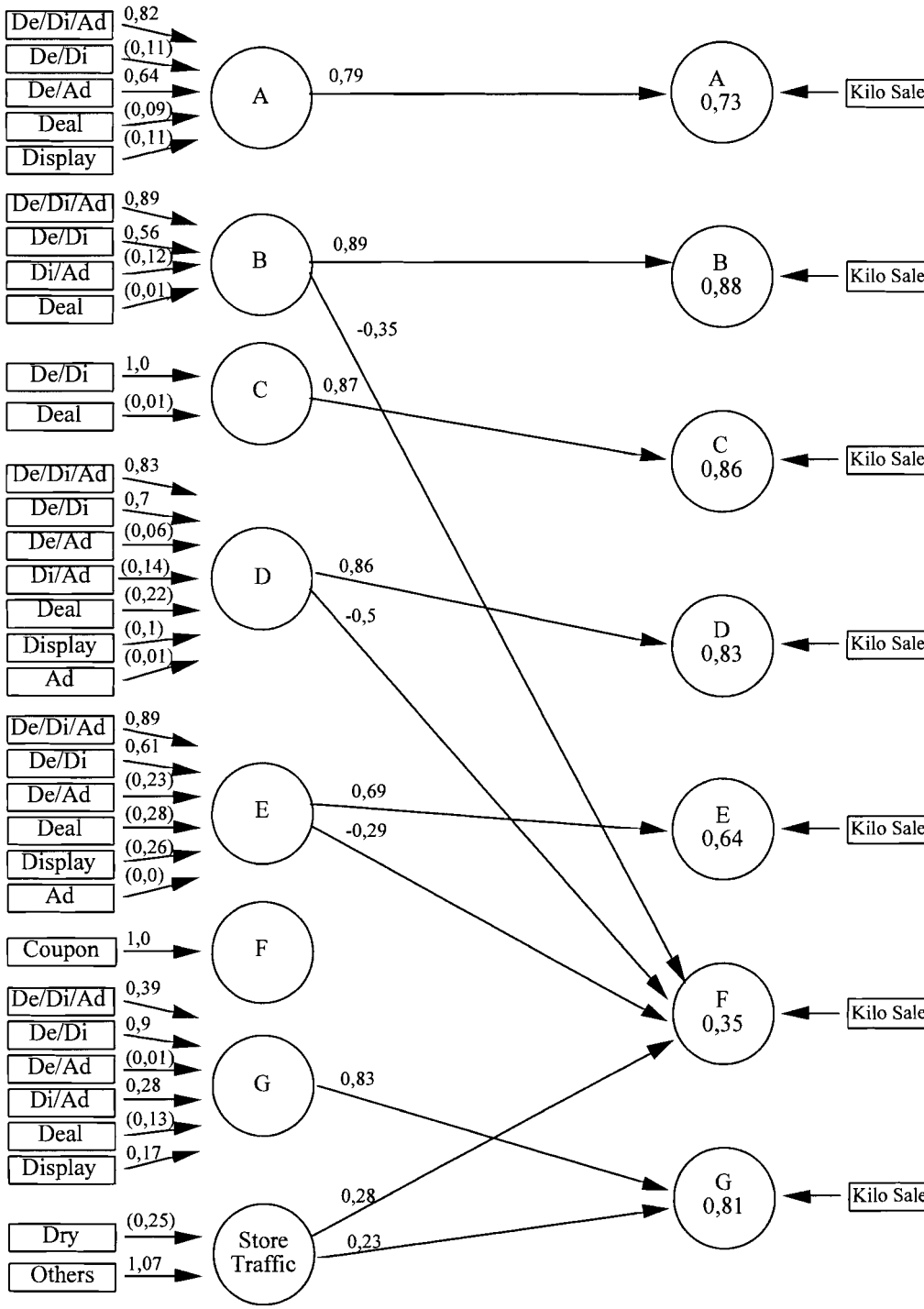


Figure 6.8 Coffee, 164 weeks

So, what information can we find in PLS-analyses that is not available in the other, and more simple, kinds presented in this study?

PLS-analyses enables us to study relations in a market and find patterns of competition. Identification of which products in a category that function as complements or substitutes to each other is very important for those planning promotions. Knowing which products that are independent, and not affected by others, is also very valuable information.

Looking back at the models presented here some findings are particularly interesting and illustrative of the value of PLS for this data.

We can see in figures 6.1 and 6.2 that spaghetti is a promotion sensitive category. Brands A and E seem only to be influenced by own promotions, independent, while brands B, C and D steal sales from each other. Some products seem more promotion sensitive, which was already found in the regression analyses.

The macaroni market in figures 6.3 and 6.4 shows a little less promotion sensitivity. The pattern of competition is more complex in this market, and this is partly due to promotions for some products occurring at the same time. Brand A promotes several of its products together, this is very common for example for products A4 and A6. It is very interesting to see that brands B and C are not affected by the promotions of brand A. High values of R^2 are good, but as high as for C1 in figure 6.4 are almost not realistic. All variation in volume sold cannot be expected to be explained by promotion only, but here it does!

Figures 6.5 and 6.6 show that the subcategory other pasta is less sensitive to promotions than macaroni and spaghetti. There seems, however, to be more products from different brands that act as substitutes to each other in this group. The positive signs on the arrows from product A2 to products C2 and C9 could mean that when product A2 is promoted it reminds the consumers of the category and they purchase products C2 or C9.

One reason to divide the models of pasta into three groups was to suggest that the pasta-category might contain a lot of variations. Is the same consumer buying tagliatelle and macaroni, or are there different segments? The models imply such a difference, and for the specialist on the pasta market, there is much to learn from this type of analyses.

The results for pasta are, however, somewhat better in explanatory value than expected, considering that only 20 per cent of volume sold of pasta was sold on promotion.

Coffee was presented in two different models, figures 6.7 and 6.8. The difference between the two is mostly of technical nature. One of the results is, though, that when promotion is coded as in figure 6.8, PLS-analyses can give a great insight into the effect of different promotions. We know that promotions in the coffee category has occurred frequently, and that 74 per cent of sales was

of promoted products. That is an indication that good fit of the models should be expected for this category.

To summarize what has been shown in this section, PLS-analyses can certainly be informative and add to simpler types of analyses. They are complicated to interpret, but are a good help in showing patterns of competition within a product category. PLS-analyses can be very helpful for the curious manager responsible for a category, or for the brand manager who wants to know which products are directly competing with each other. If products steal from each other promotion can be a very expensive tool to use in the long run. The negative side of PLS is that it is complicated, both to run and to interpret, in the versions available today.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will sum up and discuss the results, relating back to the expectations that were stated in chapter four. The realism of expectations of effects of promotions from table 5.1 will be commented on, and how well the other classifications contributed to explaining variation in volume sold for the different products. This chapter will also relate back to the threefold purpose in 1.2, to see how well this study complies with it.

Type of problem

The results presented in chapter six are both intriguing and somewhat disappointing. The type of problem approach might be helpful in explaining variations in effects of promotions. The results however only support this partly, and the pattern is not really clear.

One finding is that it can be questioned if out-of-store promotions are observed by consumers. Mostly they occur in combination with price-reduction, which can be discovered by the consumers when they are already in the store.

The arbitrary classifications of the product categories should be discussed here. Subjectivity is a problem that is difficult to avoid in this type of classifications. The translations of problems into product categories might be erroneous. One reason for the results for the products thought of as solving limited problems might be how the products are chosen. Maybe the categories chosen as solutions to the dinner problem aren't viewed as such by the consumers.

Type of promotion

When considering effects of the different types of promotions the results give a lot of information. In-store promotions lead to high increases in volume sold, which was expected. This is an interesting result that supports the reports that a very high share of purchase decisions are made in-store. Of course, effects of in-store activities presupposes that consumers come to the store. The question of whether they do that because of out-of-store promotions or for other reasons can not be answered with these data.

It is a somewhat surprising result that feature advertising in combination with price reduction show relative increases in volume sold that for many of the categories are on similar levels.

Sales increase for products that participate in feature advertising and are price reduced is compared with sales increase for the same products when they are sold with reduced price and are not supported by feature advertising. Price reduction alone even lead to higher increases in sales in some cases. Again it

would be interesting to know if the consumers are aware that the category has been in feature advertising, or if they just respond to the price reduction that they observe in the store.

Coupons issued by the store chain lead to extreme increases in volume sold. These coupons are however extreme in the level of price discount they offer, and when markup is considered their value as a promotional tool can be questioned.

Overall we can say that the absolute sizes of the effects of promotion are high. Many of the promotions are such that the consumers have to come to the store to find them. It seems actually quite likely that consumers use stores as external memories, and let themselves get influenced by the promotion found in-store. This could be used as a heuristic, which was suggested in chapter three.

Type of product

The dimensions suggested are still appealing but not really supported by the data.

Two of the dimensions found support in data: food or non-food and purchase frequency. They seem to be able to explain variations in sensitivity to promotions. Food products seem to be more sensitive to promotions, than non-food products, especially to those promotions performed in-store. Product with higher purchase frequency also seem to be more sensitive to promotions, than products with lower purchase frequency, and in-store promotions have higher effect on sales here too.

The suggestions of storability, impulse consumption attractivity and promotion frequency, as variables being able to serve as explanations of variation in products different sensitivity to promotions, were not supported by the data. However, we see that promotions are very important. The assumption that consumers learn the system and use the system seems realistic. Mere figures on share of category sold on promotion is by itself an indication of this. Some results indicate that sales of some products are to a very high degree driven by promotions. It could be said that *institutionalized marketing behavior may lead to institutionalized purchasing behavior*. This is another way to say that consumers are socialized into (grow up with) patterns of purchasing behavior that are adapted to the grocery trade's patterns of marketing behavior.

Going down to item level shows variations in sensitivity to promotions between products in the same category. This is an indication of other things being more important than just storability, impulse consumption attractivity etc. Products in the same category are not expected to differ on the suggested dimensions. These results also indicate that more work should preferably be done to identify groups of products with similar response patterns.

There might also be other things not taken into consideration. One can for example be the importance of strong brand names. In some categories brands seem to be very important for consumers. This is shown in the PLS-analyses. Research on how competition works within and across price-tiers (Blattberg & Wisniewski, 1986) also support this notion. Another thing to consider is size of package which might be influential as well.

Level of analysis

During the work with this data the question of level of analysis has occurred on many occasions. The best choice of level of analysis, when searching to identify effects of promotions, is the level that represents how consumers choose. This can be difficult to identify, even though the approach mentioned above, identifying clusters of products with similar response patterns, might be a good attempt. The borders of categorization might be limiting our perspective. Maybe consumers look for something to put on a sandwich, and not particularly a piece of cheese. Or maybe they do it sometimes, but not always. And as mentioned earlier, a consumer is not expected to behave consistently over time or over person. Every person is expected to utilize different behaviors.

From the perspective of a manufacturer, one obvious level of analysis is brand level. Other potential levels are for example size of package, flavour, price level and market leaders vs market followers.

Expected effects of promotions

Looking back at table 5.1 the two columns to the far right are summaries of expectations of effects of promotions when the different characteristics are considered.

Only two of the five suggested dimensions were supported in the study, which decreases probability that the expectations of effects of promotions from table 5.1 are correct. Out-of-store promotions mostly give low results. Feature advertising seem to be directly influential on sales of fruits. For other products when feature advertising is combined with price reduction, it seems very likely that the price reduction is observed by the consumers at point-of-purchase.

In-store promotions result in high increases in volume sold for most products. The pattern of effects is, however, not the same, and more varied, than what the expectations in table 5.1 suggested.

The purpose of this study

The *first part of the purpose* of this study was to measure effects of feature advertising.

If we believe that *feature advertising is expected to affect volume sold*, this part of the purpose has been satisfied. Effects of feature advertising on volume sold are found, and seem to be on similar and low levels for many categories.

If we believe that *feature advertising is expected to attract consumers to the stores*, this part of the purpose has not been satisfied. In the discussion about consumer behavior and the consumers main limitations in budget and time we have, however, seen that there exist constraints in the consumers ability to engage in store switching. It could be questioned how many consumers that really have the possibility to engage in store-switching.

The *second part of the purpose* was to explain variations in effect between different products when comparing in-store vs out-of-store promotional activities.

With data from fourteen product categories, variations in promotion sensitivity were found, as expected.

Different explanations for these variations, were proposed. The type of problem being solved was the principal explanation suggested. This is neither totally verified nor totally falsified in this study. The problem of identifying which products relate to which type of problem solving needs to be elaborated on. An ambitious attempt was made, using different product categories.

Other explanations suggested were product characteristics like storability, impulse consumption attractivity, purchase frequency and promotion frequency and food vs non-food. Two of those explanations were supported by data:

Food is more sensitive to promotions than non-food products.

Higher purchase frequency also results in higher volumes sold when products are promoted.

The other three explanations were not supported by data in this study.

The *third part of the purpose* was to discuss and apply various methods for analyzing scanner data.

The three different methods of analysis have all shown to be very useful and informative, by themselves as well as in combination. Which method to choose is an issue related to the knowledge and interest of the user. PLS-analysis is certainly more complicated, both to understand and to practise, but it can give most exciting insights into patterns of response to promotions for different products. Much potential exists in all three types of analyses, when the goal is to identify how effects of promotions vary, between and within categories, as well as for different promotional tools.

Working with scanner data could be described as "searching for answers but finding new questions". The method of analysis should of course be chosen to be illustrative of answers searched for. One experience is, though, that each method of analysis has its advantages and most results are informative in one way or the other.

The value of methods of analysis is of course related to who is posing the questions. With such large data bases as here, knowledge of the markets together with specified questions and models are very helpful as it can otherwise be easy to get lost in data. Handling of data is cumbersome, and still, so fascinating and rewarding.

8 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

8.1 Managerial implications

As was stated, when the issue of generalizability was discussed, what is general in this study is the approach chosen. Similar types of datasets are accessible in Sweden, particularly on store level. Increased usage of this type of data as a tool for better decision making is highly recommended.

One thing to note is the *value of using store level data*. Aggregation can be useful on some occasions, but much of the interesting information is after all found in the variation and not in the averages. There is much to learn for all actors by studying consumer responses on store level.

Even with analyses that are not so sophisticated, there is a lot of information to be found by using scanner data. For the retailer or for the employee responsible for a certain department in the store this type of analysis can be a valuable contribution. One result of this study is that data collection and analyses are possible with rather simple methods and equipment. Handling of data, and analyses, can still be cumbersome. When the analyst has good knowledge of the market and the actors in the market, the results can certainly provide additional and valuable information. Using scanner data and more complex models to study competition within a market and identifying, on product level, who are the competitors, are sources for more knowledgeable marketing decisions.

The data on store level can be used to improve decision making concerning the retailers purchases and marketing. Scanner data can also help evaluate which products earn their place on the shelf and which are unnecessary in the assortment. One thing to remember is that quality of data will never be better than the store wants. If the store manager and personnel work actively to scan all sales and have accurate data in the files the system can be used in a much better way. When so many of the installed systems are used only to produce standardized reports, the incentives to work on improving data quality are not high.

When these data are used it should be remembered that the interpretations are only valid for the circumstances under which the purchases have been made. If the results are made for predictions, they will not function if circumstances are changed. If promotions continue in the same way as they have done during the test period, then the models will be more accurate to use for prediction

purposes. We will never be able to say that "Promotions give ... effect", but we can be very certain that, under the circumstances, "promotions gave... effect".

8.2 Further research

One idea for further research is to try to identify different *groups of consumers*, or shopper baskets, where response to promotions varies. Going back to what was discussed above it might be possible to identify "feature advertising-reading" consumers. Our data collection has recently been expanded with receipt level data, from the same store, which might give possibilities for this type of research. This data is anonymous but otherwise quite detailed.

The question of *categorization* is another interesting issue. Which assortment of products are possible alternatives for consumers in a given situation? Are there better ways to define categories than what is used in the trade today? Which products belong to the evoked set for the consumers, and which choice heuristics are used for different categories in different situations?

The divison of products into the *type of problem* that they can help to solve is indeed appealing. A good method could be to list products and ask consumers what they can be used for and in which situation they would purchase them. Another way is to list situations and ask them for the solutions. This could give better input into selecting products for analyses.

The results from the study indicate that there is more to do in the area of finding *dimensions* to characterize products along. The differing response to promotions within product categories indicate that variables such as flavour and size of package could be useful. Another way is to search for the explanatory value of strong brand names. Price-tiers (Blattberg & Wisniewski, 1986, 1987) and assymetrical relations between competing products seem like concepts that could be used also when analyzing the Swedish market. We cannot assume that a consumer is indifferent to price levels and brand names and perceived differences in quality.

The approach taken by Fader & Lodish (1990) is also tempting. Identifying *clusters of products*, from different categories, with similar promotion response and comparing these results with receipt data could be helpful in segmenting consumers and products.

The last suggestion for further research, is to study if *feature advertising can attract consumers* to the stores, i.e., consumers' willingness to switch stores. The reason to put this question last is not less importance than the others, on the contrary. When the results tell of feature advertisings lower importance in increases of sales for products, the question of other roles of feature avertising has appeared many times.

References

Bemmaor, A. C. & D. Mouchoux (1991), 'Measuring the Short-Term Effect of In-Store Promotion and Retail Advertising on Brand Sales: A Factorial Experiment', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 28 (May 1991), pp. 202-214

Bettman, J. R.(1979), *An Information Processing Theory of Consumer Choice*, Philippines: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co, Inc.

Blattberg, R. C., G. D. Eppen & J. Lieberman (1981), 'A Theoretical and Empirical Evaluation of Price Deals for Consumer Nondurables', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 45 (Winter 1981), pp. 116-129

Blattberg, R. C. & S. A. Neslin, (1990) *Sales Promotion – concepts, methods and strategies.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Blattberg, R. C. & K. J. Wisniewski (1986), *Price-Induced Patterns of Competition* Marketing working paper no. 41, Graduate School of Business, University of Chicago (December 1986)

Blattberg, R. C. & K. J. Wisniewski (1987), *How Retail Price Promotions Work: Empirical Results,* Marketing working paper no. 42, Graduate School of Business, University of Chicago (December 1987)

Blomqvist, P. (1988), *Kampanjeffekter i dagligvaruhandeln*, Term paper in marketing, Stockholm School of Economics

Bolen, W. H. (1988), *Contemporary Retailing*. 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Bowman, R. (1987), 'What's "in-store" for 1987', *Marketing & Media Decisions,* Vol. 22, no 1 (January 1987), pp. 78, 80

Chevalier, M. (1975), 'Increase in Sales Due to In-Store Display', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 12 (November 1975), pp. 426-31

Chevalier, M. (1975-76), 'Substitution Patterns as a Result of Display in the Product Category', *Journal of Retailing*, Vol 51, no. 4 (Winter), pp. 65-72

Cotton, B.C. & E. M. Babb (1978), 'Consumer Response to Promotional Deals', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 42 (July), pp. 109-113

Curhan, R. C. (1974), 'The Effects of Merchandising and Temporary Promotional Activities on the Sales of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables in Supermarkets', *Journal of Marketing Research,* Vol 11 (August), pp. 286-94

Dagens konsument (1991), Västerås: ICA-Förlaget AB/SIFO

Davidsson, P. (1989), *Continued Entrepreneurship and Small Firm Growth*. Stockholm: The Economic Research Institute at the Stockholm School of Economics

Dickson, P.R. & Alan G. Sawyer (1990), 'The Price Knowledge and Search of Supermarket Shoppers', *Journal of Marketing,* Vol 54 (July), pp. 42-53

DLF (1981), *Kan samaktiviteter inom dagligvaruhandeln förbättras,* Report no. 135, Stockholm: Dagligvaruleverantörers Förbund

Dodson, J. A., A. M. Tybout & B. Sternthal (1978), 'Impact of Deals and Deal Retraction on Brand Switching', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 15 (February), pp. 72-81

Eliason, M. & C.-R. Julander (1991), *Productivity in Swedish Grocery Retailing - changes over time and a causal model*. Malmö: Foundation for Distribution Research, EFI, Stockholm School of Economics

Engel, J. F. & R. D. Blackwell (1982), *Consumer Behavior*. 4th ed. Japan: The Dryden Press

Fader, P. S. & L. M. Lodish (1990), 'A Cross-Category Analysis of Category Structure and Promotional Activity for Grocery Products', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 54 (October) pp. 52-65

Fornell, C. (1987), 'A Second Generation of Multivariate Analysis: Classification of Methods and Implications for Marketing Research' in (ed.) M Houston: *The Review of Marketing 1987*, pp. 407-450, Chicago: American Marketing Association

Gupta, S. (1988), 'Impact of Sales Promotions on When, What and How Much to Buy', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 25 (November), pp. 342-55

Henderson, C. (1988), 'The Interaction of Coupons with Price and Store Promotions', *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 15, pp. 364-71

Howard, J. A. (1989) *Consumer Behavior in Marketing Strategy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Hultén, S. (1990) *Omvandlingen av dagligvaruhandeln 1970-89.* Stockholm: MTC

Inman, J. J., L. McAlister & W. D. Hoyer (1990), 'Promotion Signal: Proxy for a Price Cut?', *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 17 (June), pp. 74-81

Jansson, E.-L. (1988), *Samaktivitet/Veckoannons ur butiksperspektiv – en fallstudie*, Term paper in Business Administration, Uppsala University

Julander, C.-R. (1984), *Extrapriser och veckoannonser. Effekter av dagligvaruhandelns SA/VA-aktiviteter*. Fonden för Handels- och Distributionsforskning. Västerås: EFI, Handelshögskolan i Stockholm

Julander, C.-R. (1989),'What's in the basket? Receipt analysis for marketing decisions: An exploratory study' Mimeo, The Foundation for Distribution Research, at the Stockholm School of Economics

Julander, C.-R. & C. Holmberg (1987), *Marknadsinformation från datakassor*, Research Report, Economic Research Institute at the Stockholm School of Economics

Konsumtion i förändring: en sammanställning åren 1975-1989 (1991). Stockholm, Statistiska Centralbyrån

Krishna, A., I. S. Currim & R. W. Shoemaker (1991), 'Consumer Perceptions of Promotional Activity', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 55 (April), pp. 4-16

Krishna, A. (1991), 'Effect of Dealing Patterns on Consumer Perceptions of Deal Frequency and Willingness to Pay', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 28 (November), pp. 441-51

Lattin, J. M. & R. E. Bucklin (1989), 'Reference Effects of Price and Promotion on Brand Choice Behavior', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 26 (August) pp. 299-310

Lewis-Beck, M. S. (1980), *Applied Regression: An Introduction, Series: Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences*. London: SAGE Publications

LMU, see SOU 1987:44

Persson, P.-G. (1990), "*Factors Influencing Consumer Sensitivity to Promotions*," Term paper in marketing, Stockholm School of Economics

Sellerberg, A.-M. (1977), *Hur kunden möter affären. En sociologisk analys av relationen mellan konsument och affär*. Lund: Lund University

Shoemaker, R. W. & R. F. Shoaf (1977), 'Repeat Rates of Deal Purchases', *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol 17, no. 2 (April), pp. 47-53

SOU 1987:44, *Livsmedelspriser och livsmedelskvalitet*. (LMU) Stockholm: Allmänna Förlaget

Stone, G. P. (1954), 'City Shoppers and Urban Identification: Observations on the Social Psychology of City Life', *The American Journal of Sociology*, pp. 36-45

Supermarket (1991), 'ICA och Konsum – i särklass störst som reklamköpare', No. 2, p. 51, Västerås: ICA-Förlaget

Supermarket (1991), 'Svenska folkets affärer 1990: Totala konsumtionen nära 700 miljarder', No. 5-6, p. 9, Västerås: Ica-Förlaget AB

*Svensk Dagligvaruhandel 1990-91: Aktuella marknadsfakta från Fri Köpenskap(*1991*)*. Solna: Fri Köpenskap

Swedish Census (1988) "Så använder vi tiden: preliminär rapport från tidsanvändnings-undersökningen", Levnadsförhållanden; 59, Stockholm

Tellis, G. J. (1988), 'Advertising Exposure, Loyalty, and Brand Purchase: A Two-Stage Model of Choice', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 25 (May), pp. 134-44

Van Raaij, W. F. (1988), 'Information Processing and Decision making Cognitive Aspects of Economic Behaviour' in W.F. Van Raaij, G.M. Van Veldhoven, & K-E Wärneryd (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Psychology* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers

Walters, R. G.& S. B. MacKenzie (1988), 'A Structural Equation Analysis of the Impact of Price Promotions on Store Performance', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 25 (Feb), pp. 51-63

Walters, R. G. & H. J. Rinne (1986), 'An Empirical Investigation into the Impact of Price Promotions on Retail Store Performance', *Journal of Retailing*, Vol 62, no. 3 (Fall), pp. 237-66

Walters, R. G. (1991), 'Assessing the Impact of Retail Price Promotions on Product Substitution, Complementary Purchase and Interstore Sales Displacement', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 55 (April), pp. 17-28

Wickström, B. (1989), "Framtida perspektiv på konsumentens inköpsbeteende" in H. Benndorf & H. Henriksson (eds.) *Framtida perspektiv på marknadsföring*, Stockholm: MTC

Wilkinson, J.B., C. H. Paksoy & J. B. Mason (1981), "A Demand Analysis of Newspaper Advertising and Changes in Space Allocation," *Journal of Retailing,* Vol 57, no. 2 (Summer), pp. 30-48

Wilkinson, J.B, J. B. Mason & C. H. Paksoy (1982), 'Assessing the Impact of Short-Term Supermarket Strategy Variables', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol 19 (February), pp. 72-86

Wirsäll,N.-E. (1988), *Den omöjliga idén blev verklighet. Från ICA-rörelsens första femtio år.* Västerås: ICA-Förlaget

Wittink, D. R., M. J. Addona, W. J. Hawkes & J. C. Porter (1987), 'SCAN*PRO: A Model to Measure Short-Term Effects of Promotional Activities on Brand Sales, Based on Store-Level Scanner Data', Unpublished Research paper, Cornell University (May).

Woodside, A. G. & G. L. Waddle (1975), 'Sales Effects of In-Store Advertising', *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol 15, no. 3 (June), pp. 29-33

LIST OF APPENDICES

#	Content	Pages
1	The ten largest advertisers in Swedish media in 1989	I
2	Weekly data on promotions and assortment	II-VII
3	Descriptions of markets for chosen products	VIII-IX
4	Glossary	X
5	Feature advertising from four decades	XI-XIV

Appendix 1

The ten largest advertisers in Swedish media in 1989.

1	**KF**	**493.067.000**
2	**ICA AB**	**461.860.000**
3	**Åhléns AB**	**149.710.000**
4	Volvo	133.513.000
5	Televerket	103.615.000
6	V.A.G Sverige	75.835.000
7	**Vivo-Favör**	**73.825.000**
8	Ford Motor Co	68.864.000
9	Hennes & Mauritz	68.177.000
10	General Motors	66.748.000

(Supermarket 2/91,p. 51)

The companies marked with bolded letters represent major or large share of groceries.

Appendix 2

Weekly data, from one store, on extent of promotions and assortment. Number of products in the stores price files, number of products with price reduction, number of products on special display, number of feature advertisements, number of products in large feature advertisements and number of products in small feature advertisements

Week No	# of items	# of deals	# of displays	# of ads	#of prod in large ad	# of prod in small ad
8709	7,764	634	n.a.	4	35	40
8710	7,804	546	n.a.	2	43	29
8711	7,847	501	n.a.	2	0	46
8712	7,871	530	n.a.	1	35	0
8713	7,913	601	n.a.	1	0	36
8714	7,899	637	n.a.	5	36	42
8715	7,947	667	n.a.	2	0	79
8716	7,983	671	n.a.	2	57	1
8717	8,014	651	n.a.	2	0	11
8718	8,022	712	n.a.	2	43	39
8719	8,040	722	n.a.	2	35	32
8720	8,053	681	n.a.	2	38	28
8721	8,015	678	n.a.	3	42	51
8722	8,039	790	n.a.	2	41	33
8723	7,907	811	n.a.	3	44	40
8724	7,931	621	n.a.	1	43	0
8725	7,781	726	n.a.	2	41	31
8726	7,772	762	n.a.	3	32	57
8727	7,702	641	n.a.	2	0	58
8728	7,697	672	n.a.	2	36	23
8729	7,718	687	n.a.	2	33	29
8730	7,714	595	n.a.	2	36	28
8731	7,729	500	n.a.	2	33	25
8732	7,756	550	n.a.	2	49	8
8733	7,781	485	n.a.	2	53	40
8734	7,800	593	n.a.	2	0	70
8735	7,904	642	n.a.	2	37	37
8736	7,915	441	n.a.	2	39	32
8737	7,954	589	n.a.	2	42	29
8738	8,033	604	n.a.	2	47	37
8739	8,067	648	n.a.	2	33	42
8740	8,052	657	n.a.	2	35	10
8741	7,930	534	265	4	75	3
8742	7,972	561	208	3	44	50
8743	8,000	717	105	3	44	50
8744	8,036	705	97	2	47	1
8745	8,140	583	97	4	42	50
8746	8,191	610	153	3	39	37
8747	8,223	754	100	3	0	77

Week No	# of items	# of deals	# of displays	# of ads	#of prod in large ad	# of prod in small ad
8748	8,261	806	158	3	40	31
8749	8,281	590	261	5	43	67
8750	8,307	629	217	2	0	73
8751	8,214	592	36	3	84	30
8752	8,227	515	186	1	42	0
8753	8,230	425	157	5	44	35
8801	8,225	335	115	3	41	23
8802	8,009	377	66	2	33	29
8803	8,038	423	50	3	34	28
8804	8,160	569	177	3	0	69
8805	8,179	549	188	2	41	33
8806	8,207	404	172	3	43	35
8807	8,247	452	157	5	38	38
8808	8,255	582	91	4	0	80
8809	8,314	543	80	4	39	36
8810	8,337	455	172	4	39	71
8811	8,497	549	78	2	38	33
8812	8,512	598	174	4	0	74
8813	8,511	598	164	2	54	35
8814	8,533	423	162	3	42	38
8815	8,514	354	52	3	43	35
8816	8,535	529	93	3	0	73
8817	8,580	408	80	2	51	40
8818	8,604	376	80	2	36	28
8819	8,500	509	83	2	41	34
8820	8,528	514	101	4	45	34
8821	8,548	398	87	3	75	1
8822	8,581	396	193	4	47	59
8823	8,591	419	127	5	40	44
8824	8,684	592	213	2	40	36
8825	8,695	611	222	2	53	38
8826	8,682	466	225	3	37	31
8827	8,693	487	268	2	43	30
8828	8,700	493	143	2	36	27
8829	8,720	453	140	3	37	30
8830	8,736	370	255	3	43	38
8831	8,766	327	135	5	35	30
8832	8,778	423	89	3	48	33
8833	8,242	469	140	2	36	36
8834	8,273	424	110	1	41	0
8835	8,311	316	108	2	41	35
8836	8,360	389	98	2	44	29
8837	8,385	448	109	2	41	38
8838	8,433	484	113	5	47	46
8839	8,485	658	268	3	44	39
8840	8,520	681	246	3	44	29

Week No	# of items	# of deals	# of displays	# of ads	#of prod in large ad	# of prod in small ad
8841	8,576	529	266	3	39	37
8842	8,598	593	206	3	38	26
8843	8,629	622	250	2	40	36
8844	8,679	568	219	2	50	31
8845	8,713	438	196	4	46	48
8846	8,750	560	206	2	42	36
8847	8,794	609	225	4	46	57
8848	8,848	566	268	4	108	3
8849	8,903	512	216	4	47	38
8850	8,955	555	220	2	48	35
8851	8,955	555	118	3	134	0
8852	8,993	375	166	3	36	34
8901	9,040	353	187	2	36	28
8902	9,058	330	171	2	45	1
8903	9,105	428	185	4	38	36
8904	9,116	478	165	3	41	32
8905	9,155	379	187	3	35	38
8906	9,182	430	224	3	53	35
8907	9,221	550	159	3	37	35
8908	9,248	625	272	2	39	40
8909	9,318	666	n.a.	4	37	38
8910	9,421	514	240	4	46	41
8911	9,477	544	249	2	40	36
8912	9,508	675	342	2	89	0
8913	9,529	544	n.a.	3	43	33
8914	9,585	439	156	2	0	74
8915	9,639	566	175	5	49	62
8916	9,608	572	216	6	36	24
8917	9,758	673	218	4	44	44
8918	9,771	597	221	2	44	31
8919	9,809	652	238	3	43	38
8920	9,828	528	224	3	42	34
8921	9,894	605	232	2	43	38
8922	9,933	624	130	4	39	42
8923	9,975	592	265	4	41	46
8928	9,966	503	n.a.	4	80	1
8929	4,636	259	n.a.	2	45	39
8930	4,835	273	n.a.	3	38	40
8931	4,896	255	n.a.	4	38	36
8932	4,870	299	n.a.	3	33	36
8933	4,950	304	105	3	40	33
8934	4,950	304	111	3	33	34
8935	5,190	263	93	2	40	35
8936	4,999	263	101	5	30	71
8937	5,008	300	164	4	40	52
8938	10,343	646	256	3	41	34

Week No	# of items	# of deals	# of displays	# of ads	#of prod in large ad	# of prod in small ad
8939	10,387	741	278	5	41	39
8940	10,465	711	242	2	45	39
8941	10,536	618	245	3	41	37
8942	10,540	606	265	3	39	42
8943	10,604	553	238	3	44	35
8944	10,603	525	227	5	42	61
8945	10,633	528	211	4	41	53
8946	10,680	603	239	4	40	39
8947	5,372	498	161	5	38	39
8948	5,428	554	241	3	44	48
8949	5,299	407	209	5	45	43
8950	5,246	452	221	5	42	71
8951	5,421	464	256	6	156	3
8952	5,866	349	112	2	40	1
9001	5,087	272	146	4	60	25
9002	5,131	252	133	3	40	36
9003	5,191	203	126	2	38	26
9004	5,215	334	157	4	44	35
9005	5,090	366	119	3	41	38
9006	10,086	378	129	4	44	42
9007	10,109	377	170	4	42	37
9008	10,148	532	168	3	45	37
9009	10,205	465	165	3	43	37
9010	10,244	354	153	3	40	39
9011	10,267	469	154	3	38	38
9012	10,309	505	187	4	40	38
9013	10,340	600	176	3	85	2
9014	10,381	619	167	4	82	4
9015	10,382	503	156	3	89	2
9016	10,397	346	135	2	80	0
9017	10,422	470	181	2	77	0
9018	10,457	491	163	2	44	37
9019	10,499	373	181	4	37	47
9020	10,550	430	218	4	93	0
9021	10,574	574	226	2	48	39
9022	10,594	518	265	2	42	41
9023	10,625	350	194	3	44	32
9024	10,643	532	258	3	42	39
9025	10,665	591	251	3	45	44
9026	10,677	584	247	3	39	36
9027	10,777	580	305	2	39	35
9028	10,836	573	223	2	36	35
9029	10,842	340	180	2	39	30
9030	10,850	362	143	2	40	31
9031	10,864	347	166	2	38	27
9032	10,889	381	137	4	40	39

Week No	# of items	# of deals	# of displays	# of ads	#of prod in large ad	# of prod in small ad
9033	10,899	492	131	2	43	38
9034	10,913	535	153	3	42	40
9035	10,957	462	173	4	90	4
9036	11,020	421	158	4	41	44
9037	11,045	411	174	4	47	45
9038	11,093	538	251	3	43	37
9039	11,111	566	230	4	42	46
9040	11,146	415	214	3	45	40
9041	11,168	435	239	3	46	42
9042	11,173	380	214	4	91	5
9043	11,222	544	212	3	39	38
9044	11,257	595	244	4	47	56
9045	11,284	476	250	3	47	40
9046	11,318	477	271	3	40	35
9047	11,375	544	217	4	46	38
9048	11,428	615	286	3	106	3
9049	11,464	557	279	4	42	42
9050	11,482	605	228	3	47	47
9051	11,499	629	245	5	181	3
9052	11,507	560	216	2	83	0

Appendix 3

Description of markets

Falukorv contains 763 observations of sales for 169 weeks. Total volume sold is 19,682 kilos, and of that 54% was sold at deal price. The average kilo of falukorv sold was price reduced by 7%.

Coupons from the chain are used in this category, amounting to 1,295 kilos of sales, and average volume for the item week is 185 kilos and price reduction is then a high 34%. 5 suppliers are represented by 19 item numbers. One major brand answers for 65% of volume sold, the second largest brand represents 14% of volume sold.

Prinskorv has only 367 observations. Two brands were sold during the whole 167 week period. A total of 1,694 kilos have been sold and 567 of these (33,5%) were on deal. Coupons have not been used in this category.

It is interesting to see that the brands that are not represented all the time have a higher share, 57%, of sales at reduced price.

Bacon sales are represented by 441 observations, and the total volume sold is slightly under 5 000 kilos. 8 suppliers with one brand each sold under 9 different item numbers. 94% of sales come from the Danish supplier. 34% of volume is sold at reduced price, and other suppliers sell 80% of their volume at deal price.

The ***pasta*** category is represented by 6 580 observations. Total volume sold is 65 417 kilos under the 165 weeks. Four suppliers sell five brands represented by 68 item numbers. Spaghetti and macaroni are equal competitors with approx 26 000 kilos each. The largest brand contributes with 1 866 observations and represents 55% of the volume sold. The second largest has a much larger number of observations, 3185, but only 30% of volume. This tells us that the largest brand has fewer item numbers and might also sell larger packages. 20% of pasta sales are made at a reduced price, and average price reduction in this category is 15%.

3015 observations of ***frozen potato*** products are spread over 33 item numbers and 6 suppliers.They amount to 54 124 kilos, 24% of which were sold at reduced price, with an average price reduction of 21%.

A display in this category is not the same as display in other categories. A freezer is a freezer whereever it is put.

The ***yogurt*** category contains 10 065 observations of data. 107 item numbers represent 4 suppliers and the consumer has 12 brands to choose from.Total volume sold under the studied period is 155 304 litres, 11% of this is sold when promoted. Yogurt comes in many different sizes, from 150 ml to 1 liter.

Smaller kinds of yogurt often come in many flavors, and thereby also have many item numbers. In this group new products have been heavily supported by promotions.

Banana sales are registered for 197 weeks. Average volume sold per week is 1616 kilos. The highest volume registered for one week is 4391 kilos, and the lowest just 69 kilos. Prices for this product varies also with season and supply. Total volume sold over the period is 318 434 kilos. 36% of the volume is sold when bananas are promoted.

Kiwi is a more problematic product to grasp. Kiwis are sometimes sold in basketlike packages with a pricetag on. The price is then per package. Many times prices are 3 for SEK 10, which is registered manually by the cashiers. We can only give you the results from the kiwis sold by piece price. Prices in this category vary with season and supply. Lowest volume registered one week is 113 kiwis, largest is 2974 (!). Volume sold on promotion is 39% or 61.922 kiwi-fruits.

Coffee in this database has 6 071 observations. Total volume sold is 104 533 kilos. 74% of this volume was sold at deal price. The three largest brands represent 78% of the volume sold in this group. 53 item numbers come from 5 suppliers in the shape of 7 different brands.

Very few weeks are unpromoted in this group. Almost one brand is on sale each week, and most brands have regular and highly frequent promotions.

The database consists of 3 861 observations of ***mustard*** sales. Volume sold is 8 271 kilos, 24% of which is sold at reduced price. The largest brand answers for 69% of the volume sold, and its share sold at reduced price is 30%. 41 items represent 19 brands and come from 14 suppliers.

In this category we have to remember that seasonalities effect outcome. A large share of mustard purchases are done in the weeks before Christmas.

Sales in five weeks just before Christmas represent 31% of the volume sold.

The ***catsup*** group contains 2565 observations. Total volume sold is 28 382 kilos, with 30% of sales at reduced price. The largest brand represents 32% of volume sold, with 22% of sales on deal. The second largest brand has 27% of sales with a deal share of 31%, followed by number three with 23% of sales a deal share of 46%. Total number of brands is 9 from 8 suppliers. Number of items on sale in this category is 28.

Snacks is a large group with 14 606 observations of data, for 200 weeks as this is one of our trial categories. Volume sold is amazing 60 000 kilos, with 20% sold at reduced price. The two largest brands, of 30, represent 75% of volume sold. They have 17% of their sales at reduced price, while the other brands deal share is 30%. 132 item numbers in this group from 17 suppliers.

If sales are categorized into chips, peanuts and other types of snacks we end up with following the result; chips accounts for 38% of volume – 18% at reduced price, peanuts accounts for 23% of volume – 31% at reduced price.

The ***soap*** group contains 90 different items of 31 brands. 23 suppliers sell these. For analytical reason soap has been divided into two subcategories. Hard soap are all soaps that are sold in grams, and liquid soaps are measured by milliliters. In this category it might be worthwhile to make analysis on sales in money, on the condition that hard soap and liquid soap are considered to be comparable. 5627 litres of liquid soap (4169 observations) was sold under the period of 197 weeks, 17% of these were sold on deal. 8683 kilos of hard soap (4012 observations) was sold, 37% of these were sold on deal. Hard soap has also been divided into number of soaps.

Number of soaps	1	% of volume	21	% on deal	2
	2		18		6
	3		32		37
	4		5		44
	5		12		29
	6		27		65

We have 5001 observations of ***toothpaste*** sales over a period of 167 weeks. Total volume sold is 5035 litres, with 22% sold on deal. Two major brands answer for 45% of volume sold. Their share of deal prices is slightly higher, 27%, than for the total category. The consumer meets seventeen brands in this category and 60 item numbers. Number of suppliers is 12.

Appendix 4

Glossary

This list of terms is included to show how I use them. Some of the explanations come from Bolen (1988). Sales promotion is defined by Blattberg & Neslin (1990). Most definitions are my own.

Activity means that a product is promoted, see sales promotion.
Article has a unique article number.
Brand is a common communicator towards the consumer. For example Coca-Cola which is a brand that includes several articles.
Campaign means that the product is promoted, see sales promotion.
Display is when an item is exposed in the store on another spot than regular shelf-space.
EAN (European Article Number) corresponds to the american UPC. It is usually a 13-digit identification number with barcodes that are specific for each item.
Feature advertising is advertising where chain or store is sender and a number of products are mentioned. See examples in appendix 5.
Item is the lowest level of identification, see SKU.
Loss leader pricing means selling an item below the market price or even below cost in order to generate store traffic.
Markdown is a reduction from the original retail price.
Markup is the difference between what the item costs and what it is sold for.
Movement means volume sold.
Price deal is a temporary price reduction.
Price discount is a temporary price reduction.
Product is used both for article, item and for a somewhat higher level. Product can be both schampoo and a particular kind thereof for normal hair.
Product category is a group of products, example rice or crisp bread.
Product group is the same.
Promotion, see sales promotion.
Sales Promotion is an action-focused marketing event whose purpose is to have a direct impact on the behavior of the firm's customers. This can include one or several of for example feature advertising, direct mail, price reduction and display.
SKU (Stock Keeping Unit) one, distinct individual typ of item carried by a store.
Variety means the number of lines carried in a store.
Voluntary chain is when a retail store aligns itself with a particular wholesaler who will offer various services and provide the store with all or almost all the merchandise it needs. The store will ususally take on the name of the voluntary chain.

Rivning pågår...

Fastighetsägare, om ni ser denne man på tvärgatan gata på Nedre Norrmalm, si hälsa i ert hus. Det är han som "river stan". Tekniske direktören Åke Hedtjern på sig in till de nio borgarrådens på onsdagsmorgonen — för att lämna en rivningsrapport.

Efter en två timmar lång överläggning i borgarrådsberedningen på onsdagen beslöt man att ge rivningsspecialisten direktör Åke Hedtjern i uppdrag att snarast inkomma med ytterligare ett PM över det allvarliga rivningsläget i Stockholms city. Då skall he la stadskollegiet inkallas för att ta ställning till förslaget att gora stora delar av Norrvägenkvarteren till provisorisk parkeringsfält på "obestämd tid".

Finansborgarrådet P. O. Hanson (fp) har — tillsammans med hr Hedtjern — kontakt egna manar i den egna staden på rivningsmarken. Det Hr Hanson hoppas på att kunna hitta en dessarlattnings-magic genom Storstadsnämnden. Pa den ena sidan finns dessa fina sevärda man da kunna bygga det nuvarande stadshotellet.

Men en ned tekniker av eleptisks och talar om att man måste se hela Storstadsområdet som "en funktion", och vänta på utökningen av Flodstadsomvandlingen.

Under alla förhållanden måste stadshotellet rifas om redan beslutet National alternativ. Da dartor inte med hur det gar med Stockholmshotellet.

Projekter i ke Storstagen pr i New York under arbetsnamnet "Stora Jagen". Beskriv av Ahman

Höstagille

hushålla-handla hos ICA

Stockholmssektionens ICA-butiker

**-märkta priser gäller t.o.m. lördag 27 sept. *-märkta priser gäller t.o.m. tisdag 30 sept.

***Wienerskinka** fett och svälfri extra prima BENFRI ..... kg **17:80**

***Kyckling** FÄRSK KRONFÅGEL ..... kg **13:80**

Kycklinggryta
Beräkna 1 kg kyckling till 4 port. Styckeka kycklingen i bitar, ältrya dem i lite mjölet. Lägg dem i serveringsgryta. Fräs 1–2 hackade lökar och 200 g färska champinjoner. Lägg dem i grytan. Strö over 1 msk vetemjol. Spädmed 3 dl buljong. Smaksätt med kinesisk soja, salt och vitpeppar. Sjud 30 min. Strö frästa salta jordnötter och små tomatklyftor över vid serveringen

***Hjortstek** med ben cry-o-vac djupfrysi kg **29:80**

Hjortstek 4 port
Tina steken tätt och sprit. Gnid in den med salt, vitpeppar och stötta enbar. Lägg steken på galler i en långpanna. Stek den i 150-175 graders ugnsvarme. Stick gärna in en kottermometer i stekens kottigaste del efter drygt 1 timm. Steken är färdig efter ca 2 timm. Vispa ur pannan med vatten. Red skyn till sömmig sås. Servera kokt potatis, sallad och tomater till.

***Falukorv** SCAN kg **10:90**

***Grillkorv** "Hot Dogs" SCAN ..... kg **9:60**

***Prinskorv** skinnfri NORRMALMS ..... kg **16:70**

***Samsöost** 45+ Dansk Ord. ca pris 16:85 ..... kg **13:90**

***Tomater** holländska ..... kg **6:20**

***Äpplen** GRAVENSTEIN ..... kg **3:90**

***Vindruvor** italienska ..... kg **3:20**

Goda tips för Frukostmålet!

*Formbröd Sandwich skivat DIWONG	Ord. ca pris 3:84 ca 450 g	3:15
*Frukostmarmelad BOB	Ord. ca pris 3:33 burk 420 g	2:60
*Brödrost helaut. ROWENTA-TOP 1000 w	Ord. ca pris 113:65 st	85:00
*Brödkorg rund 24 cm diam. sort. färger	Ord. ca pris 13:50 st	9:25

* *Just nu 15% rabatt*
på **Findus** *djupfrysta sortiment*
FISK I FORM *400 g och 550 g*

*Pajer FRODINGE jordgubb, äppel, blåbar eller krusbär	Ord. ca pris 4:55 350 g	3:75
*Löksill LUNDIS	Ord. ca pris 13:25 burk 450 g	9:80
*Krabbkött stycktryst FESTAB	Ord. ca pris 12:20 200 g	9:50
*Dubbelburgare 4 olika smaker djupfrysta SCAN 140 g	Ord. ca pris 2:89	2:40
*Småbröd olika sorter PÅÅLS	Ord. ca pris 2:93 ca 100 g	2:45
*Tomatketchup MILLS, pl fl 550 g	Ord. ca pris 5:37	4:15
*Kaviar mildrökt KAVLI	Ord. ca pris 3:63 tub 150 g	2:80
*Te HORNIMANS	Ord. ca pris 7:67 100 port	6:30
Apelsinsaft ICA	1,5 lit	6:90
*Diskmedel TUSEN-ETT	Ord. ca pris 4:41 600 g	3:50
*Diskborste DISKETT	Ord. ca pris 4:75 st	3:20
*Hushållsduk CHIF-O-NET	Ord. ca pris 4:62 5-pack	3:75
*Tvättmedel TVATTA	Ord. ca pris 15:35 80 dl	13:50
*Tvättlappar baby DUNI	Ord. ca pris 3:35 50-pack	2:70
*Mimosept mini	Ord. ca pris 4:65 10-pack	3:85
*Strumpbyxor bikini NIVELLA, per par	Ord. ca pris 5:95	4:70

Moms ingår i ovanstående cirkapriser. För ytterligare upplysningar eller besked om var närmaste ICA-butik inom Stockholmssektionen är belägen se sid. 384 i yrkesregistret eller ring 81 00 00.
Avvikelser från erbjudandena i denna annons kan förekomma i enstaka butiker av utrymmesskäl eller andra orsaker av lokal karaktär.

Din ICA-handlare kan sina varor.

ICA För den goda maten

FÄRSK Strömmingsfilé i ICA-butiker med försäljning av färsk fisk. **16.80** kg

Ananas från Elfenbenskusten st **13.40**
Kiwifrukt st **3.80**
Swegrosallat i kruka st **6.80**

Chiquita **Bananer 10.90** kg

Revbensspjäll (44.55) tjockskurna **29.90** kg

Brita Olsson, hushållslärare, ICA Provkok:

Veckans Recept

Gryta med spjäll 4 port.
~~Dela 1 1/2 kg revbensspjäll~~ i mindre bitar. Vänd dem i 3 msk vetemjöl kryddat med 1 1/4 tsk salt, 1 krm vitpeppar och 1/2 tsk ingefära. Bryn dem sedan i margarin eller smör. Strimla 1/2 vitkålshuvud (ca 600 g) och 2 gula lökar. Fräs alltsammans i matfett i en stekgryta på svag värme. Varva i spjället. Tillsätt 4-5 dl vatten, 1-2 buljongtärningar och 3 msk tomatpuré. Sjud på svag värme ca 1 tim. Strö över klippt persilja. Servera kokt potatis till.

DJUPFRYST I FOKUS

***Räkor** frysta med skal storlek 70-90/kg (58.50) **39.90** kg

***Stillahavslax** kval Pink (49.00) kg **36.80**
Torskfilé VÄSTKUSTFISKARNA (11.20) 300 g **9.80**
Scan Småköttbullar stekta (14.15) 200 g **9.90**
Scan Småköttbullar stekta (33.65) 500 g **24.90**

***Hållö Queen Krabba** (32.35) burk 200 g **28.60**
FINDUS Majonnäs vanlig eller lätt (17.75) glas 450 g **14.90**
Champinjoner PRIMOR i bitar (6.95) burk 190 g **5.70**
Kejsarvåfflor KUNGSÖRNEN (9.45) paket 400 g **6.95**
BOB Sylt Hallon el Jordgubb (10.95) 410 g **9.80**
Hushållslingonsylt BOB (43.60) hink 1.5 kg **34.60**
***BOB Cider** Äpple el Päron (6.35) 63 cl **5.70**
Krossad Ananas DEL MONTE (7.95) burk 376 g **6.95**
Del Monte Päron (13.65) burk 825 g **11.90**
LUXUS Kaffe Mellan Mörk eller Skånerost (29.95) vac 500 g **25.90**
LUXUS Kaffe Colombia (30.45) vac 500 g **26.80**
Maryland Cookies (8.45) 175 g **7.60**
PRIPPS Blå Öl (5.95) burk 50 cl **5.25**

Isterband LARS JÖNSSON (46.10) kg **39.80**
Rimmat Bogfläsk DAFGÅRD (61.80) bit kg **55.60**
Scan Kalvsylta (12.70) 250 g **11.40**

Just nu 10% rabatt på Lars Jönsson Smörgåsmat:
Rökt Skinka, Kokt Skinka, Kokt Medwurst, Hushållsmedwurst eller Salami.

RiksOst Prästost runmärkt Rödklövern (55.75) 31% ärslagrad kg **49.80**
Vit & Grönmögelost SAGA (107.95) kg **86.90**
Vit & Grönmögelost SAGA (15.25) 150 g **12.90**
Kavli Frestare olika smaker (13.35) 175 g **11.40**
***Kalles Kaviar** (16.85) tub 300 g **14.85**

SALTMÄSTARN
***Kassler** (79.55) varmrökt färdig att äta **54.80** kg

VECKANS KLIPP!
Farfarslimpa LOCKARPS (10.70) 600 g **5.95**

Kristinaskorpor SKOGAHOLM (17.90) 450 g **12.90**

Påskkaktus per kruka **15.90**

ICA GARANTI Din ICA-handlare garanterar alla varor i sin butik. Är Du inte nöjd med varan får Du den utbytt eller pengarna tillbaka. NÖJDA KUNDER KOMMER TILLBAKA.

Priserna gäller t o m lördagen den 30 mars. *-markta priser, gäller t o m lördag 6 april. Priserna inom parentes avser ICA-Storstockholms rekommenderade cirkapriser. Avvikelser från erbjudandena kan förekomma i enstaka butiker.

Annonsservice för synskadade: Fr o m torsdag kl 08.00 t o m lördag kan man ringa 08/91 50 54 så får man veckans matannons upplast.

ICA handlarna i Stockholmssektionen

För den goda maten

Rostbiff i bit ____ kg **99.00**

Utskuren Biff i bit ____ kg **109.00**

Fryst Älgfärs ____ 500 g **24.50**

Varmkorv ____ kg **69.50**
med skinn

Ge-We´s Munsökorv ____ kg **66.90**
bitpackad

Färskfylld Pasta BERTAGNI ____ 250 g **18.50**
Cappelletti/Tortellini

Rökt Kalkonbröst ____ kg **169.00**
skivat

Benfri **Högrev/Märgpipa** **69.00** kg

Birgitta Rasmusson, chef, ICA Provkök:

Böngryta 4 port.

Blötlägg 3 dl vita bönor över natten. Koka dem enligt paketets anvisning. Skär 500 g benfri högrev i bitar, 2x2 cm. Koka upp 5 dl buljong. Lägg i köttet och låt det koka under lock. Skala 2 gula lökar och 2 morötter. Skär lökarna i klyftor och morötterna i stavar. Lägg ner det i grytan och krydda med 1/2 tsk salt och 3 krm svartpeppar. Låt koka ca 45 min eller tills det känns klart. Smaka av med 1 msk soja, 1 tsk vinäger och lite kajennpeppar. Tillsätt bönorna och låt grytan puttra 10-15 min. Servera med bröd och ev. sallad.

Pris ca 13:50/port. utan tillbehör.

Annonsservice för synskadade: Fr o m tisdag kl 08.00 t o m lördag kan man ringa 08-91 50 54 så får man veckans matannons uppläst.

Ren-Hjortskav Scan djupfryst ____ 240 g **26.80**

Fylld Spätta Findus djupfryst ____ 320 g **35.90**

Sprödbakad Torsk Findus djupfryst ____ 260 g **23.80**

Potatiskroketter, Pommes FELIX Nouveau/Duchesse djupfrysta ____ 400 g **16.50**

Skogaholms Bröd **Kristinaskorpor** 3 smaker ____ 450 g **19.90**

Västerbottenost Rikskäs runmärkt kg ____ **74.80**

Husets Briost kg ____ **109.00**

Mozzarella HØNG strimlad påse 200 g ____ **17.70**

Condis Royal 2 sorter 120 g ____ **12.90**

Dubbeltoa Elite 8-pack ____ **19.90**

Lännerstalimpa Schumacher! 550 g ____ **11.90**

Finskt Bondbröd Pekkers 650 g ____ **17.90**

Svea Tårtbotten 3 delad 340 g ____ **14.90**

Småbröd 4 sorter 145 g ____ **12.90**

Dubbelköks Elite 4-pack ____ **19.90**

ICA handlarna

Stockholmsdistriktet

ICA Garanti:
Din ICA-handlare garanterar alla varor i sin butik. Är Du inte nöjd med varan får Du den utbytt eller pengarna tillbaka.

ICA-handlarna för kvalitet

Priserna gäller t o m lördag 7 mars. Avvikelser från erbjudandena kan förekomma i enstaka butiker.

Kaffe LUXUS ____ vac 500 g **16.90**

Kaffe LUXUS Mocca/Colombia ____ vac 500 g **17.90**

Tomater från Kanarieöarna **19.90** kg

Red Delicious Äpplen från USA ____ kg **12.90**

Gröna Vindruvor från Chile ____ kg **19.90**

Morötter Ö Swegro otvättade ____ påse ca 2 kg **9.90**

Ros i kruka ____ st **22.50**

PART TWO

THE ROLE OF THE GROCERY STORE IN THE PROBLEM SOLVING OF HOUSEHOLDS

– A STUDY OF FOOD PURCHASES AND FOOD HABITS

1 INTRODUCTION

When demand and supply meet in the grocery store it can be described as a meeting between two different logics. The supply is organised based on logistical considerations, i.e., dry products, frozen foods, dairies, etc. are separately managed, handled, and displayed. Special displays and promotions often display products side by side that would not be served together but that are logistically similar.

A meal is organised after a different logic, often containing products from several of the different logistical categories. When consumers come to the stores to purchase ingredients for a meal, or even to decide on what to eat for dinner and purchase what is needed for it, they have to adapt their purchasing and decision making to the logic of the supply.

Everyday life in a household can be seen as a steady flow of problems needing to be solved. One part of this daily life is food; deciding on what to eat, what to purchase, where to buy it, how to prepare it, etc. Restrictions occur in terms of, for example, time and money. The consumers have the choice to buy or not to buy, to buy more or less, to continue frequenting the same stores or to spend their budget elsewhere. If the households are not pleased with what the stores offer they can either switch store or complain and try to initiate a change. But, how large is the difference between stores? Is it worth the effort to change store? What is the cost in time and effort to be an active consumer? How much do we know about the consumer and her everyday reality, her values and her attitudes towards the retailers and their credibility? Do consumers perceive themselves as having the power and the ability to choose and influence? Another question is whether they really care?

From a consumer perspective the following quote from Julander may serve as an illustration of the type of problem to solve:

> *"At the heart of the decision process for food lies the general problem for households to produce meals; two to three meals per day, year after year. Not only that, these meals should satisfy the needs and wants of all members of the household. A missing product can ruin a meal and being out of stock can strongly affect the satisfaction of the household members. These decisions not only are highly frequent but also extremely important for the general welfare of the household."*
>
> (Julander, 1989, p. 2)

The consumer can use several different strategies to manage this reality of everyday problem solving. The importance of the stores in consumers purchasing was shown in an earlier study (Holmberg, 1992) which used scanner

data to study effects of feature advertising and other promotions. Different types of promotions also led to different sales volumes. The most intriguing result was that effects of in-store promotional activities were considerable. When campaign activities were not followed up in the store environment, much lower volumes were sold of the products on deal. The role of the store, and the retail store-customer relation, thus seem important.

On a yearly basis, the turnover of the Swedish grocery retail stores reaches about SEK 165 billions (Supermarket 6-7/95). This sum is an aggregate measurement of all visits to grocery retail stores. On the household level, the visits to the grocery store on average amounts to expenditures of about 20 per cent of consumption (SOU 1987:44). Depending on geographical area households report that they visit a grocery store 2-3 times each week (Dagens konsument, 1994). Grocery shopping is thus both a frequently occurring activity and answers to a large part of the household budget. Many studies also report that a large share of purchase decisions are taken in-store. Bowman (1987) reports on a study where as many as 80 percent of all brand purchase decisions were taken in store. The stores thus seems to be important from several perspectives in this frequently occurring activity, grocery shopping.

The Swedish grocery retailing sector employs almost 400.000 people (trade and retailing) (SCB, 1995). The development and continued prosperity of this sector is thus of importance in the Swedish economy. With technological development more and a greater variety of competences will be needed by the workforce. A well functioning distribution and retailing system has long been regarded as important, reported Anell (1979) referring to several governmental analyses of the issue.

In the grocery retailing industry, competition has increased on store-level, partly due to deregulation which opened up the market to new actors a few years ago. Food prices is a much discussed topic in Swedish media, and the price level is considered as high relative to other comparable countries (SOU 1987:44). Discount stores have entered the market, and are gaining market share, even if this share still is somewhat low compared to other countries. With increased competition it has become even more important for the retailers to finetune their professional tools and to strive for a better understanding of their customers.

The increased competition, influenced also by Sweden joining the EU, have among other things also brought the consumer into focus. Earlier concentration on prices in market communication has to some extent been complemented with aspects of credibility like involvement in health issues, environmental questions, and focus on Swedish farm products. Some retailers work actively with reducing their volume of waste, and urge consumers to leave

unnecessary packaging in the store, in order for the retailer to be able to give this feedback to the respective suppliers.

Manufacturers and suppliers of provisions every year allocate large resources to marketing of existing as well as new products. The retail chains spend much energy and money on marketing the different retail stores and their assortments. Other parties, more indirectly interested in the grocery retailing industry, are, for example, different societal actors interested in the food habits of the population. In order to improve the health of the population resources are spent on information about what is good to eat from a nutritional point of view and what should preferably not be on the menu.

For a number of years, high interest rates in combination with technological development have brought logistics into focus. Much attention and effort has been placed on improving the flow of products. With an increasing assortment to manage, this has been a both important and rewarding allocation of resources. Technology has also brought with it new analytical possibilities that also illuminate the retail store-customer relation. It has become easier to administrate membership cards and bonus systems, and to fill them with new benefits and attractive segmented services. The on-going efforts to attract more members show that the grocery retail chains are actively interested in increased customer loyalty, which also should make them interested in more knowledge about how the consumers look upon the grocery retail stores.

For, among other things, these reasons it is of importance to investigate the role of the grocery store in the households' meal planning and in the actual purchase situation. Considering the household, their needs and problems, it is interesting to discuss to what extent and in which way the grocery store is involved in and facilitates the households' everyday chores.

The grocery retail store can be seen as the place where all the actors (supplier, manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer and others) meet the consumer. It is the place where the outcome of all resources allocated to marketing can be measured in what is actually purchased. This role of the store, as the meeting place, is in my opinion very important, deserving more attention than it has received in the past.

1.1 Purpose and Delimitations of the Study

The purpose of this study is twofold.

The first, and main, purpose is to *describe and understand households' decision processes for food, with the role of the grocery retail store in focus.* This means studying households' meal planning, purchases of ingredients, and how households experience these activities.

The aim of the study is thus to focus on the relation between the retailer and the consumer. One expected outcome is to be able to identify ideas for how

retailers can facilitate households' problem solving process as a way of building long term relations with their customers. This focus on the retail store-customer relation does, however, not exclude other actors in the trade. They are here assumed to have an interest in understanding, facilitating and improving the retail store-customer relation. This study is not about identifying techniques by which it would be possible to sell more goods, it is about a way to look upon the role of the grocery store.

The second purpose is *to explore the usefulness of a method that allows closeness to the consumer*. Such a method enables the study of the grocery store – customer relation from a consumer viewpoint. A contribution from this study is increased understanding of the value of applying such method in consumer behaviour research.

To summarise, this explorative study aims at generating ideas – ideas for how to develop stores, ideas for how to look upon the retail store-customer relation, and ideas for further research. There will be no attempts to give normative recommendations or to generalise from the empirical study beyond what can be said about the households included in the sample.

1.2 Outline of the Report

In chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, the reader is introduced to theories and empirical studies from some different fields of research related to consumer behaviour. The chapter is concluded with the extraction of some themes, concerning the households decision processes regarding food. The themes appear again later in the chapter on method and in the presentation of the results.

Chapter 3 presents how my method, participant interviewing, evolved and where the major inspiration came from. This is followed by a presentation of the empirical study in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 contains the results. Here we first meet the different households, before the themes are discussed based on the empirical study. An attempt to relate the different themes to each other follows, as well as comments related to the theoretical framework, before the role of the store is discussed.

In chapter 6, a final discussion and managerial aspects are presented before the report is concluded with suggestions for further research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework reflects the fact that this research issue is on the "border-line" between several different areas. Many inspiring studies from ethnography, anthropology, sociology, and social psychology have provided me with an increased understanding of the problem under study, but I am doubtful that the presentation here treats them with full justice. My training in business administration in general, and marketing in particular, presumably affects both which theories that have been chosen and how they are presented.

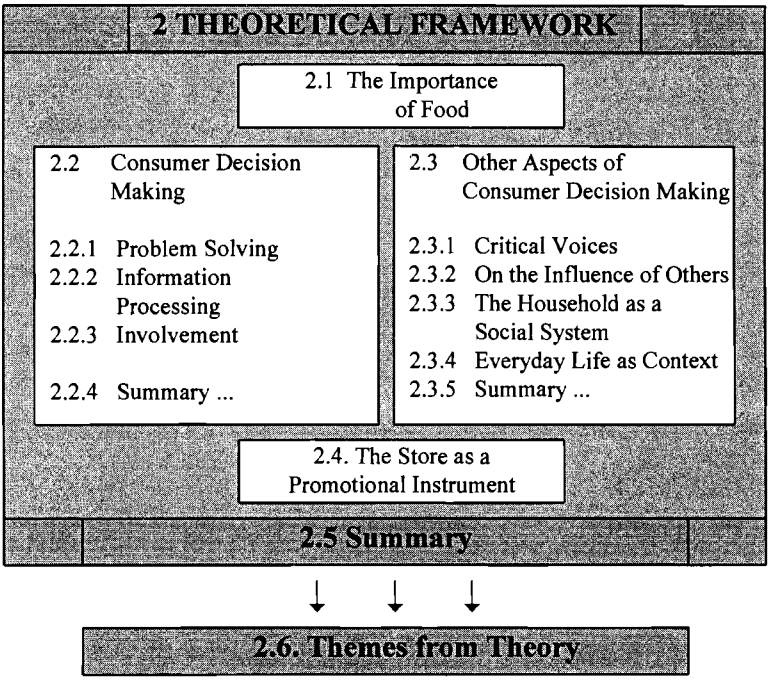


Figure 1. Outline of the theoretical framework

The order of presentation of the different topics is illustrated in the figure above. As the study deals with households' decision processes for food, and the role that the grocery store has in that, the first part of the chapter is a discussion of the importance of food. This illustrates that food can be important for many reasons, of which nutritional value is but one.

Next follows two sections about consumer decision making. The first part concerns the more traditional theoretical works, and discusses problem solving,

information processing, and involvement as the notions seem helpful in this study, and has received much recognition. Some empirical studies on consumer decision making are presented, before the section is summarised.

The second section points to aspects of consumer decision making that I judge to be influential, but that are not included in the more traditional models and theories. Some of the criticism raised from consumer researchers follow next. Part of the critiques concerns the fact that much research has focused on the individual decision maker. As this study has households in focus, the influence of others is discussed. The next section, the household as an open system, also concerns decision making and behaviour in the household setting. Decisions are not only influenced by other people, they are also made in a context. The decision process that is of interest here is frequently recurring, and everyday life as a particular context is therefore discussed next. A few empirical studies, illustrating these aspects of consumer decision making are presented, before the section is summarised. The everyday behaviour of the retailer is treated in the concluding part discussing the store as a promotional instrument.

Finally, the theoretical framework is summarised, to clarify to the reader how the theories are regarded, and what the earlier empirical studies have shown. The main question treated in the study is the households' decision processes regarding food, with the role of the grocery store in focus. Some themes that emerge from the theoretical discussion are regarded as useful for the empirical study. These themes are presented as a conclusion of the theoretical framework.

2.1 The Importance of Food

Food is important. Besides being physiologically necessary it plays a major part in most peoples' lives. From the infant age and onwards, a large part of our learning and our lives are food related. In the primary socialisation we learn behaviours, enforced by rewards, that are maintained through life. "Don't talk with food in your mouth", "say thank you before leaving the table", "use your knife and fork properly", "drink the milk instead of pouring it over the plate", etc. Looking at how small children spontaneously behave, the opposite seems more natural. Childhood is an apprenticeship, and appropriate food related behaviour is a skill to be learnt.

When discussing different aspects of food consumption and the food consumer, McKenzie (1986) identifies five fundamental laws:

"... (1) Food preparation, storage and consumption act as an aid to feelings of security.
(2) Food selection and preparation act as a direct substitute for maternal creativity.
(3) Food choice demonstrates group acceptance, conformity, prestige.
(4) Food compensates for denial so is used as a support during times of crisis.
(5) Our choice of food and drink acts as a means of demonstrating mood and personality"

(McKenzie, 1986, p. 160)

Berger and Luckmann (1966) see the immaterial world as socially constructed. This means that we live with social, more or less explicit norms, for which behaviour is correct in different situations. There are of course also norms related to food, and food related behaviour. When faced with a new situation, we also have a set of norms for how to behave and perceive what is the established course of action in such a situation. We learn by watching and imitating, as we have done since we were very young. This is interesting also in the context of meal planning, what we eat, how we get and treat the ingredients. When small children accompany a parent to the grocery store, learn which products and brands that are brought to the home and that are today advertised on TV, they learn which products and brands that are used in the household and which are acceptable (and thereby attached with no social risk). By gradually being exposed to other types of households, institutional dininghalls, and meals in different social contexts, the frame of reference is broadened and individuals learn what is suitable in different groups and at different occasions. We have fixed ideas of what kind of food is appropriate on which occasion, which complementary products go well with a certain meal, etc. The pace of change is slow and may have different causes. Changes in household composition, marketing, debates in media, and societal information are examples of things that might lead to change in behaviour.

A Norwegian study by Fürst (1988) shows that a search for identity and cultural belonging are the primary bases of food habits. Dishes which follow old traditions are passed on from mother to daughter, and contribute to a sense of security. A need for freedom among the younger is expressed in new, foreign, and modern food. The sociological significance of food has also been treated in a number of essays edited by Murcott (1983). The role of food and eating in rather different settings is illustrated with the wedding meal as one example and the role of food in domestic violence as another. These authors, like so many others, mean that food has not been enough treated in research.

Research about food and eating can, according to Ekström (1990), be divided into two main groups: food and health, and food and culture. Mennell et al (1992), also sociologists, discuss ethnological food research, and show that

much of the work has been on certain very narrow issues, like white vs. dark bread, or the importance of the wedding meal.

Burgoyne and Clarke (1983) show the importance of food and meals in family building, and in upholding the family as an institution. Their study concerned reconstituted families and they also show that in the new family the meal can be a battlefield or a place where the new family is shown to be an improvement over the old one.

The importance of food and its strong social loading has for example been treated by Sjödén (1989) and Cline (1990) who both discuss food habits in relation to looks and perception of the own body. Cline also means that food has turned into a battlefield between the sexes. Sjödén (1991) regards the meal as a forum for learning of, for example, societal norms, conversational skills, what is important and what one is supposed to talk about. When tests have been made letting children try new food it has been shown that influence from parents particularly affect the children, both relative to influence from other children and other adults. It cannot be described as easily as "we eat as our parents", the correlation is low. Sjödén means that we eat what we learn to like, but that we learn during our whole life, both as children and as adults. Studies show however, according to Genrup (1988), that food habits change very slowly.

Jansson (1988, 1993) studied food habits and relations to food from an ethnological perspective. Food habits are defined as:

> *"... individuals' behaviour and approach towards food – how it is organised and what they think, mean, and feel regarding the extensive daily routine that we normally call 'to eat'"*
>
> (Jansson, 1993, p. 4, translated from Swedish)

Food habits are according to the author also, besides being an adaptation

> *" ... an active construction with social purposes, something that is consciously used to form or express the purpose of a relation"*
>
> (Jansson, 1993, p. 25, translated from Swedish)

With such a meaning food habits seem to be a passing phenomenon, related to primary social circumstances. As long as the social constellation is stable that is also relatively true for food habits. When a change takes place in the individual's social surrounding, the relation to food and food habits is also changed. According to Jansson, food habits are used as a part of the social play and a connecting link in the relation with the close family. Jansson also compares the conditions to get nourishment in the old farmer society, with those of the nineties. Conditions have been radically changed and were earlier being

driven very much by external circumstances. The conditions to get nourishment today are more dependent on personal standpoints, like opinion and taste, values and knowledge, feelings and wants. The "meaning" of food, according to Jansson who applies an interactionist view, is something that appears in an interhuman context.

Ekström's model from 1990 presented below is an illustration of how we choose food, and of the complexity of this process. The model summarises Ekström's analytical discussion which focuses on the difference between intentions and actual results.

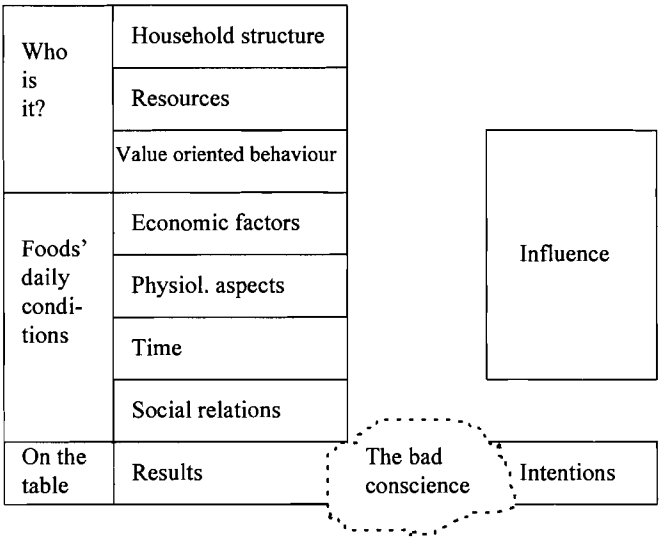


Figure 2. "An illustration of our choice of food", from Ekström (1990) p. 176

That the outcome, which in one way is a solution to the problem at hand, still can give the problem solver bad conscience illustrates once more how important food is.

2.1.1 Empirical Studies Illustrating the Importance of Food

A study of food socialisation in French families found that food is an important issue in French childrens upbringing. Sjögren- de Beauchaine (1988) who studied meal patterns in French families belonging to the buorgeoisie found that developing the taste of children, and teaching them to be able to appreciate a varied menu, is regarded as a way to teach them culture, just as important as teaching them to appreciate literature. The meal in the French families conserves tradition and has a ritualistic form, as has purchasing of the ingredients. When the meal is described by the participants it contains three

different themes: the food, the surroundings, and the social exchange or meeting.

Jansson (1988, 1993) studied Swedish households in different life cycle stages, sizes, and ages. He found large differences in how food is regarded depending on social circumstances. When a couple have their first child their household becomes a family, something which is manifested partly through the shared evening meal. Everybody in the household eats the same food at the same time, which might be a difference from other meals during the day. Interviews with people who for different reasons have become single eaters, even though they wish for a different situation, show that having dinner alone, can serve as an indicator of just how lonely a person is. They seldom feel so lonely as they do at the dinner table. Jansson also found that households, which on the surface seem to have very similar conditions, can have completely different food habits, understanding of what is essential, and view on the importance of food. Cline (1990), for example, found that for some people a sense of security can be found in having the pantry and the refrigerator full. Other households meant that having large supplies at home is a part of how a family life is lived.

A Norwegian study of twentyfive households with small children showed, that establishing a family has great consequences for food patterns in the household (Wandel et al, 1995). This study also reports that as women work more, their ideal picture of the housewife seems to have faded away. The women, who were mostly responsible for food in the household, found it important to cook something proper because of the children. They expressed their view of what a proper meal consists of, which was however not what they cooked, because of lack of time. During the weekdays, time aspects were important determinants of food choice.

Also in Swedish families with children, the housewife seemed mostly responsible for food and mealplanning, according to a study from the cities Umeå and Uppsala (Ekström, 1990). The housewife was the one with the "pantry-in-her-head". Daily cooking in the median case took about an hour, while an hour and a half was used on weekends. The children's participation in preparing the meal was limited. This study also showed that 40 per cent of the families had breakfast together, while 75 per cent shared the dinner table.

Danish studies have focused on a way to relate food to life style and way of life. Grunert et al (1993) propose an instrument called food related life style, which they have tested empirically in three cultures/countries. Life style is here a mental construct, which explains, but is not identical with, actual behaviour. Life style transcends individual brands or products, but may be specific to a product class. When this is related to food, the following five elements are used as links between food products and values: 1) shoppings scripts, 2) meal

preparation scripts, 3) desired higher-order product attributes, 4) desired consequences, and 5) usage situations.

2.2 Consumer Decision Making

For the past thirty years, research in consumer behaviour has been in high demand. With increases in private consumption also followed increases in research interest. Much of the focus has been on influencing and shaping behaviour. What, then is meant by consumer behaviour? Engel et al (1995, p. 4) define consumer behaviour as *those activities directly involved in obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services, including the decision processes that precede and follow these actions.*

Much research has discussed consumers' decision making processes. Decisions can of course be made at all levels of detail and concern numerous issues. The research and industry interest in how consumers make decisions has to a large extent been related to brand choice, importance of price, etc. Decision making can be seen as a process, or studied more singularly focusing on a particular outcome.

van Raaij (1988a) discusses the importance of information in decision making and illustrates how information plays a part on the three different levels where decisions are made:

1) generic level (to go on vacation or not)
2) modal level (which type of vacation)
3) specific level (which destination or travel agency)

These three different types of decisions levels need different types of information, where generic decisions are more built on time- and financial constraints, and general conditions.

O'Shaugnessy (1987) wrote about "buying as rule-following behaviour" and proposed that rules may be personal, social, or institutional. Whether they are personal or social, they are usually followed unconsciously. Consumers know the reasons for their actions but are not aware of the rules embedded in the reasons. According to O'Shaugnessy, rules are important for eliminating mistakes; a way to guide between right and wrong. A rule is a description of a regularity in buying behaviour. To be able to identify the rules that buyers use we must understand the meaning of the purchase for the buyer. The possibility of understanding the consumer builds on the assumption of "shared meanings".

2.2.1 Decision Making as Problem Solving

Consumer decision making can be discussed in terms of problem solving. Purchasing is then seen as solving problems. Howard (1989) uses three types of problem solving in his Consumer Decision Model. According to Howard this is

applicable only for choices among product categories, and not singular products. The model also rests on the idea of the product life cycle, with its three stages: introduction, growth, and maturity.

Extensive problem solving (EPS) occurs when the consumer finds an innovation, a new product category for the consumer. The buyer must then form a new product category concept with belonging criteria. The amount of information used is large, and is searched externally as the consumer has no earlier experience with the category.

Limited problem solving (LPS) is relevant when the consumer comes in contact with a new brand in a known product category. Memory processing is an active part as information is stored.

Routine problem solving (RPS) occurs when the consumer is purchasing from known categories where s/he has experience. The purchases are of repetitious character of well known brands from well known product categories. Here it is mostly enough that the consumer recognises the brand rather than recalls the brand which takes more energy from memory. Known and accepted brands from each product category are in the consumers evoked set, which could be described as a mental list of potential brands in each category. This last type of problem solving is often exemplified by grocery purchasing.

2.2.2 Information Processing in Decision Making

Bettman (1979) sees information processing as a central part of consumer choice. He presented a model of information processing that has received much attention. The model is based on the assumption that consumers are exposed to large amounts of information that can be relevant for different situations. How consumers react to information, interpret it, make associations to other pieces of information, etc, is of great importance for how choices are made. An important ingredient, in Bettman's model, is the cognitive capacity that affects all steps in the decision process. Limited cognitive capacity is a hindrance for how much information a person can grasp, but also a restriction for how many activities a person can engage in simultaneously. Due to these restrictions the individual builds up patterns for interpretation and simple rules of action to make life more manageable.

These patterns for interpretation can, for example, influence how selective we are in what we choose to react upon out of all the available information surrounding us. *Heuristics* can be described as mental short cuts to facilitate everyday activities. These heuristics can, for example, consist of rules, or strategies, for how to plan our cooking and related buying of ingredients. Rules, like shopping for the week every Friday, always buy minced meat when the price is reduced, or always serve pea-soup and pancakes on Thursdays, lessen

the need for mental effort used for the frequently occurring decisions in everyday behaviour.

Another way to facilitate decision making is by categorisation of information for storing. van Raaij (1988a) discusses this illustrating that a brand can be an example of a "*chunk*", a sort of label in memory that stands for several characteristics in the brand besides the brand name.

Core values can also guide choice. These are important, and basic in understanding the behaviour of people. *Core values*, for example, define how products are used in a society. The example given by Engel et al (p. 619) is that they determine what food should be eaten, and also with what other food products it is appropriate, how it should be prepared and what time of day to eat.

The *consideration set*, sometimes called evoked set was mentioned earlier and described as a mental list from which choices can be made. This consists of what can be retrieved from memory, the retrieval set, and what can be found from an external search. In an external search some predefined criteria would be needed for what to include and what not to include (Engel et al, 1995).

Bettman et al (1991) point out that the accessibility of information and the ease of processing it must be separated. The processability is partly depending on how information is presented. The strategy chosen to make a certain decision normally depends on how the information about the decision is presented and who is making the decision, the social context.

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) argue, however, that only using the information processing approach is not enough, as it treats the consumers as a strictly logical thinker. They point to other aspects of consumption – "fantasies, feelings, and fun" – and propose a more experiential perspective, including the symbolic, hedonic, and estethic nature of consumption. Hirschman and Holbrook do not suggest an abandonment of the information processing perspective, but rather that it is complemented with other aspects of consumption.

2.2.3 Different Levels of Involvement

The notion of involvement has been of importance in research on consumer decision making. Involvement is by Engel et al (1982) defined as *the activation of extended problem-solving behaviour when the act of purchase or consumption is seen by the decision maker as having high personal importance or relevance* (p. 24). This occurs when the product is of high personal relevance, costly, or when there is strong reference-group influence. The decision process then involves active search and use of information. Engel et al say, however, that this type of problem solving process is very rare, as few products are important enough to justify this high level of arousal. When

involvement is low, according to Engel et al the decision process is simpler, even without involving problem solving.

An ongoing discussion concerns whether involvement should be regarded as involvement only in products. Sometimes the product can be purely instrumental while the problem that it helps to solve can be of high importance for the consumer. Whatever the outcome of this discussion will be, the notion of involvement has been of great importance in research on consumer decision making. Discussion has also concerned the quite dichotomous division of involvement. It might be more relevant to regard it as a continuous scale, where decisions might differ over products, persons, and problems. Mårtensson (1987), in going through different definitions of the involvement concept, illustrated the lack of a unique definition, which complicates the discussion.

Kassarjian (1982) suggests that the discussion of involvement should be extended by incorporating the existence of different personality types. He argues that people are in themselves more or less involved, and involvement should thus not only be thought of in terms of products or situations. Kassarjian means that much research has concerned high involvement decisions, which is only a small share of decisions made. An argument of relevance could thus be made, that consumer decisions that are of high relevance to consumers should be studied rather than decisions which by researchers are regarded as high involvement decisions. Relevance for consumers could be in terms of, for example, high share of budget, complex decisions or frequency.

2.2.4 Empirical Studies on Consumer Decision Making

A large number of empirical studies have been done on consumer decision making, some of which will be presented here as they seem relevant for this study. In a survey with 900 respondents, Tollin (1990) treated information seeking among grocery shoppers in some different ways. Questions about whether consumers have the habit of reading the declaration of contents on products generated five groups of respondents. "Always readers", 26 per cent, read often, partly for medical reasons and partly for reasons of mistrust of the manufacturers. The category "interested seldom-readers" was only 4 per cent of the respondents. They choose brands they know, or large brands, and cultivate some primary products themselves. Together with "always-readers" Tollin calls these 30 per cent quality seekers. A group of 10 per cent consist of "never-readers" and the remaining 60 per cent are made up of "periodical readers" and "novelty-readers". They search for much information in some buying situations or during certain periods (for example when dieting).

Degree of information search was further related to interest in cooking and interest in knowledge about the influence of food on physical well-being. 47 per cent are categorised as interested in food/health while about one third of the

sample are called "info-full". 13 per cent are searching information but not very actively and 9 per cent seem totally uninterested. 27 per cent are labelled hobby-cooks. This group is very active and treats cooking, particularly on weekends, as a pleasure. Two thirds of these search for a lot of information. "Recipe-collectors", 15 per cent, do not have the same interest in cooking, but are still collecting recipes from the manufacturers. A low or moderate interest in food and lower degree of information search characterises the remaining 58 per cent of the respondents.

Tollins four main, and partly overlapping categories, ”quality-seekers”, ”hobby-cooks”, ”nutrition/health-aware” and ”price-focusers” are illustrated in the two figures below. ”Hobby-cooks” and ”quality-seekers” have been described earlier. ”Price-focusers” in her survey stated high tendency to read feature advertising and that they engaged in store-switching. ”Nutrition/health-aware” claimed borh an interest in the general bodily well-being and that they were searching information about the relation between health and nutrition.

Tollin further means that the concepts involvement, participation and social situation are central when searching for an increased understanding of grocery purchasers. Involvement, according to Tollin, is a level of activation that indicates the strength behind the motives driving the individual to act in a certain way. For the grocery purchaser these can be; perceived importance, perceived risk, pleasure, and symbolic value. Social situation refers to which company the respondent has in the consumption process, while particpation both includes treatment of groceries in the household and purchasers aspiration to participate in decisions about how manfacturers treat groceries.

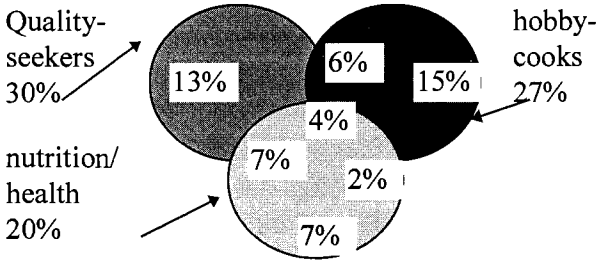


Figure 3. Quality seekers, nutrition/health-aware, and hobby cooks, from Tollin (1990) p. 204

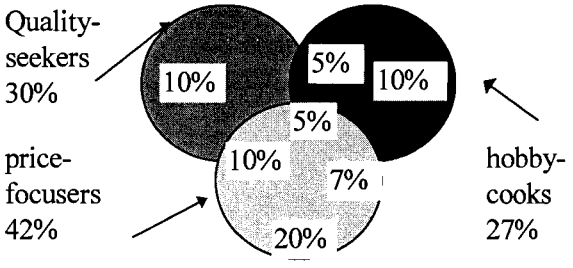


Figure 4. Quality seekers, price focusers, and hobby cooks, from Tollin (1990) p. 192

In an exploratory study of grocery purchases, Linderstam (1989), found buying behaviour to be very routinised, and that the consumers included three different dimensions when calculating how much resources that should be allocated to the purchase. Given these three; time, money, and involvement, it appeared to Linderstam, that many consumers' buying behaviour seemed well thought-out and suitable for their situation. Simple rules of thumb and heuristics were common, particularly in decisions considered to be of minor importance. The most searched for information was about prices. Apart from that, the consumers used in-store information and own experiences from earlier use of the products. Display in the store was important. Consumers also engaged in planned impulse-buying, i.e., their strategy was to buy certain products when these were sold at a reduced price. Price reduction could also work as a decision simplifier for frequent and less interesting purchases, or when the consumer did not perceive any difference between brands. A red price-tag on a product worked as a signal, and the consumers perceived that the price was reduced without grasping what the product really cost.

Haglund (1979) found many combinations of planning in the households he studied. Most households were medium-planners, but no dominating or uniform planning typologies were revealed. More planning was correlated with higher education. Size of household, and age were other discriminating variables. A planning (organised) group was discovered also by Jansson (1988, 1993). Gunnarson and Wahlund (1995), studying households' financial strategies, among their respondents found much variation in the planning dimensions.

2.2.5 Consumer Decision Making: Summary

How do we reach a decision on what to eat and what to purchase, and when is the decision made? It is somewhat difficult to define exactly what the object under study is when we do research on consumer decision making, as decisions are made on many different levels of detail. One useful approach has been to study it as a problem solving process, and thereby focusing also on which type of problem the decision helps to solve. Internal and/or external information is

used in the decision process, and decision making has also been researched with an information processing perspective. Within this perspective the consumer is seen as using heuristics, ie simplifying rules and consideration sets, ie mental lists in order to reduce the need for information processing. The importance of a decision has been connected to the notion of involvement, which has had large impact in consumer research. This useful notion has unfortunately not been defined conclusively, and is mostly used dichotomously even though many researchers propose it as a continuous variable.

2.3 Other Aspects of Consumer Decision Making

2.3.1 Critical Voices Regarding Consumer Behaviour Research

Research in consumer behaviour has during a long period been criticised for being too estranged from the consumers and their reality. An early critic was Tucker (1967) who meant that research should emanate from realistic situations and that theory should be built from that. He illustrated this in his book where he presented descriptions of different buying and consumption situations, which he meant should be the basis for generation of theory. Many other critics arguing the same cause have followed over the years.

One critical voice is Arndt (1980) who made a summary of the expressed criticism and found that some of the main deficiencies that had been adressed were:

- Consumer behaviour has not been studied in relation to public companies, the focus has been on the conditions and interests of private companies, while large areas like for example transportation, education, and health have not been covered.
- Fragmentation is another problem. The form of publication and existing demands to publish do not lead to cumulative science, the research is for example driven by data availability.
- Group behaviour is neglected, normally the individual is the object under study.
- Bias towards decision processes, when it would seem reasonable also to study both consumption and consequences for the consumers.
- Uninteresting problems, in the sense that they are of less importance for the consumers.
- Irrelevant results, narrow testing of hypotheses lead to results that are isolated from a larger context and do not contribute to increased cumulative knowledge.

Another summary by Arndt (1986) divides consumer behaviour research into six groups in the form of a matrix. One axis tells whether the research deals with group behaviour or individual behaviour. The other side concerns the view

on the consumer/group and divides the consumer/group as 1) rational actor, 2) behaviour driven by external variables, and 3) research with a social constructionist perspective on behaviour. Each of these six groups is regarded as a paradigm and Arndt places different research traditions in his matrix. He then establishes that it has been much more common to make studies on the individual level than with groups, and that the view upon the consumer as a rational individual has dominated.

Rationality in itself is, however, an ambiguous concept. Walters and Paul (1970) argued that the consumer is rational in the sense that her behaviour is not random. This is not rationality in the strict economic sense which does not allow for emotionality or variation seeking. Being rational is thinking through ones problem and making a decision based on that. The consumer chooses what at each given occasion seems to be the best alternative given available information, which is also judged to be sufficient.

Anell (1979) means that earlier research in consumer behaviour has lacked in strength in the sense that it has used the wrong perspective by relatively one-sidedly studying the consumer from a company perspective. Anell means that there is great demand for

> *"... development of an alternative perspective, starting from the households' (or the individual consumers') situation and searching to find bases for decisions for solving of the households' or the consumers' problem, and that is not defining consumer behaviour only as purchasing behaviour"*
>
> (Anell, 1979, pp. 48-49, translated from Swedish)

Pinson and Roberto (1988) do not seem to think that it is a problem that consumer behaviour research is so fragmented. What is done is according to them useful for companies engaged in marketing. Ölander (1993), on the other hand, asks for more research with a consumer perspective, and not only managerially applicable research. If it is the consumer we are studying, let her be visible also in textbooks and similar texts.

A somewhat optimistic tone is found in van Raaij's (1988b) discussion of the possible future for research in consumer behaviour. He highlights some biases in focus of research which has been commented on by a number of authors. Based on this discussion he presents eight fruitful directions in which research in consumer behaviour could go. 1) Research about the total consumption cycle, from purchase to disposal is desired. 2) The generic decision making of the consumer is not enough illuminated, i.e., how is the budget allocated between some larger groups like food, clothing, leisure, saving, etc. 3) Consumer behaviour regarding the public sector and the products and services it supplies would be an interesting object to study, particularly as

the pricing of these is not done as in the private markets. 4) Besides marketing perspectives, research could be supplemented with a consumer politics perspective which should also include 5) aspects of "quality of life", i.e., regarding environmental and external effects of consumption. 6) Crosscultural and comparative studies can supplement studies that have been done in the western industrial nations. It is hardly likely that what is generalisable in Europe and North America is applicable in the former eastern block. 7) Affective factors are particularly interesting to study in the field of decision making and finally, van Raaij means that 8) the household as a decision maker is not enough studied.

Heisley and Holmes (1987) also point to the fact that the field of consumer research in marketing has been lacking in studies of the family. Both the family as a consumption unit, and as influencing individuals' consumption, is in their opinion a field where creative consumer research is needed. The research done has mostly used a sociological approach while Heisley and Holmes believe that more research using anthropological perspectives would be fruitful.

Much of the espoused criticism in consumer behaviour research concerns the narrowness of the existing perspectives. Studying consumer behaviour and decision making as narrowly defined processes where each decision, as well as the separate steps, can be distinguished, has been criticised by several researchers. The decisions should instead be seen in their context. It can be relevant to study a chain of decisions, or to view for example marriage as a long term negotiation process. Suggested is also that one can see a tendency for decision avoidance, which can be rational. Nicosia and Mayer (1976) argued for an attempt to work on a sociology of consumption with buying, using, and disposing as main activities. They also argue for the explication of consumption activities in terms of baskets, and more interest devoted to how *time* is allocated. All kinds of activities are, in their perspective, interdependent as a limited supply of time exists. Nicosia and Mayer believe that consumption should be studied relative to cultural values and the values established in the institutions in which the consumption activity is performed. Time as a limited resource has also been treated by Burenstam Linder (1969) who argued for inclusion of time as a variable in decision theory as well as in many other fields. This is, however, something that still has not been treated to any larger extent.

Holbrook (1987) proposes an expansion of consumer research to reflect a fuller treatment of "1) consuming, 2) experiencing, 3) using products, 4) intangible services and ideas, 5) more durable products, 6) expenditures of time, effort, and ability, 7) emotional components, 8) consumer misbehaviour, 9) mutually independent wholes, and 10) concern with consumption for its own sake" (Holbrook, 1987, p. 173). Holbrook advocates a radical change both in

the topics and methods used in consumer research, in search for the roots of consumption.

The discussion about consumer behaviour research has continued and, interestingly enough, been very vital within the Association for Consumer Research (ACR). A number of established American researchers, related to ACR, started off on an "Odyssey" (see Belk, 1991a) over the American continent. The voyage started as a protest against the institutionalised forms that consumer research was done and distributed in, and as a base to start a meaningful discussion. During the trip that all in all took a couple of months, the group engaged in filming, interviewing, and by participant observation coming close to, consumers in a wide variety of different buying- and consumption situations. Belk means that partly they tried to take up Tucker's fallen mantle. This voyage has been followed by a lively discussion with both constructive and critical features, where some say that this might be the rescue for the field of research in consumer behaviour, which was on the verge of becoming totally isolated. A large number of articles and conference papers have been produced emanating from the Odyssey. Solomon (1992) has, for example, incorporated some of these thoughts in his textbook on consumer behaviour. This is indicated already from the sub-title of his book – Buying, Having, and Being.

According to van Raaij (1993), research methodology also has to

> *"... adapt to the changed conditions, emphasizing naturalistic observation, contextualization, maximised comparisons, and sensitized concepts".*
>
> (van Raaij, 1993, p. 562)

Wind et al (1991) discuss procedures within consumer research and establish that a change of paradigm is going on and that research is polarised within different lines of consumer research, with increasing specialisation. They ask for methodological creativity and innovation and an increased intellectual exchange within the different branches of the discipline. Hirschman and Holbrook (1992) propose a worldview where different ways of approaching different truths can exist side by side. For the field of consumer research to prosper and evolve they argue that multiplicity in methods and perspectives as well as understanding and tolerance are needed among its practitioners.

2.3.2 On the Influence of Others

Wärneryd (1988) discusses social influence on economic behaviour. It is common, exists in many forms, and is very often mutual. One of the theories in this field is attribution theory which says that the individual interprets actions as causal and tries to understand the behaviour of others even if he or she is not directly affected by it. The interest within attribution theory has been focused

on whether a person has explained events with human attributes or attributes in the environment.

Social systems, particularly smaller groups, are important in the study of economic behaviour. Bettman et al (1991) point out that decisions are not made in a social vacuum. Each individual in a group is under influence of, and influences, the other group members. In this context, roles and role expectations are also discussed. Economic socialisation is a socialisation process which concerns understanding and growing into the expected and "correct" behaviour. Consumer socialisation is another part of socialisation that might not so often include conscious training by parents, but where imitation and learning still are a large part. The role of the family is another topic discussed under social influences. The family is just one example of a reference group. Reference groups and social comparisons have been presented as reasons for both consumption and other economic behaviour

Folkes and Kiesler (1991) discuss how cognitive processes influence the way in which consumers think about themselves, other consumers, marketers, and the products and services they choose, buy, use, or refrain from. The most important issues are presented below:

- In reference to the person's perception of the self, how is ownership of certain products contributing to this perception? And to which extent does this perception affect what is purchased?
- How is sale or ownership of a product affecting the perception of who that person is, when stereotypes and categorizations are used? How do stereotypical perceptions about others affect how we value products they use?
- How do consumers make causal inferences about themselves and others and about how good products are?
- Which type of inferences about the self is done from knowledge about the attitudes of others to products and their ability to use products?
- How does knowledge about the own person affect inferences about others' product decisions?
- How do consumers' inferences about others before and during social interaction affect how these interactions take part?

The short answer to all of these questions is that other people matter, or that it matters what we believe that other people think. The consistent picture of the self is also important in this context. Social interaction is important, and social context is a factor of influence, both directly and indirectly. Folkes and Kiesler mention, for example, that expectations on social interaction can influence our behaviour. If we know that we might be expected to explain our brand choice, we tend to choose a brand that we can easily find arguments for.

Kirchler (1988) studied decision making in the household. The family is, according to Kirchler, a very important group as it has long term interaction during many different circumstances. Within the realm of the family, another kind of intimacy and other behaviours appear, than what would be considered natural in, for example, a work group. The problem with studying household decision making can for example be that it can be difficult to say who made a decision, and that the spoken is not always the important. A large and important part of family life is interpreting what the other family members think about different things.

Much research has concentrated on how decision making is divided between spouses. Studies have for example shown that some types of decisions can be regarded as belonging to one of the spouses' decision making arena, while others as naturally are taken by the couple together. A certain difference in demographic characteristics can, for example, be a base for defining such divisions. That one part decides more than the other has for example shown to be related to relatively larger allocation of resources, higher involvement, or norms about gender.

2.3.3 The Household as a Social System

Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987, 1989) build on a systems theory perspective and discuss what it means that the family, here called household, can be described as a social system characterised by cooperation, specialisation of tasks, shared home, etc. The following discussion follows chapter four in their book (1987).

A social system can be seen as a group of interacting individuals. Groups on many different levels can be seen as social systems. Society is an example of such a system on a high level. Social systems can also be described as *structures of behaviour*. The issue is then to describe different roles and their respective behaviour. Every role can be subdivided into a number of activities characteristic for that role. Every individual has several roles, and if two roles for two inviduals are dependent on one another, or connected, they are part of a social system.

According to Engström and Hartvig Larsen, other authors have focused on shared values or norms that bring people together, which is called *conceptual structures*. These common views are what define the social systems, and they appear through socialisation and interaction. However, Engström and Hartvig Larsen argue that when the household is discussed as a social system it is not sufficient to use conceptual structures as norms. They believe that by combining conceptual structures with behavioural structures, a more realistic picture of the household is obtained. Behaviour is influenced by norms just as

behaviour has consequences for norm formation. Instead of seeing this as a cause - effect relation it should be seen as an interaction.

Engström and Hartvig Larsen further suggest that two other dimensions should be included when the household is studied. The *resource structure* that is available to the household is important. Absence of household technology might be a restriction, while changes in resource structure can bring changes in other buying decisions as well. Access to a car can also be an important factor. A further dimension is *demographic structure*, for example the number of people in the household, age, income, and stage in the life cycle.

Between all four structures – behaviour, conceptual, resource, and demographic – mutual relations exist. No relation is superior or inferior. The household can thereby be described through structures, which constitute the social system which is the household. The four structures and the relations between them are illustrated in the figure below.

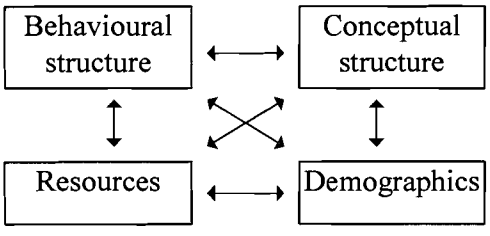


Figure 5. Model by Engström & Hartvig Larsen (1987), my visualisation

Engström and Hartvig Larsen also emphasise the importance of the situation in which a purchased good or service will be used. Use situation is dependent on, or constituted by, the four structures. A use situation with its specific characteristics can thus be regarded as a contextual starting point for a purchase, and that this together with the four structures determine which choice criteria are relevant. Four types of choice criteria are suggested by Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1990); "1) goods/brands being major items on the household budget, 2) goods/brands that can be substituted by better qualitities within the budget, 3) goods/brands being essential in the usage situation nearest in time, and 4) goods/brands being essential in the most significant usage situation among all the usage situations covered by the shopping trip" (p. 1045).They also note that different households rank usage situations differently. The household as a system further contains synergies, which can be reached for example by division of labor and organisation of labor. It is also characterised by being an open system, i.e., interacting with the world around it.

The household is also seen as an open system also by Anell (1979) in her study on households and distribution of groceries. The household is interacting with its environment to accomplish its goals. The household is here however compared to an organisation, a group that consciously cooperates to reach certain goals. Effectiveness is then to minimise resource consumption given the desired results. On the issue of purchasing, Anell means that use of time and other resources for the household members should be minimised. Purchase of groceries is seen as an activity that is not particularly meaningful per se, but that leads to a goal with meaning.

> *"Purchasing can be seen as a part of that activity in a household that should lead to the members getting tasty, varying and nutritional food on the table with a minimum of sacrifices of time, work, money, and other resources"*
>
> (Anell, 1979, p. 7, translated from Swedish)

2.3.4 Everyday Life as Context

As context is referred to so often and considered important in this study it seemed to deserve being elaborated on separately. As an illustration of its importance, it can be mentioned that in the latest version of the widely used textbook by Engel et al (1995), environmental influences take up a whole part. This part covers cultural influence, ethnical influence, social class and status, personal influence, family and household influences, and situational influences. Situational influences has a whole chapter to itself. When comparing with an older version of Engel and Blackwell (1982) the difference is striking. In the 1982 version of the high involvement model of consumer decision making, external influences are cultural norm and values, reference group/family, and something called unanticipated circumstances, of which the latter only affects choice. What now takes up several chapters in the eighth edition was given relatively little attention in the fourth edition. Situational influence, according to Engel et al (1995), can be viewed as the influence arising from factors that are particular to a specific time and place that are independent of consumer and object characteristics. Engel et al themselves talk about communication situations, purchase situations, and usage situations. The purchase situation includes both information environment and retail environment.

In the different texts referred to and read, three different terms are used which seem to have similar meaning; context, environment, and situation. A dictionary[1] was consulted to clarify this issue.

The meaning of context is *1) the parts of somethings written or spoken that immediately precede and follow a word or passage and clarify its meaning*, and *2) the*

---

[1] The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 8th ed, 1990, Oxford University Press

circumstances relevant to something under consideration. Environment means *1) physical surroundings and conditions, esp. as affecting people's lifes, 2) conditions or circumstances of living, 3) Ecol. external conditions affecting the growth of plants and animals*, and *4) a structure designed to be experienced from inside as a work of art.* Situation is explained as *1) a place and its surroundings, 2) a set of circumstances; a position in which one finds oneself; a state of affairs, 3) an employee's position or job*, and finally *4) a critical point or complication in a drama.*

These three different terms seem to stand for almost the same thing. Irrespective of whether agreement has been reached on the definitions, it seems agreed upon that the field of consumer research has much to gain by taking context into consideration (see for example van Raaij 1993, Rogoff 1984, Tversky and Kahneman 1986, Warlop and Rathneswar 1993). Grafton-Small (1993) argues that "... it is surely impossible to see consumption of any shape as somehow independent of the environment in which it takes place." (p. 95)

Belk (1975) proposed five groups of characteristics defining situation:

> *"1. Physical Surroundings are the most readily apparent features of a situation. These features include geographical and institutional location, decor, sounds, aromas, lighting, weather and visible configurations of merchandise or other material surrounding the stimulus object.*
> *2. Social Surroundings provide additional depth to a description of a situation. Other persons present, their characteristics, their apparent roles, and interpersonal interactions occurring are potentially relevant examples.*
> *3. Temporal Perspective is a dimension of situations which may be specified in units ranging from time of day to season of the year. Time may also be measured relative to some past or future event for the situational participant. This allows conceptions such as time since last purchase, time since or until meals or payday, and time constraints imposed by the prior or standing commitments.*
> *4. Task Definition features of a situation include an intent or requirement to select, shop for, or obtain information about a general or specific purchase. In addition, task may reflect different buyer and user roles anticipated by the individual. For instance, a person shopping for a small appliance as a wedding gift for a friend is in a different situation than he would be in shopping for a small appliance for personal use.*
> *5. Antecedent States make up a final group of features which characterize a situation. These are momentary moods or momentary conditions rather than chronic individual traits. These conditions are further stipulated to be immediately antecedent to the current situation in order to distinguish states which the individual brings to the situation from states of the individual which may result from the situation."*
>
> (Belk, 1975, p. 159)

Finally this must have a "demonstrable and systematic effect on current behaviour", something which has to be empirically tested. Belk reports that

empirical studies have found a significant impact of situation on consumer behaviour. A shorter, and perhaps somewhat negligent version of Belks characteristics of situation is: Where, With whom, When, What to do and In Which Mood. Denzin (1983) discusses situations as important in interpretative interactionism and says that all experience is situation-related as situations represent how a person is currently anchored into the life-world. Situations, on the other hand, exist only to the extent that people act upon them and make them real. Social context as an important factor in understanding how people see themselves and others is discussed by Folkes and Kiesler (1991).

Ekström (1995) points to the importance of recognising both situation and environment as variables that might be explanatory when studying children´s influence in family decision making. Environment is defined as "the context in which interaction between parents and children takes place with a focus on purchasing and consumption aspects" (p. 97). Ekström considers situation to be more specific than environment, but is aware that they are interrelated and that the words sometimes are used as synonyms.

Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987) point to the importance of the intended usage situation when studying purchasing behaviour. Situations are in their terms seen as social reference points which to a large extent will be governing behaviour. They are also placed in time, and constitute the passage of time in a way to make it understandable. The situation can also be defined as external or internal depending on who will be participating or able to observe it.

Going back to the object of this study, everyday life can be regarded as a context. To manage all the daily transactions and keep the household running like a smooth operation can be regarded as a task of some complexity. The goal can be regarded as a general level of well-being. Different members of the household have differing expectations and will to contribute. Things like meal planning have to be done over and over, day by day, and year by year. The household has to find a state of equilibrium where the amount of effort used on mealplanning, purchasing, and preparation is in good balance with the resulting meal and the value attached to that. Where to find this balance is an issue related to preconcieved notions, interest, divison of responsibilities, ages of household participants, stages in life cycles, primary and secondary socialisation, etc. A large number of factors are thus directly or indirectly included in this process of adapting to how to create a feasible and running everyday life with whatever scarce resources there are. The balance is a social construction of everyday life that probably basically is stable but still is in constant change. Minor changes appear all the time, and larger changes appear when there is a structural change in the composition of the household or its circumstances. The context is both socially and materially constructed. The context is thus contributing as creator of both needs and problem solving

strategies. Of importance is also that it is the context as *perceived* that is influential, as well as *perceived* resources.

2.3.5 Empirical Studies on Other Aspects of Consumer Decision Making

All the studies done in the Odyssey (Belk et al, 1991a) could be presented here. Their empirical studies of consumers in different consumptions situations, provided rich knowledge on consumer behaviour. Reporting on, for example, vacation performances, collections, out door markets, and a Barry Manilow Fan Club, the Odyssey serves as good illustrations of the importance of including context in consumer research.

Jansson found in his studies (1988, 1993), that ready-made food was used mostly by single households, while the families with children mostly started from primary products. Several of the larger households also had different means of obtaining food besides shopping in the store. The households had clear pictures of what type of household they were and how such behave. In the social interaction these behaviours are enforced. Creativity for example demands social response – it is not as pleasing to be creative just for one self.

Tollin (1990) found in her surveys that the social situation at the table influenced to which extent buyers were interested in buying ready-made food. The buyers who eat alone, or where there is little interaction at the table, will to a larger extent buy ready-made dishes, seldom cook with a recipe, and show a low degree of variation in the menu.

Overall the empirical studies indicate a lack of variation in the weekly menus, which is also supported by the lists of popular dishes published by retail chains. Hager (1988) studied variety in purchasing of red meat, poultry, and fish, and concluded that variety on household level might be perceived very differently.

2.3.6 Other Aspects ..... : Summary

In consumer behaviour research, the lack of realism together with the narrowness of the perspectives have received most criticism. When consumption is studied from a broader perspective, the rational individual making a single decision is replaced as object of study, and other aspects apart from buying decisions, are studied. Consumer behaviour is regarded as social, in the sense that other people matter. Other people influence what we purchase, and inferences are made from the consumption pattern of others. Decision making is influenced by others, and many buying decisions are such that the outcome of the purchase has an impact on several people. It is then natural to think about the buying decisions as influenced, for example, by a group of people or a household. The household as a decision making unit was discussed. Viewing the household as a social system, constituted by its conceptual structures, behavioural structures, resources, and demographics, appears as a

realistic and manageable way of analysis. To focus on context is also a way to strive for realism in research. Context is used, in this study, as the circumstances relevant to something under consideration. With everyday life as a context, problem solving related to food is just one of the many tasks that need to be handled over the day.

2.4 The Store as a Promotional Instrument

The store can be seen as a media, or as the meeting place with the consumer. The store can also be regarded as a promotional instrument, or be promoted just like a product. Kotler's (1988) definition of product is: "A product is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or a need" (p. 445)

The product can be described on three levels 1) core benefit/service, 2) tangible product, meaning the larger packaging, and 3) augmented product, which is added features like extra services etc. Retailing can in this respect be seen as a product with a lot of augmented values to it. Retail outlets can be described as having distinct images or personalities, expressing the augmented values, which contribute to the consumers store choice. According to Boyd and Levy (1967), stores have their own brand images. A stores image consists of many dimensions, of which the promotional profile is one.

Promotions have been extensively treated in marketing literature. It is described as a tool to increase sales and is one of Kotler's original 4 P:s (product, place, price and promotion). Kotler (1980) defines promotional tools (promotools) as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and publicity. Sales promotion is here anything that is not included in one of the other three. Sales promotion tools have two distinctive qualitites: insistent presence and product demeaning.

Blattberg and Neslin (1990) find four themes that should be retained in a good working definition of sales promotions. Sales promotions are 1) action focused, 2) marketing events, designed to have a 3) direct impact on behaviour and 4) to influence consumers or marketing intermediaries. Blattberg and Neslin comment on the issue of creating an immediate sale, which have been included in some definitions of promotions but they do not think that this is totally supported by empirical evidence. They also refrain from using short term impact which has been rather common, as they think that the long term effects need to be studied more.

Blattberg and Neslin divide promotions into three major types: consumer promotions, retail promotions and trade promotions. They state that it is important for managers to understand not only how consumers respond to promotions but also why. Involvement is important in the process, and Blattberg and Neslin describe consumers as high-involvement consumers or

low-involvement consumers. The consumer with high involvement is an active information seeker and processor who attempts to maximise satisfaction with his purchases. The products are closely tied to the highly involved consumers' identity and belief system and the consumer evaluates brands in detail before purchasing. Information is rarely searched by the low-involvement consumer and when found processed passively. They seek an acceptable level of satisfaction and the products are not tied to the consumers identity and belief system. The low-involvement consumer might evaluate the product after purchase. Promotions has the possibility to influence consumers with both levels of involvement, according to Blattberg and Neslin.

Blattberg and Neslin (1990) state that there are four basic mechanisms according to which sales promotions affect sales. These are:

- *"brand switching – the consumer is induced to purchase a different brand from that which would have been purchased had the promotion not been available*
- *repeat purchasing – the consumer's probability of buying the brand again in the future is influenced by purchasing the brand on promotion*
- *purchase acceleration – the consumer's purchase timing or purchase quantity is changed by the promotion*
- *category expansion – the consumer's total consumption of the product category is increased by the promotion"*

(Blattberg and Neslin, 1990, p. 112)

In other words, it can be said that there are different ways that consumers can react and behave, when facing promotions. Not all of these mechanisms have been supported by empirical data, and the authors claim that in the real world marketplace it is likely that all the mechanisms occur at the same time.

One of the consumer's problems is to combine a basket of products to produce a meal, and the retailer's problem is to provide an assortment of brands and categories, and help to solve the consumer's problem. For the retailer, four promotion objectives are particularly important; generating store traffic, moving excess inventory, enhancing the store's image, and creating a price image. These are aimed at through a portfolio of planned and less planned promotional activities. Considering the new tools the trade has obtained through scanners and higher processing power in small PC:s, this portfolio can today be managed in a much better way than before. New ways to model and plan campaigns have for example been presented by Persson (1995).

The stores are interested in having loyal customers. Promotions serve, among other things, as a means to attract new customers as well as a way to communicate to earlier customers that the store is worthwhile visiting again. New customers, however, have been customers somewhere else earlier, which implies store switching. A customer can engage in store switching because an

important difference is perceived between the stores, or sometimes just because there is a need for variation.

Loyalty was discussed by Hirschman (1970), who basically argued that customers or members in organisations have the choice of using exit or voice when dissatisfied. Exit means to leave the organisation while voice is to make a complaint. The customers using the voice-option, if something is done about their complaints, are more likely to become loyal customers.

A thorough discussion of the notion of loyalty is found in Laaksonen (1993). When loyalty is defined only as a certain share of purchasing devoted to a particular brand or store, the underlying assumption is that this is an expression of a positive attitude towards that brand or store. In summary, Laaksonen argues for a more dynamic approach to loyalty, which includes multiple dimensions as well as multiple objects. The notion of loyalty should be defined and applied in such a way that it reflects the buyers resistance to switch object.

2.4.1 Empirical Studies on Store-related Behaviour

Research done involving the grocery retail store have to a large extent used a brand manager perspective. The problems in focus have been choice of brands, price elasticities, etc.

The stores total sales volume represents a combination of different types of purchases. An American study by FMI on purchases in grocery retailing, referred to by Tordjman (1988), has suggested the following typology:

- *"routine purchases which represent a household's food supplies for a period which usually varies between three and seven days. This category of purchases, despite the fact that it is in decline, continues to account for 75 per cent of supermarket sales;*
- *stock-up purchases which are made when the consumers want to increase their household stocks;*
- *fill-in purchases such as milk, butter, bread, and all kinds of basic or missing products;*
- *purchases for consumption on the same day, such as sandwiches, prepared dishes, or salads;*
- *adventure purchases, which is a method by which the consumer goes out to make discoveries without a predetermined list of items to buy."*

(Tordjman, 1988, p. 56)

Kahn and Schmittlein (1992) divided shopping trips into major trips and fill-in trips. Their study, using scanner data for crackers, showed that coupons were used relatively more on major shopping trips, while purchases of featured brands were relatively higher on fill-in shopping trips. The effects of in-store display was researched as well, but the pattern in this case was not clear.

Already in 1954, Stone, a sociologist, presented a shopper typology, with four categories: 1) economic, 2) personalising, 3) ethical, and 4) apathetic. Similar categorisations have followed (see for example Darden and Reynolds, 1971, Williams et al, 1978) but Stones categories seem basically to hold, even if more aspects have been added in later studies. One question in this type of research is whether the typologies should be of shoppers or shopping trips. Situational factors and type of problem might make large differences in how the purchase is perceived by the shopper. Laaksonen (1993) criticises many of the studies dividing buyers into shopping types as they regard the shopping types as distinct and static.

Tollin (1990) identified three major categories of buying behaviour. The variables used to discriminate between buyers were degree of information search and loyalty towards the store. "Price focusers", 42 per cent, choose both store and product from feature advertising. "Store loyals", 23 per cent, read feature advertising, but did not engage in store-switching. The third category, "the flexible", 35 per cent, visited the store on a daily basis, and did not collect much information about weekly price offers. Both store loyal customers and store switchers were included in this category. More younger buyers were found in the flexible category, while older buyers were more focused on price. This is hardly surprising as older buyers probably have more time to spend on grocery shopping relative to other age groups. Store switching due to price reductions was rare in Linderstams (1989) exploratory study of buying behaviour.

In an earlier study, Holmberg (1992), I used scanner data from one store to study effects of promotions. In-store activities gave high sales volumes for all fourteen product categories included. Feature advertising gave much lower contributions to sales, and the results indicated that the consumers used the stores as reminders and sources of inspiration.

Many empirical studies on promotion effects have used a manufacturer perspective. Blattberg and Neslin (1990) thoroughly discuss how promotions affect sales. Studies of brand switching indicate that cross-elasticities are assymetric between brands. These assymetries can to a large extent be explained by price-tiers. More empirical studies on repeat purchasing need, according to Blattberg and Neslin, to be done in order to be more certain on the extent of this effect on sales. Purchase acceleration has been both theoretically and empirically supported. A large share of these studies have been done using data for frequently promoted packaged products, while more studies need to be done with other categories. Category expansion has not yet been empirically demonstrated, according to Blattberg and Neslin. Again it should be reminded that all four effects probably occur simultaneously. Another issue is that the effects mentioned here all are short-term effects, while long term effects need to be taken into consideration.

Blattberg and Neslin (1990) also discuss retail promotions, i.e., using a retailer perspective. Going through empirical studies in the field their key findings are:

> *"1.Promotional responsiveness is much greater than price responsiveness.*
> *"2.There are certain effects that cannot be explained by standard economic models. These include "ending in 9"-effects and "N for X" prices.*
> *"3.Panel data show that consumers appear to stockpile goods when promotions are offered, but it is very difficult to measure "throughs" after deals using retail scanner data.*
> *"4.Some items within a product category derive their sales increase by cannibalizing the sales of other items in the category. These items may not always be profitable for the retailers to promote.*
> *"5.The magnitude of the deal response across brand and product categories are approximately the same. While there is substantial variation, it may be possible to use the mean elasticity level and shrink all the coefficients to this grand mean.*
> *"6.Deal effectiveness decays exponentially the longer the deal is run. The reason given is that consumers begin to treat the price decrease as though it was permanent. However, the exact cause is not well understood.*
> *"7.Display and feature advertising increase sales in the range of 75 to 100 percent. They may interact with price promotional discounts."*
>
> (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990, pp. 363-364)

Persson has conducted a number of scanner data studies using a retailer perspective. With receipt data for coffee, Persson (1992) firstly concluded that promotions affect volume sold, and thereafter decomposed the sales increase. This revealed that promotions increased the number of shoppers buying from the coffee category, as well as the number of shoppers buying the promoted brand. The average quantity purchased per buyer also increased. No stockpiling among the consumers was indicated as most buyers purchased just one or two packs of coffee. This is, however, not particularly surprising as the coffee category is very frequently promoted, which reduces the incentive for consumers to stockpile. A category effect on the effectiveness of promotions was found in another study by Persson (1993) using scanner data for six product categories. A third study by Julander and Persson (1993) found empirically that food items were more sensitive to promotions than non-food items.

Woodside and Trappey (1992) asked consumers about their primary store choice among supermarkets, and which store they were least likely to visit. Their results show that consumer's top-of-mind brand or store name associations with some characteristics of the store or brand is strongly related to her shopping and buying behaviour. Price promotions and feature advertising

led some customers to switch stores to make their purchases of disposable diapers in a study by Kumar and Leone (1988).

2.5 Theoretical Framework Summarised

The summary of the theoretical framework will focus on aspects of everyday life related to food, particularly with the role of the grocery retail store in mind. The theory on consumer behaviour has been rightfully criticised for beeing too distant from a consumer viewpoint. This study will try to avoid this criticism by using a consumer perspective.

Food is important for a number of reasons. Food can be a carrier of cultural meaning, tradition, consolation, a means of expression, a problem, and sometimes pure joy at the same time as it is an everyday task to be managed. Food carries strong social loading, and the meal can be important in upholding the family as an institution. Food habits are socially constructed patterns expressing both the individual, different roles, and relations. Food habits have different functions, that need to be understood in their respective contexts. Reading works in sociology and ethnology add to the understanding of food habits as cultural and social phenomena. The theories on social construction can easily be applied to consumer behaviour. Decision rules, which brands that are accepted, which store chain to visit, what to cook and eat, and when, are all socially constructed patterns of behaviour, learned in interaction. Food habits, perceptions of food and its social role, are also socially constructed, formed during the younger years, and later modified. Changes in social conditions, exposure to new environments, and other influences bring constant, and slow, changes in these socially constructed patterns of behaviour. The largest change of behaviour occurs when there is a change in social conditions.

Decisions on what to eat, what to buy, and how to prepare it can be seen as frequently occurring and routinised decisions, at least where the Monday to Thursday mealplanning is concerned. Grocery purchasing is often suggested in literature as an example of low involvement purchasing. Involvement in purchasing should however be seen in relation to context. Everyday meal planning need not be highly involving each day, but can still be regarded as an important issue for the general well-being of the household.

The grocery purchasing decisions are interrelated as, for example, a certain variation in the menu is desired and provisions might last for more than one meal. Moreover, they are made under restrictions in terms of time and money. Contrary to the instrumental view on purchasing, involvement is regarded as important. Little time and money, but a genuine interest in food can lead to a different rationality in buying, than what would be found in a household with more time and money but lacking interest. Rationality is regarded as subjective and socially constructed, whereby it is both culturally and contextually

influenced. For the individual and the household it is probably a question of finding *their* rationality, given the *perceived* conditions.

The buying decisions are regarded as recurring problem solving. The households establish routines and simple decision rules to facilitate managing the information dense and complex environment. These routines are also influenced by variables such as involvement, and time and money at disposal. It seems likely that each consumer has numerous different consideration sets, some of which might be overlapping. It has been shown that households have different purchasing strategies, and differ in the evaluation of the importance of price, store loyalty and information search behaviour. Display of products in stores and price information affect behaviour and can be included in the decision rules. Studies have also shown that households with similar socio-demographic characteristics show different patterns of behaviour and attitudes.

As humans are social, interacting beings and food, as was said earlier, plays a role in social interaction, other people matter also in the daily problem solving regarding food. The household is seen as an open system, interacting with its varying environment. The system can be described through conceptual, behavioural, demographic, and resource structures. This means that given the life cycle stage of the household and the resources they have access to they will identify certain roles for themselves, partly governed by the norms and values existing in the household. To see behaviour, norms, and values as constantly interacting gives a picture of a dynamic system, which is under constant influence from many directions.

The households decision process for food will be studied in its context. With context is here meant circumstances relevant to something under consideration, and in this study the management of everyday life is regarded as the relevant circumstance.

That many decisions concerning food purchases are made in the store, or made earlier and carried out in the store, point to the importance of the store as a promotional instrument and as an instrument to approach the consumer and search to understand the consumer. The role of the grocery store, has been scarcely studied from the perspective taken here. The store can be regarded as a product or brand that needs to be managed with care, in order to keep its image and attracttion to customers. The product retailing offers augmented service, which must be adapted to what the consumers demand and are willing to pay for.

Empirical studies have pointed to the importance of food, particularly the social aspects. There seems, however, to be different patterns, or attitudes, as well as buying behaviour and ways to manage the daily problem solving regarding food. Several studies point to the importance of involvement. A number of studies have collected data in the retail store. These studies have

mostly used a manufacturer perspective or a retailer perspective. The unit of study has frequently been the shopping trip, or a particular choice of brand. The effects of retail promotions have been extensively studied. In-store display in particular has been found to have significant impact on sales volume. A lack of studies from a consumer perspective is evident.

2.6 Themes From Theory

The following main themes have been extracted from the theories presented, and were used in the empirical study. The order in which the themes are presented does not tell of any ranking of importance among them.

The issue to be treated is where the store enters the households decision process for food. Of interest is not only where, but also in which way. In the decision process for food is included planning and purchasing of the meal and ingredients necessary for that.

The themes are a useful way to highlight dimensions that are of importance in this study. Many of them can be seen as operationalisations of the model by Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987), which indicates the importance of their model in this work. All the themes touch to some extent on the issue of decision making, which thus can be regarded as an implicit theme.

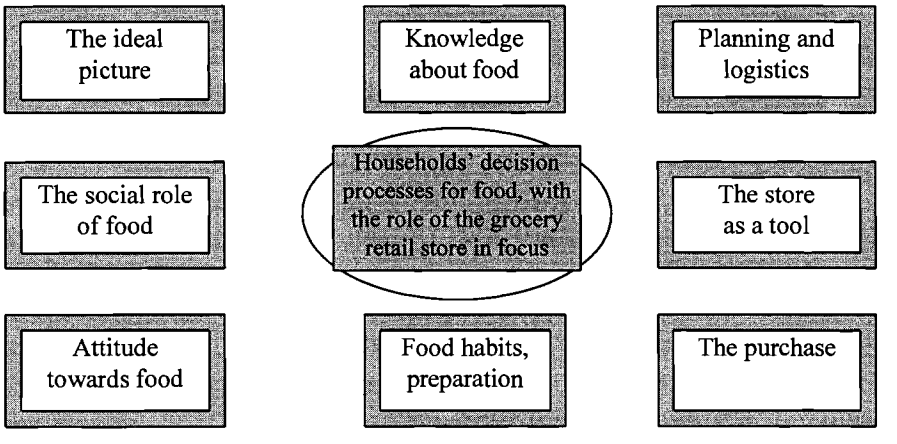


Figure 6. Themes from theory

The ideal picture. As this study deals with an area of change, the ideal picture of everyday life related to food, is important as a model. The theories on social influence (Folkes and Kiesler, 1991) and attribution theory (Wärneryd, 1988) can be used to understand the importance of others in building up and maintaining the ideal picture. In terms of Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987),

it is an expression of the conceptual structures. That there exists strong pictures of how a household should perform, is reported in many sociological and ethnological studies, while a Norwegian study (Wandel et al, 1995) reports slightly contradictorily that the ideal picture is fading away and that housewifes have fix ideas on what a proper meal is. Other studies indicate that the households seem quite satisfied, which indicates that there exists no gap between the households perceived state and ideal state.

The social role of food. Food as a socially important instrument is covered in much literature. Food as an instrument of upbringing, food as an expression of the role of the household, food as an indicator of loneliness, etc. Many different aspects have been illustrated in the theoretical framework. Using the terminology by Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987) this is also part of what constitutes the conceptual structures. The social role of food is regarded as socially constructed, in the manner of Berger and Luckmann (1966).

Attitude towards food. Engström and Hartvig Larsen's (1987) conceptual structures also includes the households' attitude towards food. Both Jansson (1988, 1993) and Tollin (1990) discuss the importance of food-related involvement, where for example Tollin's hobby-cooks express an active interest in food. Linderstam (1989) also found involvement to be one of the major dimensions discriminating between households.

Knowledge about food. Tollin (1990) showed that interest in food and interest in knowledge about food was an important discriminator among the households in her study. Being knowledgeable can also be regarded as being competent. Knowledge is not what Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987) have suggested when they discuss resource structure, but it is appealing to regard knowledge as one of the households resources, a simplifying one.

Food habits and preparations. In terms of a cultural carrier of meaning, food habits can be seen as an expression of this. Food habits can be seen as social constructions, an expression of conceptual ideas, and, according to Jansson (1993) as a way to express the role of the household and some of the values considered important. The notion of consideration set and heuristics can also be useful in this part. In Engström and Hartvig Larsen's (1987) terms, food habits and preparation can be regarded both in behavioural and conceptual terms.

Planning and logistics. The notion of the rational planner as an ideal sticks up its head with persistence. The view upon the purchase as purely instrumental (Anell, 1979) supports the idea of the planning consumer as a good customer. In Engström and Hartvig Larsen's terms (1987) this is part of the behavioural structures, while the view upon planning is a consequence of the conceptual structures. Earlier studies show that planning behaviour varies among households.

The store as a tool. Tollin's (1990) segmentation of consumers on the basis of buying behaviour also implies different ways to use stores. This has also been found in many of the studies focusing on the effects of promotions where in-store activities have led to significant increases in sales volume (see for example Holmberg, 1992). Linderstam's (1989) study showed that stores were used as sources of information, which has also been suggested by van Raaij (1988b) who stated that stores can be used as external memories.

The purchase. Earlier studies have reported on different types of buying behaviour (see for example Jansson, 1988, 1993, Linderstam, 1989, Tollin, 1990). Anell (1979) regarded the purchase as instrumental, while Tordjman (1988) reports on a way to divide shopping trips depending on the reason for the purchase. The consumers' consideration set can be studied, as well as heuristics used in decision making. This is also one aspect of Engström and Hartvig Larsen's (1987) behavioural structures.

3 METHOD

Research, according to Morgan (1983a) is a distinctively human process, through which researchers make knowledge. The knowledge produced by this study will be of an exploratory nature, and can for example be used as topics of discussion, or to generate ideas for further studies. The chosen method combines the nature of the problem under study, with existing theory in the field, and with the characteristics of the researcher doing the study.

As shown in the literature review, few studies exist that clarify the role of the store in households' planning and purchasing of groceries. Furthermore, quantitative and postivistic approaches have been used in studies of consumer behaviour. Critical voices have argued that these approaches have not used a consumer perspective. This study applies a method that allows closeness to the consumer, and takes a consumer perspective.

An interpretative approach is recommended by Sandberg (1994), when the object under study is human action. In this approach, the human world is never a world in itself, it is always a perceived world. One example of this is that two people can react differently to one and the same stimulus, because they perceive it differently.

This chapter will begin with a presentation and clarification of the object under study. Some different methods are thereafter presented. These are the methods that I read about, and was inspired by, before feeling prepared to do the empirical study. The selection consists of grounded theory, naturalistic inquiry, culture analytical methods, and ethnographic methods. These readings led me to participant interviewing, which is what I call the method I used in this study, and which is closely related to ethnographic methods. Criteria for evaluating qualitative research are discussed, before participant interviewing is presented with a discussion of its advantages and disadvantages.

3.1 The Object under Study (Clarifying the Purpose)

The study treats something as complex as the household's daily problem solving related to food. This implies both which form the planning takes and, more specifically, how the planning and managing is carried out. (Purchasing, cooking, storing, planning, buying routines, decision rules, use of recipes, ...). Daily problem solving can be studied on two different levels. The first level is the actual behaviour and the reasoning about it, and on a higher level attitudes, opinions, and values. Is it easy or difficult, is one a master of the situation or is it with a sense of deficiency that the daily decision making is lived through?

The aim of the study is to show *the role that the grocery store* today *plays* in households meal planning and purchasing, and to generate ideas for possible consumer related changes/improvements. My intention is to dig into the daily problem solving of the household. One aim is to identify their mental choice heuristics, or routines. As this is partly unconscious rules, or at least of such a character that they work like automatic rules, it is something that is difficult to reveal just by asking the individuals. Apart from the mental rules, I am interested in studying how information is searched for and where impulses come from. Of interest is also the households constraints and prerequisites, and how these are perceived by the households. If the constraints are taken as given, or are perceived as constraints can certainly make a difference. I am searching for their *perceived action space*. Earlier studies have pointed to the importance of involvement, interest, and participation. These are of interest to study per se, but it is also interesting to see to what extent they affect, or maybe constitute, the action space.

3.2 The Road to a Method

Considering how little was known about the object under study, I decided at an early stage to use a qualitative approach. The method had to be of such a character that it allowed closeness to the consumers, was not governed completely by theory but instead open for what the empirical data brought.

In this task of finding a suitable method, and to understand its application, some of the methods that I read about, inspired me and gave me pushes in different directions, even if none of them seemed to be the best solution for this project. Eventually my own method, which I call ***participant interviewing***, evolved from my readings. This section attempts to tell the reader how it evolved.

3.2.1 First Stop: Grounded Theory

Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) was my first line of thought. The main idea in grounded theory is to let theory be grounded in empirical data. This was a way to protest against the established view within sociology, where it, according to Glaser and Strauss, was meritorious to use theory to generate elegant hypotheses that could be tested empirically.

In grounded theory the researcher should enter the research field as a "blank sheet", without preconcieved notions. This is seen as a way to let the empirical data speak for themselves as much as possible. "Theoretical sampling" is used, which means maximising variation, and a sample cannot be defined beforehand. Data collection and analysis take place in interaction, so that already collected data can be allowed to affect further data collection. The criterion by which further sampling is judged, is the supposed relevance for the

emerging theory. Thereby the sampling can be adapted to what is found during the process, and be ended when nothing new is added. The process is comparative. Data are compared to data which are compared to categories which are compared to each other, etc. "Theoretical saturation" is reached when no further characteristics can be identified or added to the categories. A category is a separate element in a theory – a notion, and should be a concept on a somewhat higher level of abstraction than data itself.

The method has been discussed and criticised, for example for its lack of guidance regarding procedures for coding and analyses. In the original text a "common sense"-approach can be said to dominate. A more recent presentation by Strauss and Corbin (1994) describes grounded theory as a general method to develop theory that is grounded in systematically collected and analysed data. More instructions on actual procedures to use are included.

The lack of specific instructions have led users of the method to develop their own interpretations. Brytting (1991) and Södergren (1992) both used a version of grounded theory in their dissertations. Brytting's version of grounded theory was somewhat more formalised, and he compared the method of analysis with a content analysis of the researcher's own cognitive map after empirical exposure in two steps.

The advantage of grounded theory, and what makes it tempting, is the focus on empirical content. Today, however, agreement seems to exist that data always are theory-loaded. There is always a context or frame of reference in which we make interpretations of data (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 1994). This is contradictory to the idea of the researcher as a "blank sheet", which is also something that grounded theory has been criticised for. The method, which seems to ask for both strictness and openness, at the same time, without really specifying how, demands much of the researcher. Brytting (1991) and Södergren (1992) report that they put much work into developing their own versions of the method.

3.2.2 Second Stop: Naturalistic Inquiry

Naturalistic inquiry was used in the research tour called The Odyssey[2] (Belk et al, 1991a), descrived earlier. These researchers version was an interpretation of Lincoln and Guba's presentation, in their book from 1985.

[2] This was first discussed in the theoretical framework, under 2.3.1. critical voices, and has served as a source of inspiration for the present study.

The basic assumptions of the naturalistic inquiry are (Lincoln and Guba, p. 37):

- Realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic
- Knower and known are interactive, inseparable
- Only time- and contextbound working hypotheses are possible
- All entities are in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping, so that it is impossible to distinguish cause from effects
- Inquiry is value-bound

The following fourteen characteristics will, according to Lincoln and Guba, be typical of research applying the naturalistic paradigm:

1. *Natural setting*, because realities cannot be understood isolated from their natural context
2. *Human instrument*, is the only instrument sensitive and adaptable enough to study the complex and changeable reality
3. *Utilization of tacit knowledge*, is both allowed and important
4. *Qualitative methods*, as they can illustrate the relation between the researcher and the respondent, and thereby easier distinguish the researchers own approach
5. *Purposive sampling*, gives a likelihood of larger variation in the data material
6. *Inductive data analysis*, whereby it is easier to identify the multiple realities that may exist in data, and probably make the interaction between researcher and respondent explicit, recognizable, and accountable
7. *Grounded theory*, i.e., theory grounded in empirical data
8. *Emergent design*, to allow for shift of focus during the process
9. *Negotiated outcomes*, meaning and interpretations are discussed with the respondents
10. *Case study reporting mode*, not scientific or technical
11. *Idiographic interpretation*, i.e., given the characteristics of the researched case (and context)
12. *Tentative application*, due to both context and researcher-respondent interaction
13. *Focus-determined boundaries*, where the context can contribute to how the delimitations are done
14. *Special criteria for trustworthiness*, that together with empirical procedures can secure good (but not total) trustworthiness

In the figure below is illustrated how Lincoln and Guba have chosen to illustrate naturalistic inquiry, even if they point out that each study is unique.

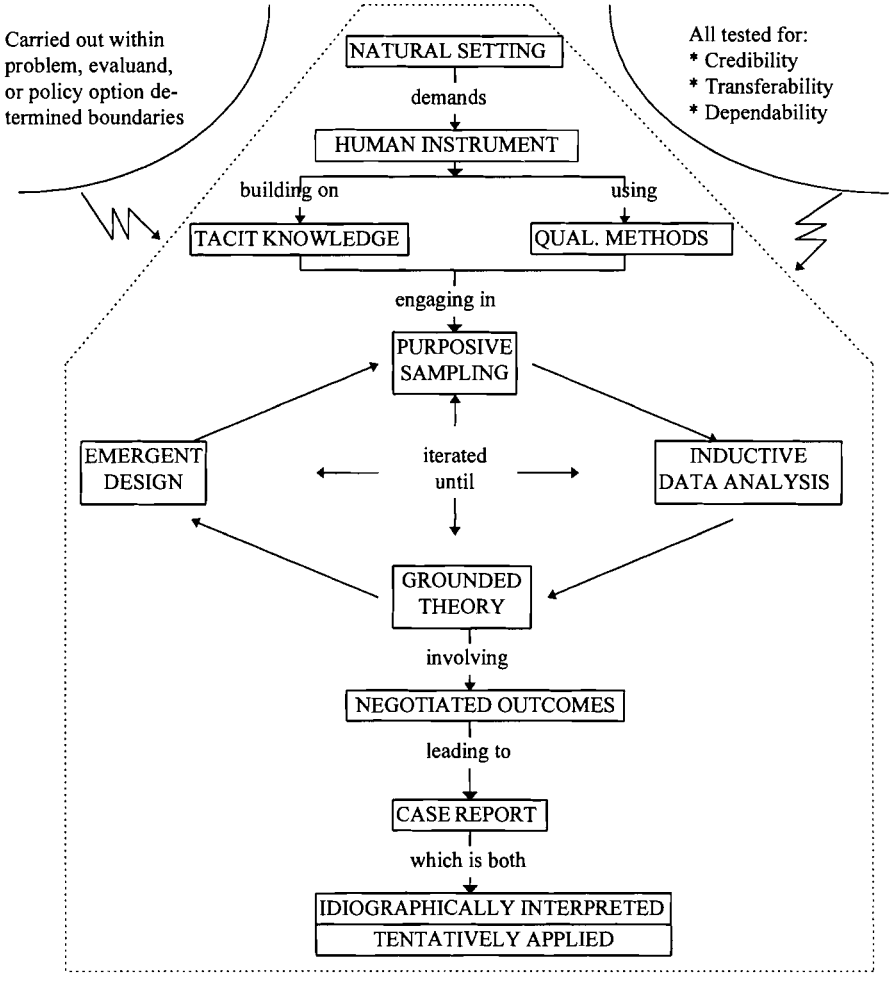


Figure 7. Naturalistic inquiry, from Lincoln & Guba (1985) p. 188

Belk et al (1988) thoroughly go through how they have used the method in a pre-study to the Odyssey. In the concluding reflections in the Odyssey, Belk (1991b) means that many good pieces of knowledge have been gained, but that it would be done differently if he were ever to do it again. One thing he believes should be changed is the strict application of naturalistic method, according to Lincoln and Guba. Belk means that Lincoln and Gubas way of proceeding is a compromise, as it is a way to use qualitative method, but in a positivistic way.

By being so strict in the application, the demands raised from positivistic research are fulfilled.

What Lincoln and Guba above called naturalistic method, is by themselves later labelled constructivism. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) at the same time point out that the labels constructivism, interpretationism, naturalistic, and hermeneutic, all are expressions of similar notions. With constructivism they want to provide an alternative to the positivistic paradigm. According to their view a reality is constructed in the minds of the individuals, and there exists in society at the same time several, often contradictory constructions that all can be meaningful.

I find it easy to relate to what Belk seems to have gone through concerning naturalistic inquiry. The first attraction is replaced by a more distanced interest. The process that Belk went through, and reports on, is very helpful. It is to me, however, not at all surprising that people trained in quantitative methods are attracted by the strict version of naturalistic inquiry. This offers qualitative, interpreted data, and at the same time gives guidelines to hold on to, compared to many other methods that leave the researcher more on his/her own.

The basic assumptions of naturalistic inquiry, according to Lincoln and Guba, still seem useful. The strictness in application of the method is what seems contradictory to the intended contributions of the method.

3.2.3 Third Stop: Culture Analytical Methods

It is problematic to study one's own culture, say Ehn and Löfgren (1982), discussing culture analysis. The problems occur mainly in the interpretative phase, as all social life contains interpretation. Meaning can not be observed, it is something abstract that is alloted to reality. In daily life, we constantly interpret what we see, without making any fuss about it. When we do not understand, interpretation becomes problematic. To be able to successfully engage in culture analysis, it is necessary to be "non-understanding", to put oneself on the outside to be able to interpret what is seen, and not to take learned interpretations for given.

The culture analyst, according to Ehn and Löfgren, must differentiate between 1) what people mean by what they say and do, and 2) what word and actions can mean independently of what people themselves intend. A prerequisite for successful analysis is flexibility and openness in the researcher. It is important to be able to be surprised by ones own data.

Ehn and Löfgren further mean that it is natural to get stuck in periods of listless staring on data that does not seem to hide any secrets, but that these periods can be a natural part of the analytical work, followed by temporary periods of clear-sightedness. To be able to go on, and actively try to break calm periods, they suggest five steps, which include the following:

Turn the material upside down, search for contrasts, change perspectives and search for other solutions, go from abstract to concrete, and let the personage change roles with each other.

The method was used by Salzer (1994), who studied IKEA in search of a common identity among IKEA employées in different countries. Salzer did, however, not share much of her experiences of the method with the reader.

Reading about cultural analytical analyses provided insights on the problem of studying one's own culture. The somewhat pragmatic recommendations on how to get further when stuck, were also good contributions on what to expect. As this particular study did not have cultural aspects in focus, further readings about method were done.

3.2.4 Fourth Stop: Ethnographic Methods

According to Silverman (1985), ethnography is research that admits the mutual dependence of theory and empirical observations, containing observations of events and actions in natural situations[3]. Several other authors, according to Alvesson and Sköldberg (1994), mean that for research to be called ethnography, a stay of longer duration in the field is necessary. Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) mean that by ethnography is usually meant research with several of the following characteristics:

- a strong focus on researching the nature of social phenomena, rather than testing hypotheses thereof
- a tendency to work mostly with unstructured data, data that has not been coded when collected, into closed analytical categories
- research of a small number of cases, maybe just one, in detail
- analysis of data involving explicit interpretation of the meaning, and function, in human action, normally in the form of verbal descriptions and explanations, where quantifying and statistical analyses play a minor role

Sanders (1987) believes that the field of consumer research is particularly suitable to ethnographic methods, as they provide an understanding in context. Haas (1987) advocates more field studies in consumer research, as marketing and consumer behaviour are social activities which the researcher must try to understand.

Spradley (1979) writes about ethnographic interviews, and points to the importance of the interviewer having an understanding of the respondents' frames of reference, and that the interviewer can place both questions and answers within these frames. Ethnographic reports are discussed by Van

---

[3] This description of ethnography sounds very similar to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) description of naturalistic inquiry.

Maanen (1988), who distinguishes between three main types. The realist tale is an unaffected story, filled with facts. The confessional tale is more filled with the storytellers experiences and reactions, than with tales of the studied culture. The third form is called the impressionist tale, and contains personal accounts of important and dramatised events from the observed, and thereby contains elements of both the other forms. This third kind, according to Van Maanen, very seldom comes into the report, but the informal account, and behind-stage conversation with friends and collegues has this form. Hill (1993) claims that data analysis is probably the most misunderstood aspect of ethnography. Ethnographic analyses are, according to Hill, iterative through the whole project, multiple, can take a variety of forms, and cycle back and forth to different issues, as distinct data sources are collected or reviewed.

Inductive ethnography, as presented by Alvesson and Sköldberg (1994), builds on a researcher with an open mind, and with theory as a frame of reference, which is not allowed to stand in the way of empirical observations and interpretations. Several techniques are used, and the researcher needs to be able to work with several kinds of empirical data. Compared with grounded theory, ethnography leaves more room for the researcher as a person.

From what has been discussed here regarding ethnography and ethnographic methods, much seemed to be applicable to the purpose of the study. On the other hand, it is somewhat difficult to extract what are the unique features of ethnographic methods, for example compared to culture analytical methods. No matter the labels, many of the ideas and assumptions seemed applicable and were included when my method was defined.

3.2.5 Fifth Stop: Criteria for Evaluation

One more issue is seen as important to discuss before the chosen method is presented. How should the results be evaluated? The notions validity and reliability used in quantitative studies can be said to refer to how well the instruments of measurement measure. Different suggestions have been presented on how to establish the same type of trustworthiness in qualitative studies.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest four criteria for naturalistic research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Brytting (1991) suggested four ways of evaluating explorative research: the accuracy of the data, the trustworthiness of the analysis, the formulated theory's generative capacity, and the existence of strong links to existing theory. Alvesson and Sköldberg (1994) recommend reflexivity as a way to strenghten qualitative research. By reflexive interpretation is meant to distance from the own study and question the own work, both during the research phase, and in the final text writing phase.

As rules of thumb for the plausibility of cultural analytical interpretations, Ehn and Löfgren (1982) suggest the following, which have a pleasant pragmatic tone:

a) There must exist an agreement between interpretation and presented data.

b) Contradictory interpretations of one and the same phenomena should be analysed further with for example changing situational conditions as a background.

c) Every interpretation has a theoretical background. The analysis is more convincing if these principal foundations are clarified.

d) Cultural analytical interpretations should be compared with other research in the same field, to build on, or maybe to disassociate from.

Sandberg (1995) deals with how knowledge produced by interpretative approaches can be justified. The question of validity in interpretative research is by him formulated as *"... how can we, as researchers, justify that our interpretations are as faithful as possible to individuals' and groups' lived experience of their reality, given the perspective taken*?". Sandberg, refering to Kvale (1989), suggests use of communicative validity and pragmatic validity. Reliability in interpretative research is according to Sandberg the answer to the question "... *how can we, as researchers, justify that our procedures for achieving interpretations are faithful to individuals' lived experience of their reality*?". The answer is the researcher's interpretative awareness, which according to Sandberg can be maintained by adopting "phenomenological reduction".

Going back to the notions validity and reliability, mentioned above, the reader is once again reminded that in this type of study, the instrument is the researcher. This makes the question of trustworthiness related to the trust in the researcher. If the results are the researchers interpretations, it is important to disclose as much as possible, both about the object under study and about the researcher. The reader, who sees the problem through the researchers eyes, also needs to know more about the researcher. That will make it easier for the reader to judge the trustworthiness.

Both for reasons of trustworthiness, and to develop the use of these methods, I regard it as essential that the researcher shares thoughts, problems, and unexpected events of all kinds, with the reader. Belk et al (1988) suggested that the researcher do as the anthropologists, i.e., keep a personal log book. This can be a way to channel feelings that arise during the highly involving, intense field work phase, but also a way to list personal impressions and prejudices, emotional and attitudinal standpoints, individual motives and speculation, and thoughts about theory. All these things can in retrospect be valuable, according to Belk et al, when interpreting the extensive field notes. I can also see it as a

good source for the researcher reflecting on personal experiences and learning during and after a project.

3.3 Method Used in this Study: Participant Interviewing

The method used here is a combination, and an interpretation, of what has been presented above. I call my method *participant interviewing*, as it is based on context related participant observation and interviews. It is similar to the ethnographic interview, but I choose to put my own label to make it clear that this is my personal interpretation of what seemed a suitable method in this study. Participant interviewing is a combination of participant observation and interviewing, maybe better described as simultaneous observation and interview. The aim is to make interviews in connection with observation, where questions also can be made about observed behaviour directly when it occurs or afterwards. It is then believed that it will be easier for the respondent to comment on routinised decision processes and behaviours related to such.

For the researcher searching to understand how a respondent perceives his/her situation, it can be helpful to be able to both see and talk about the related behaviour. The combination of participant observation and interviewing is thus regarded as constituting a positive synergy in terms of understanding. Participant interviewing has the advantage of being context related. As situational factors might influence the studied behaviour it is a strength in the method that situations are allowed to influence in a natural way.

A possible problem with the method is of course that behaviour might differ as the participant interview focuses on particular behaviours or fragments thereof. The natural routines can be disturbed by this, consciously or unconsciously. However, all of the questions will not refer to what is observed, relatively common interview questions and small talk will make up the main part of what is discussed. It is however a benefit of the method that the situation gives a possibility to directly ask clarifying questions on observed behaviour. Another risk is of course that behaviour is different just because a researcher comes along. This risk has to be calculated against the benefit of the method in the particular case. If the interest in this study was in seeing exactly what the interviewees purchase, an unobtrusive method of measurement would have been preferred.

The interview as a method, demands that the respondent has awareness of the problematised area. This is another way to say that there is no use asking people about things they do not know or have a conscious opinion on. Fontana and Frey (1994) also point out that the framing of the interview plays an important role. With framing is here meant both language and body language, introduction, dress, etc. It is recommended that the researcher tries to adjust to those being interviewed and to share their view of the world and their

perspectives. The demands on the interviewer is both to create confidence and establish contact. Oakley (1981) focuses on the gap between the textbook description of what an interview should be like, and her own experiences from interviewing women on motherhood. Describing her own encounters where the respondents asked back, and where a feeling of friendship evolved, she questions whether a "proper" interview is ever possible. Personal involvement should not be seen as a bias in interview studies as - "... it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives" (Oakley, 1981, p 58).

Participant observation has the advantage of being extremely context related. The disadvantage is that it is only possible to study behaviour, or people refraining from a certain behaviour. The interpretation of why some action is done is totally left to the observer who must have a very good understanding of the situation in question. The demands on the researcher are very high and it can be discussed in which cases it is suitable to use participant observation. Ethnography, according to Hammersley & Atkinson (1983), is very similar to the way in which we normally make sense of the world around us. They also state that all social research, and social life, is founded upon participant observation, as there is no way we can study the social world without participating in it.

Participant observation in organisation studies is discussed by Bryman (1989), who points out that one advantage is that it gives much attention to context compared to quantitative studies. According to Bryman, "ethnography" or "field research" are terms used for qualitative research based mostly on participant observation. Three main types of roles for observers can be identified: covert, full or indirect.

The role of the researcher has to be brought into the open and discussed. In methods that build on an open, searching, and flexible researcher who is almost supposed to start as a blank sheet, prepared to continuously revise her opinions, it is of course essential to follow the researchers development and learning through the project. My own part is thereby problematic – or something of importance in the research work, as well as in the report thereon.

When studying a foreign culture our own experiences and background can serve as a point of reference and something to relate new experiences to. A problem with performing a study in the own environment is the difficulty of seeing it from an outside perspective. It is then important to try to disregard what we would normally concentrate on, that which is surprising and uncommon. Instead it is central to report everything, particularly the every day things that feel familiar and obvious. This becomes in a way an introspective study. A personal log book about the researchers own learning process should therefore accompany the field notes. When the researcher is also the instrument,

it must also be important to present the researcher. Part of the credibility of the study is related to the credibility of the researcher as the instrument for data collection and analysis.

3.3.1 The Method, Applied in this Study

Participant interviewing was done with a number of households, studied both at home and in the store. As far as it was practically possible it seemed as a good idea to let the households themselves decide what was the appropriate environment in each case, the store, the home, or maybe on the way from work? The method demanded good techniques to make field notes and memorise longer sequences. No tape recorder was used, as each meeting might last for a long period, it is difficult to tape shopping behaviour, and it might be regarded as disturbing. Another reason was that the tape-recorder can only tape "the noise", which might lead to a focus on that part of the notes, as they might be regarded as a better source of data. The other parts of the interaction might, in comparison, diminish in value.

The theoretically based themes were used as a framework for the interviews. Each participant interview was expected to cover all the themes, but they were not used to steer the meeting. Before leaving the household, I mentally checked my list of themes, to make sure that they were covered. During the visits the conversation flowed quite freely, and covered more than the themes.

Analysis was iterative, starting from the first household visit, continuing through the empirical study period, and for some time after. The households were constantly in my mind for a long period of time. The households were analysed separately, as well as together, and compared. The material was analysed using the themes. What was left over when the themes were considered, was analysed separately. Households and behaviours were grouped together, and contrasted, in order to create new groups. The large amount of variation, however, made grouping difficult.

3.3.2 Sampling

Sampling was done on a non-representative basis. The sample consisted of households with small children and at least one child in a day-care center, living in the Stockholm city area. The day-care center was the place where contact was made with the households.

My reasons for choosing households with small children was that life with small children often puts the restriction time in focus at the same time as food and social life around food is part of bringing up children. Food can thereby have a number of values attached to it.

The number of households in the sample was not decided in advance, as has been discussed above. As it was not certain how many households from the

first day-care center that would accept to participate, one option could have been to contact one or more additional day-care centers.

The way to sample was to hold some variables constant. In this case life cycle stage and area of residence did not vary. One consequence of this was also that the supply of stores was similar. Sampling like this, was a way to focus on variation. If households had been chosen from different life cycle stages variation in behaviour might have been attributed to variation in life cycles. If the study would have been enlargened, other groups would probably have been sampled.

3.3.3 The Themes, Once More

The figure presenting the themes in the concluding part of the theoretical framework, is shown once more:

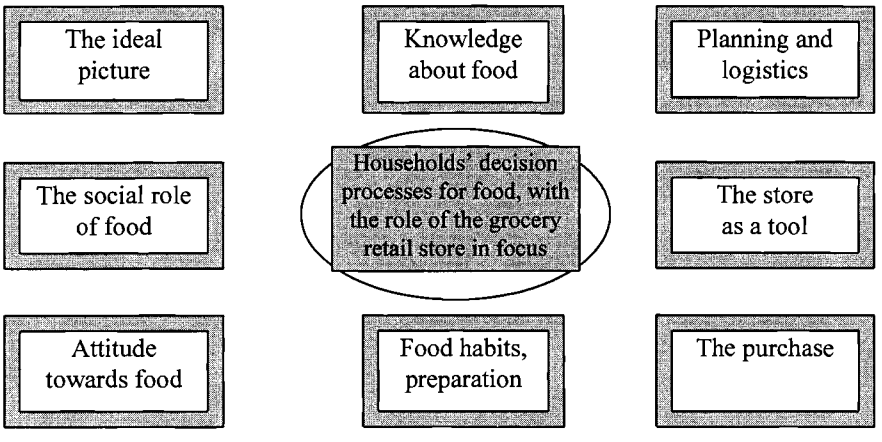


Figure 8. Themes from theory

- The ideal picture was included as a way to see if there was a discrepancy between preferred state and actual state
- The social role of food relates to the notion of involvement
- Attitude towards food is also related to the notion of involvement
- Knowledge about food was regarded as an indicator both of involvement, and of potential for the store
- Food habits and preparation was an indicator of present behaviour
- Planning and logistics were important as they have consequence for how the store is used
- The store as a tool would show how it was presently used
- The purchase, i.e., how it was done, was important to identify ideas for changes

Besides these eight themes, resources and demographics were noted. Before leaving each household, if it had not been discussed earlier, they were also asked whether they had any ideas for change that concerned grocery stores, or the retailer – customer relation.

3.3.4 Chosen Perspective, and Preconcieved Notions

Having a household perspective means trying to see the world with "household-eyes". I will here explain how I view the households, their food habits, problem solving, and grocery purchasing. This is also a way to express something about the person I am, which is important in relation to the method used. (This part was written before the empirical study was started.)

(The studied) households consist of several people. This leads to some kind of compromising. The individual learns during upbringing, establishes basic values, ideas about the role of the meal in family life, and on what it means to be a family. Frames of reference are built up during the younger years, and only modifications of these occur later. When two adults set up a home together, two sets of norms and values have to be adjusted to each other. This can be regarded as a sort of frames, or restrictions, which together with other restrictions, like time and money, set boundaries for action. Within this boundary the meal problem has to be solved. This problem solving is done with the help of heuristics, simple rules of thumb, different established way of maneuvering between the potential complexity of daily problem solving. Examples of these can be menus and purchasing routines. Some restrictions can of course be measured as factual, my interest however lies mostly in how they are perceived.

Doing this study is probably an answer to something that has been a growing concern for me. Reading literature on consumer behaviour and consumer decision making has illustrated a gap between where theory has gone and how I perceive that people in my environment actually behave. My focus on grocery retailing, and actually living with this in the back of my mind for several years, has made it more interesting and fascinating, particularly when related to the everyday problem solving of people around me. Food became a great interest of mine when I spent six months in the US, and ate three meals a day in a cafeteria that I would probably not have visited otherwise. During that period I read about food, talked about food, and even dreamt about it. I am, and have always been, a person that is curious about how other people think and react.

My niece and nephews have spent much time with me, and as they live in another part of the country, we have a common household when we meet. I then get to live the hectic family-life with small children, and see how I manage that. As I normally live quite a different life, I also have the opportunity to compare

and reflect on these experiences. If I myself had lived a family-life with small children all the time, it would very soon have become my taken-for-granted reality. As it is now, it is not, and I believe that I can study it with both an understanding from the inside, and an outside perspective.

I enter this study with an expectation of variation. Just talking to other people about how they celebrate Christmas, how they set the table for breakfast, or how they squeeze the tube of caviar, gives an illustration of different patterns. There are no rights or wrongs in this field, but there are many established patterns, which are each a point of reference for the person brought up with it.

4 THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1 Prestudies and Preparations

Two prestudies were done to test the method. One included a good friend where I spent 36 hours trying to keep track of the daytime activities of the family and getting them on file. Two shopping trips were included and of course several meals. In this first household I discovered that participant observation when shopping was both feasible and informative. Sitting down for the interview was much more complicated and, when with a friend, a slightly awkward situation. On this first occasion I brought a long list of questions, related to the themes, that I wanted to cover in the interview. This first trial made me abandon the specified questions and rely solely on the themes, which also led to a more relaxed atmosphere.

The second pretest was more focused on the shopping experience. A more distant acquaintance let me accompany her and one child on the weekly shopping trip which took about an hour. No notes were taken during the shopping trip, and the whole event was documented about four hours later. The report was shown to the shopper who was asked to comment, but she said it fairly well described her behaviour. One interesting experience from this pretest was that she did not at all appreciate reading about her own behaviour. Yet, she is an extremely competent shopper and very knowledgeable about food, why I would have expected her to read it with pride.

When preparing to do this study, I practised at memorising longer sequences of events and later writing them down. This was easier than I had expected. Another option would have been to use a technique called the running commentary on myself, though that would have required someone else to help me. This is a way to relive experienced events and comment on them. Witkin (199?) is one of its creators and has used it in different settings related to work and workgroups. The method has been very helpful in, for example, research with abortion clinics, where particularly sensitive topics were discussed.

4.2 The Main Study

4.2.1 Contacting Households

For the study, one day-care center, in an area in Stockholm with many households with children, was chosen. When I started the project I figured that finding families agreeing to participate would be a tricky issue. I was prepared to contact other day-care centers in the same area. This area is well equipped with stores of different concepts and profiles. Using the day-care center as

source of sample means that the households all live in the neighbourhood and thereby have almost the same supply of stores to choose from. Depending on which block they live in their evoked set of stores might differ, but they all have access to both low-price discount stores, full assortment stores with manual service, and 7-11 type stores with high price, long opening hours, and limited assortment. The manager of the day-care center was contacted and allowed me to try to contact families there. The first contact was a letter left in the locker of each kid, which is where information to the parents is normally left. For siblings only one copy was given to the family. The letter was tested beforehand on a collegue with children who tried to judge it both as a parent and as a researcher. All difficult words were changed, and the part about my own experience of kids was deemed as important. The letter in Swedish and a translated version are included in appendix I. The letter ended by saying that I would be present at the day-care center two days later around pick-up time where those who wanted to ask me questions or just see what I look like would have a chance to do so.

The day in question I spent some two hours going around in the different departments and talking to as many of the parents as I had time for, mostly while they were gettings their kids dressed. I avoided those where someone that I judged to be a grand-parent or someone looking like an older sibling came to collect the child. One person came up to me and asked if she could join, the others were approached by me. Many had not read the letter, some were actually carrying it around waiting for a good time to read it. All in all I received about fifteen telephone numbers and one other person said she was going to call me when they had decided. She did not call. Three people said no directly, one due to pregnancy, and two for other reasons. One woman asked me about the funding of the project, and agreed to participate when she understood that it was part of a research project leading to a dissertation.

All of the fifteen households which I was given telephone numbers to are not part of the study, due to different reasons. Illness in one case, terrible time-pressure, or other complications made me exclude them. The study consists of ten households from the day-care center, and the two households from the prestudies.

Apart from the phone number, I also wrote down the name of the child, and how old I thought they were to have something to refer to when making contact again. I also particularly asked for which time of day or evening was a good time to call, as I did not want to disturb them during eating, story-telling, etc. When I called they all remembered me and I suggested a meeting, at their convenience. I told them that I would like to accompany them to the store, bring the food home, unpack, and talk about planning, eating and shopping. I also tried to make it clear that I would like them to do whatever they would do

normally and that I would not want them to do anything extra because of me. This was also stated in the letter.

The part in my letter where I told about myself and my niece and nephews is the one part that many of the respondents commented on and made further inquiries about. What were their ages, where do they live, and so forth. Some comments were made with a reference to my experiences with my sister's children, as I was a person expected to be familiar with how children behave.

4.2.2 About the Household Visits

Doing the empirical work was both interesting and enjoyable. I was certainly well received and welcomed into the homes. Several dinners and a lot of coffee was to me a very surprising part of the study, but also something that made the atmosphere relaxed. This also led to each meeting taking a number of hours, in a laid-back mix of observations, interviews, playing with the children, and small-talk.

Some households might have vacuumed before my arrival, most had not. The food purchased and served seemed, according to the children's reactions, to be from the regular menu. Several commented on how nice it was to have another adult as company in the store, as that is a routine that is mostly done single-handedly or with the children. One of the respondents talked about me on the phone while I was in her home as the "Food Expert". She is also the one person that asked me about nutrional content in different foods. Another woman asked me about my shopping behaviour.

My meetings took place all days of the week except Saturday, and both daytime and in the evenings. I did not book anything after, in order to be prepared for long visits. Whenever the visit was and no matter how late it ended, I returned home and sat by the PC for a couple of hours or more until I felt that I had spontaneously recorded as much as possible about my observations. In most cases more was added to my fieldnotes during the next couple of days while my mind was dealing with the visit.

All the first meetings with the households took place between late January and mid March, 1995,and when I was about to leave after this first meeting I made sure in all cases that I was welcome to return for further questioning. After returning to some of the households the empirical phase was concluded by the end of May. All in all ten households are included, not including the two pretests.

Most of my meetings were with women, and they seemed to be the ones mostly responsible for the daily planning and purchasing of food. I have still used the term household, as the women seem to regard their behaviour as behaviour on behalf of the household.

4.2.3 Experience of the Method

I found myself approaching the families in a sentiment based on likeness. By my stating awareness of the life with small children, and explicitly telling in my letter that I was expecting them to be under time pressure, I approached them as a person with similar experiences. This is not to say that it was a disguise, but rather that I focused on this part of my person. Another choice could have been to have for example a more scientific approach. I felt very comfortable in the way I did approach the families and thought sometimes that I came as a potential friend or relative. I could have been one of the other parents at the day-care center. In relation to this type of method this, of course, delimits the potential research areas available for each researcher. On the other hand it could be argued that when venturing into a project like this it is facilitated by it being a field which one is comfortable with and curious about. Thrustworthiness is essential.

How did I influence the households? I can see two different ways. One is that their behaviour was different because I was with them. The other is that they started thinking more explicitly about matters that I focused on which they normally don't ponder about. Both types of influence have certainly occurred. I am not so sure, however, that it matters. The everyday life with children has a certain pattern that is difficult to change. Maybe they purchased healthier food, maybe the low share of snacks and candy was due to my presence, but as I was not interested in the particular content in their shopping baskets this was not a problem.

I was treated very well, as an ordinary houseguest, and was given dinner or coffee in several families. Did we eat better? finer? Maybe, but the way the meal works with the children is probably not all that different. In some cases my being there might have meant organising the meal as it would have been organised whenever an extra adult was present.

As the data was created in the interaction between me and the respondent, I felt very comfortable when interacting and actively participating. The only difference from what would have been my normal behaviour is maybe that I felt more cautious about saying my meaning on issues until I had heard theirs. When I enter as a potential friend I should behave like one. You would probably not make friends with someone who does not give her meaning on things or confirm what you say. Just interrogating why without giving out yourself as a person is not the normal way.

One thing that has been raised in literature about this type of methodology is how the researcher knows when to end the empirical phase. When the same type of data occurs again, is one suggestion found in the discussion about grounded theory. That sounded like a good definition to me before I started this project. In retrospect and in all sincerity I must say that the researcher is the

limit. It is a very tiring form of method and I do believe that the level of energy of the researcher is what actually puts an end to the empirical work. Every household that I visited was constantly in my mind for a long period after the visits. Going over and over them mentally was an energy-draining phase. Trying to imagine what the main themes in their household was, and how they perceived their situation, how they had come to behave the way they do were questions that I carried with me all the time. Some households were easier to process, while others took more time and energy. Overall I still must say that when the researchers brain can not take in any more respondents, you have reached the limit. This is another reason why the researcher influences the whole project. One reason why this empirical study was perceived as very tiring might be that few patterns emerged. As will be shown in the results reported below the households varied on many dimensions.

Analysing has been going on constantly. It was an integrated part in the empirical phase and something that took over and became the main occupation after the empirical study was finished. Analyses have been done on each household separately, on all households together, by comparing households, using the themes, using the consumer behaviour models, and other theoretical concepts. Each household was allocated a theme, something that came back ever so often as important when I thought about the household. It has been an important part to search both for what was said and done and what was not there. Of course I can only look for things that I would expect to be there, which is another point where I become a limitation.

A few comments on the use of a log book are in order here. I thought using this sounded like a very good idea before I started the empirical study, and did not perceive it as problematic. During the process of becoming more involved in the households I was studying, this was also mostly what my notes in the log concerned. However, during those periods when my energy to one hundred percent was directed towards processing the fieldwork, it was difficult to write about it in my log. All my written work ended up in the field notes and in my analyses. To summarise, the log was both helpful and problematic. When I go back and see how I used it, it does not cover the most intense period. Keeping a log was helpful in the project, but not in any way critical. The log reminds me about different parts that I felt were problematic before actually doing them. For other researchers, I recommend the use of a log, but not to overestimate its importance.

5 RESULTS

This part begins with a presentation of each household. These are not complete versions of the field notes, rather like sketches. Each presentation includes some data on demographics and resources, and each household is given a label, representing something that I found to be typical for that household. Their food habits, and the shopping trip are also described here. Each household included in the study is clearly visible in my memory even a long time after we met. In describing them here I have tried to point out some of their more specific characteristics, as I perceived them. As my interest lies in identifying particular behaviours and aspects of behaviour, rather than trying to identify how common these behaviours are, I use the words some, or a few, rather than identifying the number of households with a particular characteristic.

After the descriptions, a table comparing a few characteristics of the households is provided. Please note that the table is there to provide the reader with an opportunity to see the households related to each other. The table should not be regarded as a summary of the household descriptions.

In the next part, the themes introduced earlier are used as a way to structure the presentation. These do, however, not cover all aspects to be discussed why more are added at the end. The theme discussions are followed by descriptions of two extreme households. These are not descriptions of any individual households in the study but combined pictures of impressions from several of the households, pointing to the more extreme behaviours. These two, "the knowledgeable planner" and "the un-involved eater" are introduced as bases for discussion. The two pictures are followed by a suggestion of how the different themes relate to each other. The technique used when presenting the results is, puposedly, not to connect the themes and behaviours.As the study is of an exploratory nature it is regarded as important to illustrate *that* certain behaviours *exist*, while other studies have to be done in order to empirically validate how they are related, and how common they are. No attempt is therefore made in this study to connect the households and the themes.

The role of the store is commented on in the fifth part, while the final part in this section consists of comments related to the theoretical framework. Impressions from the empirical study are compared to some of the theoretical concepts and suggestions presented earlier.

5.1 Meet the Households

Before presenting the households, some more general comments have to be made. This study deals with the everyday (weekday) problem solving, which

for most families is the Monday thru Thursday planning and purchasing. There is a clear difference in how most households discuss food to be eaten on the weekdays and how they sound when talking about weekend menus. For households where the work-week is Monday – Friday, Friday evening in general seems like the day of the week to party a little and to have a treat. Friday marks the beginning of the weekend and is celebrated. Some snacks, maybe a drink for the adults, a somewhat better meal, are examples of this. The households also tend to use different stores for purchases for these different periods of the week. This is not surprising but should be remembered when reading this chapter.

Another aspect for the reader to bear in mind is that, in general, the stores in the area have a high standard. Good assortments, fresh fruit and vegetables, generous opening hours, clean, with nice personnel, etc. It is given this high standard that the discussion below is held. The households in the study have access to a large selection of stores; both discount-stores, regular supermarkets, convenience stores, and high quality stores. All the larger store chains are represented in the area. Use of a car is recommended in order to visit one of the hypermarkets, even though some can be reached by the means of public transportation.

5.1.1 A; One Adult with Three Children, Label: Money

Ms A's everyday life is a balancing act concerning money, or rather the scarcity of money. As a divorcee Ms A is now pleased not having to feed also an adult male, as they can "empty the fridge in no-time". Ms A lives with her three children, of which one has an allergy that works as a constraint in regards to which food can be served and how it can be prepared. This also means that some special products have to be purchased, which are not in the available assortment in all stores.

Ms A gives a bohemian impression, and has irregular working hours, and income, in a "free" profession. A social network of family and friends are essential in helping with the children and, when necessary, to feed them when money is scarce. Money is however not always scarce, and Ms A says that she is quite pleased with her life. Ms A is from her upbringing used to not having money, and to search for joy in whatever the daily life can offer.

The lack of money puts limitations on the household's behaviour. Formerly, when they were a two-income household, the children each had responsibility for the food one day of the week. This has been abandoned, as it is too difficult for the children to construct menus with such limited budgets.

My meeting with Ms A took place in the discount store close to her apartment. Her oldest child was taking care of the other two. Ms A was hesitant whether I would be interested in accompanying her to the store, as she only had

one hundred kronor for the next fourteen days. Of course, she was expecting money, but was not certain when they would arrive. When in the store with me, Ms A had the problem of trying to buy as many meals as possible for the little money available. She brought some empty cans and bottles for refund, to increase the sum to spend a little.

The pressure on her in the store seemed pretty hard, and she said she was glad that she did not have the children with her, as having them in the store makes it difficult to think. When she brings them she has to make sure that they behave, and that they do not get in the way of all the other customers.

Ms A's decisions were based on absolute prices. She told me that she was aware that it would be a better buy if she could have purchased larger packages of some products. She walked around the store, looking at most shelves, comparing prices, sometimes walking back again, while discussing and deciding. All her choices were made in the store.

Ms A became much more relaxed as soon as we returned to the apartment. Preparing dinner was done while talking, in a good atmosphere with me and the children. When Ms A grew up, dinner was the important meeting point where everybody's day was discussed. Ms A keeps the same tradition, with lit candles and conversation that everybody participates in. During dinner one child asked for another kind of bread which he would have preferred. The answer that there was not enough money to buy that kind of bread, was accepted without further comments.

Shopping in this household is done irregularly, and Ms A is of course the person responsible. Ms A's schedule and available resources influence (or drive) the shopping pattern. The largest child sometimes helps by going to the store. Several stores in the neighbourhood are used. The discount store that was visited with me works as an option for periods when money is scarce, but is avoided otherwise.

5.1.2 B; Two Adults and Two Children, Label: Husband's Schedule

Household B's weeks consist basically of two halves. Mr B works far away from home Mondays through Thursdays. On these days he leaves home early in the morning and comes back late in the evening. This situation leads to Ms B having responsibility for most of planning and other chores in the household.

Mr B eats his late dinner when he comes home, either heating left-overs or something specially prepared for him by Ms B. Ms B and the children eat their dinner earlier. Mr B also brings packed lunches to work, but these are often accomplished by cooking larger batches of dinner dishes.

Mr B does not work Friday through Sunday. This other half of the week is instead filled with togetherness and shared activities. The meals in this part of the week are more festive in character, and more effort goes into preparing

them. Ms B considers it as a large difference to cook when another adult will participate in the meal. During Monday to Thursday her goal is "conflict free dishes that take no more than twenty minutes to prepare".

I met Ms B an early afternoon, while the oldest child was still at the day-care center. The younger child accompanied us to the store, and seemed rather pleased to do so. Ms B brought a written shopping list, which is what she normally does when she has more than five items to buy. The shopping list contained few brand names, and no notes on volume. Ms B as a person gives a structured impression, and her shopping behaviour appears the same. She does not hesitate on her way through the store, or when taking a product from the shelf. Ms B bought ginger because they had run out of it, not because they would be using it within the next few days. This is an example of what appears as structured behaviour, and buying for stocks, rather than for immediate use.

We shopped in a discount store, and Ms B said that one of its advantages, apart from the prices, is that it offers few temptations. The discount store is the main store for this household during the week, and Ms B visits it almost every day. Normally she has already decided on the menu, and also on what to purchase. When I accompanied Ms B she was rather strict in following her shopping list, and the only thing added were Swedish apples, which Ms B likes very much. Most fruit and vegetables are otherwise bought at a small corner store, where Ms B perceives both quality and prices as better than in the stores belonging to the larger chains.

Ms B, on several occasions, used the word boring when talking about food during the week. She had considered starting with a menu for longer periods, but believes that it might be even more boring to know in advance what will be eaten every day. Once she started writing down what they ate, to make a menu out of that, but was not inspired enough to continue. She has also discussed with a neighbour that they could do that and exchange menus, which she thought sounded like a good idea. The problem was that that family did not eat fish, which B has at least once a week. Ms B thought that it is not always that easy to try new recipes. If they for example contain carrots, which one of the children does not like, the new dish will not be accepted. Allergies and dislikes work as restrictions.

The next time I met Ms B she had started working half time. Planning had become a more important ingredient. She goes to the store on Saturdays, when Mr B is at home. Ms B brings the baby carriage and buys a full load. She purchases milk, yogurt etc for the whole week and some "boring things" to eat for dinner that can be kept in the freezer. Ms B speaks with pride of how pleased she is that the system works so well. When I comment on this, she says that maybe that is because she does not consider it as so important. She can be satisfied as her level of ambitions is not too high.

Ms B could consider buying bulk products electronically or over the phone, and she would appreciate home deliveries, but is not prepared to pay more than a marginal sum for the service. She cannot consider this type of buying for the festive foods for the weekend meals, she would want to personally inspect her purchases first. Ms B is satisifed with the stores in her neighbourhood, and comments on how nice the personnel is. On a more general level, Ms B does not trust manufacturers and retailers, and even tries to leave the room when TV shows commercials, in order not to get influenced.

The major change for household B will probably be when Mr B finds work closer to home. Ms B expects the food budget to rise and the meals during Monday to Thursday to be more inspired. The household now seems to have a tight budget, but is not doing badly. They are young and educated, and the apartment, sparsely decorated with inherited or second hand furniture, gives a well-kept impression.

5.1.3 C; Two Adults and One Child (One on the Way), Label: Taste

Ms C talks about food in a way that makes it sound good. A dish is described with its ingredients, how it is prepared, and with what it is served. Food is a topic of both interest and importance. Ms C works ¾ - time, does most of the cooking in the household, and shops for groceries about three times a week, normally for two meals each time.

Ms C rarely decides in advance what to buy for dinner, nor writes a shopping list. She likes to come to the store, watch the assortment of fresh products, and mentally taste it on her tounge before she decides what she would feel like eating. When I went with her she knew in advance that she had a taste for fillet of chicken, but wanted to see it first. If she bought that she would prepare it with tomatoes and basil, in the oven. The store did not offer any fresh fillet of chicken, why she after some hesitation decided to make the same recipe but exchange the fillet of chicken for smoked ham. Smoked ham was price reduced in the store that week, but that did not seem to influence her decision, and she did not comment on it. When watching her in the decision (tasting) process she seemed completely concentrated on her task.

For the dinner the next day she bought fresh fillet of plaice, to be prepared with tomatoes, fresh mushroom and cream, in the oven. She had told me earlier during the store visit that she had fillet of plaice in the freezer. When regarding the fresh fish in the store Ms C decided that the taste of fresh fish is so much better, while the one in the freezer could be left there for a while.

Going through the store with Ms C meant scanning almost every shelf in each department, in order to decide what to purchase. She laughed at herself for buying both fresh mushrooms and canned mushrooms. The overall decision rule seemed to be taste, and she was thinking in complete dishes. Prices did not

seem to be involved at all, and were not commented on. Ms C experienced the shopping trip that I accompanied her on as a quick one. We went to the store directly from the day-care center, and thus brought the child with us. She spent most of the time in the play-area that the store keeps.

Ms C presents herself as a confused shopper. She talks about how nice it would be to be more planned, and that it would probably also cost less. Ms C always forgets to buy things needed when shopping, and has to run down to the high-priced convenience store in the evenings. The evening before our meeting she had found out that they were out of breakfast cereals, and had to go out for that. Ms C believes it would be much easier if she could think through a couple of meals in advance and purchase for that. At the same time, Ms C believes that the way she shops is an expression of the way she is, and why not accept that. "After all, it is me".

Household C shops most of their groceries in the Coop chain, and seem pleased with the quality and assortment of those stores. They do not have a membership card, which would give them some rebates and bonuses. Ms C does not know why they do not have one, when I ask, but talks with some enthusiasm about the positive aspects of such a membership.

Household C eats dinner together when Mr C comes home from work. Ms C cannot think of anything that the child does not like, and this family has no allergies. Money does not seem to be a restriction either, as their apartment gives an impression of a household that is financially very well off. Ms C confirms this impression when I comment that they do not seem to have to worry about money.

5.1.4 D; Two Adults and Two Children; Label: (Over)Weight

Ms D tells me that both she and her husband are overweight, which seems to be a major concern of hers. During the hours we spend together, she comes back to this theme on several occasions. To my eyes she might carry a few kilos too many, but not in proportion to the energy spent on worrying about them. One of the children is very thin, why she is also quite concerned with his low weight, and considers that when cooking.

Ms D is responsible for the cooking in the household. Many times she cooks one dish for the adults and one for the children. This is a way for her to deal with the weight issues, and to cook more lean food for herself and her husband. As Mr D works a lot of overtime, the puzzle of who eats what and when, is somewhat complicated to solve. The thinner child loves salads and vegetables while the other child prefers meat and sausages and dislikes vegetables.

Ms D tells me that when the thin child, who is the oldest, was young, he ate almost all dinner meals alone. Ms D preferred to wait for Mr D and have

dinner with him, even if he came home very late in the evening. Ms D worries that the child's eating habits, and lack of interest in food, is a result of that period, and she feels guilty about it.

Ms D gets some time for herself every evening when her husbands comes home, and is glad as that gives her a chance to "get away from the refrigerator". When I speak to Ms D later, she has started working part-time. Mr D collects the children from the day-care center three days a week, when he also makes dinner for the children. She buys things that are easy for him to prepare, and thinks that that is OK as she can cook more "proper meals" on the other days of the week. Ms D seems very pleased with working, and particularly commented on how much easier to cleaning has become. Ms D remembers her days at home as constantly cleaning, and is pleased to find that the apartment is in need of much less cleaning when no one is at home during the days.

Ms D and I went to the discount store, close to their home. We brought the youngest child who seemed to enjoy the shopping trip. Ms D had prepared a shopping list the evening before. In the morning she had also remembered some more things that they were in need of. These were not added to the list, but remembered anyway. When we were in the store she purchased some more products in addition to what had already been decided in advance. The store had an offer, price reduction and special display of 3-minutes macaroni, which is something that she thinks must always be kept in store at home, and therefore is advantageous to buy at reduced price. When passing by the soap counter she was reminded that they needed mild soap for the children. The same thing happened when we passed the freezer where the store keeps fishfingers, which Ms D normally buys in giant packs and also wants to have available at home at all times.

Ms D had the habit of shopping in the discount store almost every day. She seemed to be familiar with assortment and prices. During our shopping trip she walked back and forth between different counters and parts of the assortment, mostly following the structure of her shopping list. Ms D says that she is changing her attitude regarding quickly prepared, or ready-made food. Her husband had asked her to buy mashed potato-powder, which she has earlier resisted.

D seems to be educated and financially well off, and except for the issue of weight their everyday life seems to be well functioning, which Ms D confirms. This household is concerned with prices of diapers and toilet paper. They buy these in bulk from a hypermarket which they pass a couple of times each year. Ms D reads leaflets from the store chain where they have their membership card, and tries to take advantage of offers on products that they would have purchased anyway.

Since Ms D started working, more planning has to be done. The major part of grocery shopping is now done on Saturdays, while complementary store visits, to buy milk, etc, are done during the week. Ms D finds life to be more planned, but easier to handle.

5.1.5 E; Two Adults and One Child, Label: Everything's OK

The menu for the week (Monday - Friday) is posted on the refrigerator. In this household the adults have two days each when they are responsible for picking up the child from the day-care center and for cooking. Ms E, however, does most of the purchasing of groceries. She works four days a week and on her day off she and the child do a large part of the purchases.

Of the monthly budgeted sum for groceries, about twentyfive per cent is deposited on a retail card in order to be used in the nearby discount store. The rest of the money is put in a jar in the kitchen. The weekly shopping trip goes to the discount store plus a small corner store where they purchase most of the fruit and vegetables. The prices are higher in the corner store, but Ms E also believes the quality to be much better, which thereby makes shopping there more economical in the longer run.

Ms E, the child, and I first go to the discount store. Ms E has brought a shopping list, and buys things from the list. The only additional item is a chocolate bar that the child asks for. She goes back and forth to find the different items, and does not ask for help when she has problem locating an item. One of the advantages with the discount store, in her opinion, is that it does not tempt to any extra purchases. This household has earlier tried hypermarket shopping, but found that it became quite expensive as they bought more on impulse and came home with many products that they had not planned to buy.

When we go to the corner store Ms E asks for help from the personnel, and also engages in a short dialogue with the person working there. Ms E says that she also thinks that it is important to support the corner store, as it is good to have them in the neighbourhood. She seems to appreciate the visit there. Mr E purchases larger batches of toilet paper and other bulk items, that he finds at good prices, close to where he works.

Ms E says that the menus over the different weeks are rather similar. It is difficult to find variation, even if it is not the same every day. Every week contains sausage, fishfingers, and minced meat. The weekends, in her opinion, are much more fun and fantasy filled. Sometimes on weekends they go out eating in a restaurant, and she thinks that the price difference is not so large compared to eating at home. The household does not seem to consider health or nutrition when preparing their menu. Ms E says that the child gets what she

needs from the gruel and by the vitamins she takes every evening. Ms E also believes that the day-care center takes care of it.

When we come home and unpack the purchases, I point out that several things that will be needed for the dinners on the refrigerator are lacking. Ms E then tells me that she does not eat lunch when working, and that she normally uses that time for additional purchases close to her work. Overall Ms E seems very pleased with the way this household deals with the daily food-related problem solving. Mr E gave me the same impression, when I met him briefly at the first contact. Ms E can not think of anything that could be done to improve their situation, or of any desired changes.

5.1.6 F; Two Adults and Two Children; Current Label: Time

This household was at the time of my visit experiencing a period out of the normal. The normal main theme is probably different, but when I met with them time was the one ruling restriction, and commented on frequently. Due to the special and pressing circumstances, we never got to go to the store together, even though it was planned and agreed upon. What is written here is thus based on how Ms F talked about their behaviour.

With the current situation Ms F shopped spontaneously (her expression) for one to two days. The only time she had to think about what to buy was on the bus, fifteen minutes, on the way from work to the day-care center. This leads to many quickly prepared dishes, examples she mentioned where fish fingers, tortellini, and sausages. She also said that potatoes were excluded during the week, as they take too long to prepare. They instead have pasta or rice, even if she thought that rice had become relatively expensive.

She described herself as running around in the store at four thirty thinking to herself: – Fish, meat, sausage. Fish, meat, sausage. With this lack of planning she not only believes that the food is more expensive, but also that it is less nutritious as it is difficult to also consider fresh vegetables when under such time pressure.

When Ms F grew up her parents purchased groceries every Thursday. Mr F also comes from a background of planning, and it is thus natural for both of them to engage in planning and to shop with a weekly interval. Normally the weekly shopping is only complemented with purchases of milk and bread during the week. Their normal behaviour, which she talks about with longing, is to sit down, all four of them, and plan the menu. With this as a base a shopping list is produced, and one of the hyper markets is visited with the car, almost as an excursion. That also makes purchases of larger volumes of crushed and peeled tomatoes, and other canned products that are used often, a simple task. The household has a pantry of imposing size, where the shelves at the time of my visit are far from full.

Ms F describes herself as chain-loyal. She is a true "chain-A"-customer, she has always been loyal to that chain. The household has a card belonging to that chain, where they deposit money. That chain also has a store within convenient distance from the apartment. Walking just one extra block would take her to a store from another chain, a store which she says has better meat and vegetables. She explains her behaviour with her loyalty.

Ms F sounds interested in food and cooking, and they consider the dinner to be an important meeting point during the day. Most of the time, when circumstances are normal, they make an effort for all four of them to eat together. The meals during the weekend can take longer time to prepare, but at the same time Ms F feel that the extra preparation time is taken from time that could be spent with the children.

5.1.7 G; Two Adults and Two Children; Label: Food is Boring

This household does not live in a Monday – Friday cycle. Both adults work irregular hours, with varying schedules, why long periods of time pass when it is not possible for all four of them to have dinner together in the evenings. Most of the time one parent collects the children at the day-care center, cooks, and eats with the children.

Ms G told me that the household had a difficult financial situation at the moment, why they had to use the credit on their retail chain card. Their normal behaviour would be to deposit enough money for a month, and get interest rate. She felt that there were reasons to believe that the situation would improve, why she thought it was allright as a temporal solution to buy food on credit. Both adults seemed quite entrepreneurial, and working towards pragmatic problem solving.

Ms G told me that time spent on food is time wasted. She thinks that she has too little time to spend it on planning, shopping and cooking. Time spent on that is time taken from something else that she would rather do. The menu contains meatballs, sauce bolognaise, macaroni and pancakes. Ms G prefers to buy and prepare larger batches of dishes like sauce bolognaise, as it reduces total time spent cooking. Normally several servings are stored in the freezer, which she finds pleasing as she has actively done something to reduce the time spent on this boring part of life. Ms G does not either seem interested in recipes, and told me that sometimes, when she is working very hard, she forgets to eat. She normally finds out by being very tired and the best thing to do then is to prepare liver as it quickly brings her energy level back up. Ms G also told me that liver should be served with juice, in order for the body to more easily absorb the iron in the meat.

Ms G was brought up with having a hot meal for dinner every evening, and wants to give her children the same. She has recently found out, from other

parents at the day-care center, that they serve porridge for dinner which the children seem to like. Ms G has decided trying to do the same, and regards it as a particularly good solution when money is scarce. If other families do that there is not need for her to feel like a bad parent.

When we walked around in the store, while the children were still at the day-care center, Ms G showed much price awareness. She commented on the prices of many products, and seemed in the vegetable department to relate price to vitamin content. Ms G walked around in circles, and had prespecified stations that she stopped at to decide whether she needed anything.

– Let's go to the food, she said, when we were approaching the meat- and deli-department. In the bread department she told me that her rule is to buy "one dark bread, and one price reduced bread". We walked through the different stations, while she commented on which products they had at home. At each station she seemed to consider how much of some products that they had at home. When they buy detergents, they take whatever brand is on sale; Ms G said – "It doesn't make the laundry clean anyway!"

This household shops mostly at the store that we visited which is one of the regular supermarkets. Ms G said that they occasionally visit the discount store, but that she finds it too boring. Her price comparisons on many products seemed to be related to the prices in the discount store, indicating that it is visited recurrently. A third store, a convenience store closer to the apartment, is also used, but only for milk and particular products that they are cheap on. The products Ms G mentioned were hard cheeses and minced meat.

5.1.8 H; One Adult, and Every Other Week Two Children, Label: Lack of Money and Interest

Every other week Ms H lives a family life with her two children. The weeks in between Ms H lives in a single household. In my contacts with Ms H, money was a recurring topic. Her situation was likely to improve as she were about to find a new source of income. Still she was aware that it would take time before she would be able to settle at a better level, as a long period with very tight budget had forced her to postpone many purchases.

Ms H is not interested in food and cooking, and where food is concerned, there seems to be a large difference between her two types of weeks. Having both kinds of living makes her appreciate them more. In her single weeks she can enjoy eating spaghetti standing by the zink, just because she can not allow herself to do that when she has the children with her. When the children are with her they have a proper meal together every evening, where she seems to be more concerned with nutritional content than when she cooks just for herself. She also saves the left-overs from the childrens week in the freezer, to eat when she is alone.

Ms H considers cooking as very boring, and does not like it to take time. Cooking is more necessary, and allowed to take more time, when the children are with her than when she is single. When she lived with her husband they occasionally went to the hypermarket to shop. That was easier as they had a car.

Ms H talks about prices, and price levels. Normally she does most of her purchases at one supermarket in her neighbourhood. This store also has a kind of discount-department, thereby focusing both on prices, assortment and service. Ms H likes to visit other stores as well, to know the prices and be able to make accurate comparisons. She comments on one of the stores in the neighbourhood, a good quality supermarket from one of the larger chains, and believes that it is too expensive. Ms H always feels cheated when shopping in that store, even if she goes there occasionally to see what they have on special offer.

Normally Ms H goes to the store every other Sunday, to prepare for the childrens week with her. The Sunday visit is her main shopping trip, complemented with one smaller purchase, during the week, of complementary items, milk and bread. Ms H has developed a rather routinised behaviour, and the menus in those weeks when the children are with her are rather similar. This makes it possible for her to engage in a simplified and routinised purchasing, as it is basically the same every other Sunday. The menus are adapted to what the children like, and the meal one day normally affects the meal the following day, as she prepares larger batches which she modifies. The children get a fruit as dessert every day (even if they would have preferred ice-cream).

When we went to the store Ms H did not bring a shopping list. She walked through the store in a determined pattern, starting at the discount department where she bought diapers. Ms H bought one of the well-known brand names, heavily advertised, and "excused" herself by saying that they are the only ones they have tried that do not leak. When we passed by some other categories she commented on having them at home. Ms H seemed to scan the different departments in the store, and used the shelves as reminders. Her behaviour in the food department seemed to be focused on prices and comparison prices, given her pre-specified set of potential products from different categories. As we spent the time talking while going through the store, she did not calculate the sum of the purchases, which she would normally have done. Ms H commented, when we passed by the deli-counter, that it is dangerous to go shopping when hungry, as it is more tempting to buy on impulse.

Ms H is concerned about antibiotics in meat, and how cattle are transported on their way to slaughter. Ms H is herself a vegetarian, but she serves her children meat, as she wants them to have tried most things.

5.1.9 J; Two Adults and One Child; Label: Food as a Main Interest

In this household food will probably never be regarded as complicated, boring or problematic. Dinner is not a daily problem that has to be solved, but rather a possibility and an event that fortunately occurs daily. Food is an interest and a hobby for the household, and it is important to sit down and enjoy dinner together, without stress.

This household is highly educated, financially well off, and the parents are older than most of the others. They express opinions about store personnel, who they believe lack competence. It must, however, be remembered that the knowledge about food in household J is relatively high.

Planning, shopping, and cooking are not in any way regarded as problematic or cumbersome in this household. They are included in the meaningful and important process of producing a meal, which is regarded as a pleasant event. Household J goes to several different stores, partly because they are good at different things. Producing a shopping list that demands visits to three or four stores does not cause any comments or complaints.

This household invites me for two sessions, one planning session, and one shopping trip. Planning is done thoroughly, all together, and for a period of a week or more. All the leaflets from the stores in the neighbourhood, and some feature ads, are collected and browsed. The main planning instrument is the menu, which is later broken down to a shopping list. For each day a dish is noted, mostly based on a primary meat or fish product. Complementary products, vegetables, sauce, types of potatoes, rice, etc are implicit in the process. The household seems to base their decisions on primary products. Each of the primary products can be used to prepare a variety of dishes, and they express both their confidence and competence when discussing this. The menu in the household seems to be varied, and they say that they do not strictly hold on to the plan, if inspiration to do something particular, lack of time, or something else, occurs.

When household J goes through the leaflets from the different stores, they concentrate solely on fresh products. They totally disregard branded, prepackaged products in the planning process. Their focus on fresh products is partly price-related but they also believe that whenever one of the chains offer a particular type of meat or fish, the quality also is good, as the chain in question gets a high rate of turnover on that product. Mr J browsed through a 16-page four-colour leaflet from one of the larger chains and commented – "It contains nothing!"

The planning concerns, and is based on, the dinner meals. Bulk products, and other products needed are mostly noted on a list in the kitchen, which is brought to the nearby store where the bulk purchases are done. Stores from all different chains are easily available to household J, either in the area where they

live, or so that they can be passed on the way from work. Mr J does some shopping on his lunch hour. This household detests going to hypermarkets. Too crowded, and a bad athmosphere, makes them avoid this kind of shopping.

When the planning is finished, main ingredients are put on a shopping list, separated after different stores. Purchases are done over the range of a couple of days, where one store can be visited just for the purchase of one product, but then a main ingredient.

Shopping with household J was an interesting experience. We all went together to the nearest store, which as it happened, were out of that weeks offered fresh meat, cut in a particular way. Mr J spent some time in the kitchen behind the deli-counter, to make sure that new pieces were cut in the correct fashion, and from a good piece. This took quite some time, which was not commented on, and the whole event was done in a good mood. No hard feelings on either side. Most decisions were taken by Mr J and Ms J together, often conferring, and they scrutinized each vegetable before it earned its place in the shopping cart. When in the meat department, Mr J scanned the packages of pre-packed meat without reading the labels. He did not need to read the labels as he recognises the meat.

Besides the things written down, they had memorized a few items that they also needed. The J:s paid in cash, and had brought bags and a shopping cart to bring the products home. The J.s enjoy knowledgeable personnel, particularly in the meat-department, so they can discuss their purchases. This discussion is probably not of question-answer type, but more a high level exchange of confirmation on competence. Mr J gets upset when he find meat that is cut in the wrong way. Loyalty for household J would rather be in terms of loyalty to a person working in a store, giving them god service, and being competent on meat, rather than towards a particular store or chain.

When we discuss changes they wish for more competent personnel, and Mr J would also like to purchase bulk products from a wholesaler and get homedelivery. He does not seem interested in paying more than what they pay today, but suggests that the retailer margins could cover the incurred costs.

5.1.10 K; Two Adults and Four (or Three) Children, Label: Large Quantities

Ms K has an ideal picture which is difficult for them to live up to under the pressed circumstances. The K:s have children in rather different ages, and can therefore be said to live simultaneously in several phases of the family life cycle. Ms K likes the idea of having a large storage space, filled with jugs and jars of preserved fruits and jams, larger batches of all the basics, bought when prices are reduced or the products in season. Ideally the household would

somehow manage itself Monday through Thursday. The weekends would be the time for careful cooking, planning and joyful and relaxed eating.

Ms K experiences a pressure from daily life, and she perceives that she and Mr K work very hard just to get the daily life to function, to feed the children without spending too much money. They are both well educated and have good incomes, but there is still financial strain, which maybe comes on top of the time pressure that seems to be hard for them. The time pressure makes planning necessary, and it seems like the planning at the same time is perceived as a limitation to their freedom. Planning is a way to reduce the "unnecessary" amount of time and money spent.

Food accounts for a large share of the budget in this household, a share that hopefully could be decreased somewhat. Ms K buys large volumes every other Sunday, in the store nearest to their home, to fill up basic supplies. Mr K quite often shops on his way home from work, and tries to take advantage of price reductions. This household talks about volume, and batches, like twelve packages of pasta when their particular brand is on sale, or a whole box of canned peeled tomatoes when those are price reduced. Price reductions are looked for in the leaflets, and taken advantage of on those products that are regarded as part of the basic storage. Apart from the nearest store, the K:s also frequent other stores in the area, if they have good prices to offer.

The menu during the week in this household is basically one day potatoes, one day rice, one day pasta, and one day pizza. Ms K thinks it is difficult to vary the menu, and has received some inspiration from a friend that is writing a cook book on Monday-Thursday dishes. The adults divide the responsibility between them (separate days), being in charge for collecting the small child from the day care center and cooking. This gives the other adult a chance to work late. Friday is the day of the week to eat something nice, sit longer at the table, and relax after the work week.

I accompanied Ms K on one of her Sunday shopping trips to the nearby store, which is a full range supermarket. We came just before six in the afternoon, and Ms K told me that it can sometimes be problematic to buy what they have had on offer during the week, as it might have been sold out by that time. Ms K walked with the store's leaflet in her hand, to make sure that she would take advantage of the weekly specials. Ms K also walked to some special stations where she normally would go to check if the store had good prices on any large packages of products that the K's want to have in storage. Ms K used comparison prices for almost everything she bought, and demonstrated great price awareness on products of interest to her. She seemed well aware of what she is used to paying, not just absolute sums but also price per kilo or liter.

Ms K has asked the store to carry another brand of ice-cream, without success. She is also calling a large brand manufacturer to complain about a new

kind of package which she does not like. Ms K tries to always carry home full loads. Her argument is that it is leg-saving. Before we left the store Ms K checked the leaflet again, to make sure that we had purchased the relevant items. No shopping list was brought, but the K's have a list in the kitchen where everybody is supposed to note if they take the last of something which ought to be repurchased.

5.1.11 The Households Compared: on Some Characteristics

The table on next page is supplied to enable for the reader to get a picture of the households relative to each other. Please note, however, that only a few of the characteristics are included in the table. The table can only be schematic. The households are illustrated by main theme, number of adults and children and how many/which stores they use. A dichotomous categorisation into planners or non-planners is followed by a description of their menu Monday-Thursday, divided into routine, medium variation, or varied. By medium variation is meant that the menu is more varied in some periods than in others. The final column is used for a comment, and the reader is encouraged to go back and see whether they would produce the same table following my descriptions of the households.

House hold	Label	#adults/ children	Stores used	Planning	Menu: routine/ med/varied	Comment:
A	money	1/3	several	no	med	No routinised life, no routinised food habits
B	husband's schedule	2/2	discount + convenience	yes	routine	Will change when other work for Mr B
C	taste	2/1	supermarket	no	varied	Might change when new baby arrives
D	weight	2/2	discount	yes	routine	Already changed with Ms D working
E	everything's OK	2/1	several	yes	med	Very pleased
F	time	2/2	supermarket	no	routine	Extraordinary pressure
G	boring	2/2	supermarket+ convenience	no	routine	Irregular work hours, few shared meals
H	lack of money and interest	1/2(0)	supermarket	no	routine	Lives two different lives, biweekly
J	food as a main interest	2/1	several	yes	varied	Food is their main hobby
K	large quantities	2/4-3	several	no	routine	Price-focus, live in two life-cycle stages

Table 1. The households compared, on some characteristics

5.2 The Themes

In this part, the theoretically based themes (presented in sections 2.6 and 3.3.3) are used to structure the presentation. This is a way to approach the material from another angle, making it easier to find similarities in how the studied households behave in each of the aspects, and to focus on aspects instead of on households.

The households' demographics and resources are presented first. This is followed by a discussion of those themes that relate to the role that food plays in the households; the ideal picture, the social role of food, attitude towards food, and knowledge about food. Thereafter food habits and preparation, planning and logistics are described, which is followed by a general description of how the households use the store as a tool, and a more specific description of the shopping trips I participated in. Finally ideas for change are discussed.

As the themes do not cover all aspects of what was observed and heard, two more headings appear that speak for themselves: what else... and what was not said.

5.2.1 Resources and Demographics

The sample includes both single-parent households and dual parent households; with a single child and with several children. Several of the parents have an academic degree, while they all give an educated impression. All households live in apartments, well equipped in terms of refrigerators and freezers. Most households have a dishwasher and a microwave oven. The dishwasher is a praised appliance in many of the households, while the microwave is used mostly for defrosting and to heat gruel. Some of the households having a car use it when shopping, but mostly for stocking up of bulky and price reduced products like diapers and toilet paper.

All households but one gave me an estimate of their monthly food budget. In many cases they also told me how much of it they deposit at the stores credit card. Many of the households use these cards as cash-cards, depositing money in advance. This is a change from earlier as they now allocate a larger share of their purchases to one chain. The card was in emergencies used as a credit card in one household where the flow of income lately had been unsteady. The woman in that household talked about the rate of interest in terms of the absolute cost to borrow for a month. Another household will not use the cards until it is possible to get the balance directly on the receipt, as they perceive the credit as expensive, and believe that when several people in the household use the card the risk of getting in debt is too high. The woman in this household had called the card company about it.

Money was a severe restriction in a couple of the households, which mentioned it explicitly and seemed to worry about it. The rest commented on it when asked. A way to divide life, other than between weekdays and weekends, can be dividing between periods with money and periods without money. When money come in, a new good life can start and continue until the next period when money becomes scarce. Instead of trying to get an even flow, the management of the household budget for these households can better be described as hills and valleys. Bad finances are uneconomical in the sense that it is difficult to make good deals and get value for money spent. Comparison prices are less important than absolute prices as criteria for what money will be spent on. At the same time, a period of severe restrictions gives a longing for the little extras making a period of spending feel like a necessity.

5.2.2 The Ideal Picture

It was striking how certain most of the households were about their way of behaving. The chosen strategy was regarded as almost the only one possible. For those who are very planned, this is regarded as the necessary and best way of organising the household. For those on the other extreme, non-planners, planning seems an impossible task. One reason is that it takes time to plan, and another can be the impossibility of foreseeing what one will have a taste for. The argumentation is convincing in each case and no sign of doubt appears. At the same time many households believe themselves to be a-typical, which seems quite contradictory to the idea that their way of behaviour is the best one.

The expected ideal picture was not visible except in a few cases where the more traditional idea of the filled pantries was dreamt about. The households that had a certain interest in food but complained most about time restrictions, were the ones experiencing a gap between perceived behaviour and ideal picture. These were also the households that can be described as experiencing insufficiency, which can be seen as a natural outcome of perceiving an ideal picture that is distanced from how the everyday reality is managed. One woman "confessed" to me that she had bought Sauce Hollandaise-mix. Her embarassment implies that she had another picture of herself than that of a person using sauce-mix.

The one thing that many persons in the study mentioned, was that they would like to change their behaviour and regularly frequent a hypermarket, or make larger purchases on a weekly, or bi-weekly basis. The short-term perspective used was considered as uneconomical. Just visiting the store is a temptation that might lead to purchases of unnecessary items. Another point to be mentioned here is the satisfaction that seems to exist in having the pantry filled. The sense of security that lies in being stocked up on basic items can maybe be explained in the facilitating aspects of having a lot of complementary

products available. This can also be an expression of competence, which will be mentioned in relation to planning below as well. The overall impression experienced from the household studies is that these households are pleased with how they manage the issues of food and meal planning and purchasing.

Under the heading, the ideal picture, it can also be mentioned that some households said they would like to be able to serve their children ecologically grown vegetables, but that they considered it impossible due to the higher prices on such products.

To summarise, very few households seemed to perceive any discrepancy between actual state and preferred state. Overall they were pleased with their situations, and only wishes for minor changes were expressed.

5.2.3 The Social Role of Food

For the households interested in food, the evening meal was a main event of the day. That is the occasion to be together and relax. In households that were not interested in food the evening meal was not that important. The look upon the meal depended on how many of the adults that eat at home. In a two-parent family, the view of the evening meal is different when only one of the adults eats with the child/ren, than when the whole family can sit down and eat together. Sometimes the parents eat later, and something different, while the children are served when coming home from the day-care center. Many report that when they grew up, dinner was served at the same time each day and it was considered important to arrive home on time and eat together, as a social event.

The decision making and planning can also be regarded as a social event, when it is done in cooperation between parents, or in some cases also with the child/ren.

In all households but one, I had most contact with the woman. This is not to say that the men are not responsible, or involved, rather it is an expression of the fact that more women seemed to pick up the children at the day-care center, and also seemed to do most of the managing and planning of the weekly menus. One of the husbands worked quite far from home, which made that household regard the days when he was mostly absent as very different from his days off. In many of the dual parent households the men worked full time and the women worked fewer hours, allowing her to do a lot of the shopping and meal planning on weekdays. Where both parents worked fulltime, the household chores were more evenly divided also on weekdays. Shared responsibility with some days of cooking for each parent complicates planning somewhat as it then is very difficult for anyone to keep track of what is left in the refrigerator. Institutionalised menus can thus be a solution to facilitate the logistics involved.

Children's role in food and meal planning and eating can be treated very differently. Children can function as a restriction to what can be served, how

much shopping can be done, and how the food is prepared. In some households the children are involved, and used as a source of inspiration and someone to cook for. Food is then an explicitly stated means of upbringing and a cultural learning event. I participated in a meal where the children used the food to demonstrate strong will. Their mother commented this with: – "Food is so much power".

To summarise, the social role of food varied from extremely important to absolutely unimportant, and seemed connected with involvement and interest in food.

5.2.4 Attitude towards Food

An overall important dimension separating the households into two main groups is interest in food and cooking. Those interested in and enjoying food also have an interest in whatever else is related to this. For the involved household, both planning, shopping, and talking about food are pleasant occupations which are allowed to take time. Not surprisingly these households also seem more knowledgeable regarding primary products and cooking, which might even make it all even more enjoyable. Food can here be regarded as a hobby, and this interest stretches even into the Monday thru Thursday period.

Those who have the opposite opinion try to minimise effort and time allocated to dealing with food related issues. If food and cooking are not interesting, planning and purchasing are not either. Almost all time spent on these chores is too much, as it could have been spent better by doing something else. The only joy lies in time-reducing activities. One woman said about food Monday to Thursday that managing the daily life OK for her meant that the children were healthy and did not fight each other.

Differences also occurred in how, for example, ready-made dishes were regarded. Some would never serve meatballs that were not home made, while others would not consider going through the effort of making them when they are so easily purchased. Home made cooking from primary products was in some households in very high regard, and considered as the only possible thing to eat and serve. Those with a very high level of involvement were also those that in every case prefer a home cooked meal. One woman said about purchasing that she buys a couple of boring things to eat during the week.

In summary, attitude towards food varied, which was expected. High levels of involvement and interest for the process over the whole week, was contrasted with households that had a total lack of interest and considered food as boring. A third pattern found was: to be interested in food on the weekends, but not during the week.

5.2.5 Knowledge about food

Knowledge about food is varying and of course seems connected to interest. Level of interest in food and cooking was reflected in how priorities were set, and to which activities time was allocated. Cooking and food can be managed according to the instrumental minimise-time method, but all activities above that level might mirror a higher level of interest. Knowledge also shows in how purchases were made. A household that is knowledgeable on primary products and are familiar with a set of possible dishes for every primary product, can attain a larger variation in the menu. In some households the knowledge of primary products and receipes seemed high, also enabling them to use the primary products in accordance with season, price, and quality. With more knowledge, the evoked set of possible meals is larger for each primary product. This does not necessarily mean that nutritional content of food is considered, knowledge can concern what the products look like and how they can be prepared without considering which vitamins they contain.

Another type of knowledge is more "negatively"[4] defined. By this I mean knowledge on what might be dangerous to health, and how production and handling can effect the quality of products. Ethical reasons are also included in this. This negative knowledge can be related to someone in the household having an allergy meaning that some substances have to be avoided which might demand special attention. Most of the households had to take allergies into consideration. One of the women was a vegetarian out of concern for how live-stock are treated.

In summary, most households had to be knowledgeable for reasons of allergies or dislikes. The more positive type of knowledge, good knowledge on what to cook from a primary product, was found in fewer households, but also seemed related to level of interest.

5.2.6 Food Habits and Preparation

Most households described their menu over the weekdays as some kind of pattern. One description was one day spaghetti, one day fish fingers, one day sausage, etc. Another way to describe it was one day potatoes, one day rice, one day pasta, and one day pizza. One household said that every week contains sausage, fish fingers, minced meat. It is difficult to attain variation. It is not the same menu every day, but the weeks are very similar. Such a menu can be described as a general heuristic facilitating decision making. Some of the families with smaller children sometimes serve porridge for dinner which the

---

[4] I do not mean that this knowledge is negative, but that it has another source. The "negative" knowledge can be regarded as needed knowledge, setting a boundary for action, while the "positive" knowledge extends the boundaries.

children appreciate. Several households cook larger batches of things like "sauce bolognaise" and put in the freezer.

Sources of inspiration seem, for most of the households, to be cook books and magazines. When they talk about week day food with friends and collegues, it seems to be in terms of how boring and problematic it is perceived, and how it at times can be percieved as impossible to decide what to eat. Recipes in the store are taken by some, but do rarely seem to be used. Inspiration or not, the menus seem to be about the same on weekdays. One woman had considered preparing a fixed menu for a couple of weeks, but hesitated as it seemed so boring to know so long in advance what one is going to eat. Another idea was to write down what the household had eaten during a week, and switch with the neighbours. The reason why this had not been carried through was that the household in question eat fish at least once every week, which their neighbours never do.

One household said that cooking during weekdays must not take more than thirty minutes. After that point the childrens' energy level is too low, and the evening can become a disaster. One woman was very fond of jars with baby food which she found very practical. She said, on the topic of preparing your own baby food, "So much work for a small lump of food".

Most families had at least one child that is in some way particular about eating. Some children did not eat any vegetables, or fish of any kind, or only eat sausage, etc. In periods they tended to say no to almost everything they were served and call it disgusting – without tasting it. This seemed to be more commonly occurring at home, and they were better at eating what they were served at the day-care center. Another reason to be particular about what is served is the occurrence of allergies. One woman was sceptical to use the microwave oven to heat food for her child as she worried that the radiation might be health damaging.

The menu depends on who will have dinner at home. If one adult and the child/ren eat, the menu is more child-related. If two adults have dinner, the character of the meal is more grown-up and the child/ren may be served something different. One parent can eat kids' food, and in that case it is not worth the trouble to serve an "adult"-meal that the child/ren are not fond of, with the consequences that might have. There were also different ways to take care of the left-overs. One household saved it in a "pyttipanna"[5]-basket in the freezer, while another household scraped it all directly into the garbage can without comments.

There were different ideas about nutrition. Some considered it very important and made it really influential in their meal planning with a lot of

[5] Pyttipanna- basically fried cubes of meat and potatoes. Very common to use left-overs for such.

concern on how the ingredients were combined. Others thought that as they serve a *hot* meal it will contain enough nutritive value. Vegetables seemed to be considered important, but were problematic in some cases as the children did not like them. Some households did not mention the word nutrition. Another issue is weight, which was explicitly mentioned only in one of the households, where it seemed important.

To summarise, food patterns in most of the households seemed to be repetitive, with a basic recurrent structure for the week days. Friends and cookbooks were used as sources of inspiration but did not seem to have effect on the weekday menus.

5.2.7 Planning and Logistics

Monday thru Thursday shopping and planning were in many cases different and less involving than weekend planning. More routine, less variation between the weeks, and more focus on time and price restrictions were evident. This might be a way to give room for weekend splurges. As has already been implied above planning was something that varied very much in the households, both in terms of actual planning and how planning was regarded. Planning using leaflets and deciding on menus for the next ten days was done in one of the households, which had saved leaflets from all the chains. First the menu was decided, and then shopping lists for the different stores were constructed. In other households planning was avoided as it was regarded as taking too much time which could be of better use, or which was not available.

Planning took several forms. Deciding on menus for a couple of days was one form of planning, while producing a shopping list for a particular store visit was another. Planning for a day was one way while purchasing of "known popular items" was another way of planning, which also can be described as stocking up of basic items. The planning which was perceived as necessary for one household was considered impossible by another.

Planning can give satisfaction in itself. Being able to plan and manage the logistics of the household can give a sense of pride, and be regarded as a competence. This implies that it is seen as a complex system, which takes skills to manage. Planning was by some regarded as difficult, taking both time and mental energy. Concerning logistics, the mere effort of carrying the purchases home were mentioned by some as troublesome. Those with children small enough to use a pram, transport the food on it which lightens the burden. Carrying it all home is considered as more problematic. The weight-issue was also a reason to favour hypermarket shopping. On the other hand, one household thought that going to a hypermarket was like going to hell.

Shopping lists came in many shapes. A detailed list can be brought with all items written in the order of the store layout. The list can contain some products

excluding those that are bought almost every day like milk, bread, etc, as these will be remembered anyway. The list does not have to be written, it can be memorised. Several households had a system with a list in the kitchen where everybody was supposed to make a note when they took the last of something. One household had a specified list with a number of bulk-products where it was only necessary to mark whatever needed to be purchased. These are the regular things that should always be found in the pantry or refrigerator. The list can be written down all at once, or over a period of time.

Another aspect of planning is budgeting. Several households used the retail chains' credit cards as cash cards where they deposited money. They deposited whatever they planned to spend in the chain over the month and thus had a good apprehension of how much they spend. One household deposited some money on a cash card, and put the rest in a jar. The no-planning households had no such cards.

Regarding logistics, some households visited the same store every day. The number of stores used varied from just one to four or five. Most households had some kind of main store, the importance of which differed. Stores could be used for particular products that they kept a discounted profile on, while the rest was bought in another store. Other reasons for using more than one store were that some of the shopping was done in a store close to work, or on the way from work, or just that variation was appreciated.

One strategy was to buy things that one runs out of, another was to buy what is needed for the next meals. These should not be seen as opposing as there might be a combination, but there is a higher level of planning involved in buying what one runs out of, even if it is products that are not used on a daily or even weekly basis. This implies a basic assortment that should always be available. By having the basic products at home deciding on a meal might be facilitated as just a few items might have to be purchased in order to prepare the complete dish.

In one household, the decision process for what to eat on a weekday went on from the morning onwards. Impulses were then picked up at many different places during the day and taste was the ruling criterion. Deciding what to cook for dinner can then be seen as something nice to engage in, and the decision does not have to be firm when the store is entered. If something offered there seems more attractive, the decision can be changed. A household with this decision process seems to enjoy the process.

One woman pointed out the importance of always taking home a full load, as she considers it a waste to walk home with less than what is possible for her to carry. Many households with children small enough to use a pram bring that and fill the lower frame with their purchases. The change that some asked for is a possibility to get the goods transported to the apartment. One woman said that

sometimes she thinks that it would be good to plan more, but on the other hand, being as she is, is rather good. She felt that her way of shopping was a way to express her personality.

In summary, quite different planning behaviours were found. Some households found planning necessary, while others believed it to be impossible. Many used some kind of card issued by the store chains, and seemed to be aware of how much they spend on food per month.

5.2.8 The Store as a Tool

All households had a relation to the store, but the store was "taken for granted". The store is chosen for a particular visit depending on what type of purchase is needed. Sometimes a store can be considered a good choice because it is not tempting. When a shopping list is followed without deviations the store just plays the part of a storing place, a storing place that is well known. The most extreme strategy in terms of active use of the store was entering without really knowing what to eat. That is a sort of emotional decision making where what the eyes fall on is mentally tasted until a dish is decided on. This includes also walking around the store and scanning the shelves and freezers for inspiration. Another way to use the store was to focus on the price information and letting that be the guiding line. This implies choosing from a pre-determined set of possibilities. Price information was used to a smaller or larger extent, and in the cases it was used to a larger extent, money was really scarce why this behaviour was considered necessary. The behaviour might change if/when finances improve. One consumer walked through the store with the leaflet in her hand, to make sure that the offers of the week were taken advantage of if they were such that they were suitable in her household. Walking to specific "stations" (freezers, shelves) to regularly check them out was one way of approaching shopping, while walking and browsing through all the aisles was another.

Some consumers are more active and used "voice" in a dialogue with the stores. One consumer had influenced her store to supply bread of a certain brand, while another had asked her store to start carrying a particular type of ice-cream. The store in this case had not followed her request. Otherwise many of the consumers seemed to hesitate to ask for help in locating a product even when store personnel was available. One woman said that she expects to be snappishly treated in the cheap discount-store, as no-one, in her opinion, can be proud of working there. If the store is in a mess, customers will not be careful with how they walk, and if something falls down it is not all that obvious to pick it up.

Regarding the store visits, the way to walk in the store varied. One approach was to walk one full circle and pick items along the way. One approach was to start with a main ingredient and thereafter go back to

complement with vegetables and what more was needed. Going back and forth was done for several reasons. Looking for products is one reason to walk back and forth, while another is that there are products written on the shopping list that have been passed already but that the consumer needs to go back and get. One approach is also walking through the store a full cirle and use it as a list by looking at most of the assortment and consider what is needed. Some added the sum in their head and knew exactly the value of the shopping cart, others had not reflected over the possibility of doing this. The store visit can be a way to pass time, a sort of steady point or event during the day. This was true mostly for those non-working women spending the day at home with a small child. The store visit can also be something that is absolutely not looked forward to. If the interest in food was not there, visiting the store was not regarded as a rewarding way to spend time. As is probably obvious by now, the knowledgeable shopper can see the store visit as a challenge, and a way to confirm his/her competence.

To summarise, the store seemed taken for granted, even if it had a role in every decision process. The store played a role of a pure storage place, or was used as an external memeory where inspiration was searched. Overall, the households seemed to know their stores well, and used different stores for different purposes.

5.2.9 The Purchase

The households seemed to know their way around in the stores. These were stores that they visited often, and still there were products that they had some problems finding. Overall they were familiar with the layout and had opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of different stores. Both discount stores and supermarkets were visited, but mostly just one store. One woman bought fruit and vegetables separately after having visited a discount store. The stores can be thought of in terms of filling different functions for the households, and being used accordingly. Each respondent had their particular way of taking a basket or cart and approaching the purchase. Some had shopping lists, either written in order of the store (indicating that they knew the layout very well) or in the order that the needs had come up. Some consumers started from the entrance and walked straight through to the check-out, picking products along the way. One woman walked a full circle around the store scanning all the departments, while thinking about what to eat. When this was decided the actual purchase was rather quick.

Others started with primary products and then went back and forth to complement with whatever else was needed. Many kept an eye open for what was on display, but seemed to be interested only if it was products that they were familiar with and would normally use. Some consumers actively used comparison prices, while many purchased on brand familiarity and experience

with the product category. As this was mostly purchases intended for Monday – Thursday meals, many routinely purchased products were bought. When discussing stores they talked about particular stores, rather than chains and concepts. Those shopping in discount stores believed that these were good as they offered less temptations. This reasoning is however also done in reference to particular stores. Someone talking about, for example, ICA did mostly not refer to the chain or the concept but the local ICA-store on the corner. When they hear the word ICA they frame it as the local store, which became clear when they went into the details that are more store-specific than chain-related.

Different explicitly stated decision rules were seen in action. "Never buy fruit that costs over 15 SEK/kilo", "always one dark bread and one white bread", "hunt price reductions on a set of products and fill the freezer", and as mentioned earlier, "always fill up to a full load". One woman said about detergents that they buy anything that is price reduced. In her opinion the brand did not matter as the clothes do not get clean anyway.

When a shopping list was brought it was used in many different ways. Is it allowed to buy things that are not on the list, or not? In some cases yes, if there was a good price on things that were among what would normally have been purchased, in some cases rather not. The list can be based on what is offered in the leaflets, on a menu for the week that has been put together, or be more related to what the household had run out of and that which is regularly purchased. One household needed to write down everything in order to be able to remember it, another could not understand the benefits of a list. The woman in that household shopped once a week, spent about an hour, on this occasion talked to me all the time, and at the same time added the sum in her head. One strategy could also be to avoid buying something that is missing at home as the children can do well without it for a while, the example was catsup, which these children preferred on many dishes.

–"Let us go to the food" said one woman, when we were heading for the meat department. Another woman, who had fifteen minutes on her way from work every day to decide on the menu, said that she enters the store with the words "Fish, meat, sausage - Fish, meat, sausage" echoing in her head while trying to decide as quickly as possible. A customer with much more time to spend in the store ended up in the kitchen behind the counters when the store in question did not have any pieces of pork that were cut up according to his needs.

The ways to choose fruits and vegetables were very different. From regarding each tomato with intense concentration before it earned its place in the shopping cart, to picking some tomatoes while watching out for the next vegetable to purchase. Concentration in the purchase thus varied, which was particularly visible on fresh products. One woman said that in the winter time

she does not buy any imported tomatoes and cucumbers, as she perceived them as both expensive and lacking taste. Besides, she was dubious about the conditions under which they grow.

Many households visited the store accompanied by their children. This was in most cases regarded as an obstacle, but still preferred if the option was that the child/ren had to spend more time at the day-care center. One household said explicitly that they try to shop together, it makes it easier and more enjoyable.

Comparison prices were used by some households. One woman used it with great expertise on a large number of products, while others seemed to use it when they choose between two sizes or two brands. Many of the households try to take advantage of price reductions on products that they normally use. A reduced price can serve as a purchasing signal for bulk products, that are bought at reduced price when available rather than at regular price when needed. One of the households did not purchase a particular type of rice as the size offered was considered as un-economical (too small, just one serving). A coupon did in this case not break down the resistance. Another household had very little money at the time of my visit and the absolute sum was then a main criteria. Her problem was to get as many meals as possible for 100 SEK.

To summarise, large differences were found in how purchases were done. Slow or fast, structured or more spontaneous, concentrated or not, price focused or taste focused; a number of different behaviours were seen. Different explicit decision rules were found as well as a large number of ways to handle a shopping list.

5.2.10 Ideas for Change

One woman talked about a human store, where a meeting with mutual respect and dignity can take place. Apart from that, it is striking that even in my presence, which could be seen as an invitation to the households to think about the store in terms of what to change, they seemed almost unable to see the possibilities of change. What they came up with on my direct questioning is that it would be good if the aisles were wider to facilitate passage with a pram. Another thing that received a few comments is that candy is displayed by the check-outs in some stores, which can be problematic when the children are accompanying.

The possibility of getting bulk products transported to the homes without extra charges was brought up by some of the households. One woman wanted transportation free of charge. When we discussed this she changed her mind and thought that it might be fair to pay something, but at quite a low fee she would still rather carry it home herself, even if the weight is problematic. Shopping at a distance (electronic, mailorder) was discussed and sounded possible for some type of products, but was not rated as very attractive. The lack of explicitly

stated complaints and ideas for changes serves as an illustration of the extent to which the store is taken for granted. Another illustration is that when changes were discussed the possibility of keeping a shopping list on the refrigerator was mentioned. This is not something that even involves the store.

Once again it should be remembered that the stores are all of good standard. If the households had had bad experiences earlier, they would probably have switched stores, and told me about it. No such stories appeared which supports the notion of a good selection of stores.

In summary, almost no ideas for changes were mentioned, which was a disappointing result.

5.2.11 What Else ...

Decision making as such has been studied. Different households seemed to make their decisions on different levels. Some households used main ingredients as a primary decision rule. When this had been decided, the complementary products could be considered and purchased if necessary. Other households thought in terms of complete meals, while a third way was to buy a bundle of ingredients. However difficult this is to describe, the point I am trying to make is that they seemed to approach the problem on different levels. One household explicitly discussed their purchases in terms of volume. For them it was partly a problem of getting the right amount transported to the home and prepared.

The level of flexibility in decision making is also something that appeared to be interesting. Being flexible can, for example, mean being able to decide on something else on the spot, to change a recipe if some ingredient is missing, and to make up a new dish. Flexibility is also evident in how recipes are used, to the letter, or just as a basic inspiration. A flexible shoppers' purchase can be changed compared to what was on the list. What was written down might stand for something on a higher level and be given a different interpretation while in the store.

Promotional materials were used in different ways or not at all. Some did not bother about looking through leaflets at all. Others looked at one, the one of the particular chain that they regularly visit. Looking through all chain leaflets and actively using several stores was the third variation found on this theme. When the households are looking at the leaflets their perception of them can be very different. Most seemed interested in branded products, while a few were only focused on primary products. This can be related to the way of making decisions mentioned above.

The suppliers' treatment of primary products and additives in food were discussed in some households which seemed concerned. Eventually this could lead to the use of exit-power, not buying certain products. Other households

used voice-power and made complaints and influenced the assortment. Most households made no references to either situations of voice or exit. This was not, however, something that was explicitly asked about.

As restrictions can be seen time, interest, and money, of course, but also weight, allergies, and other special considerations, nutrition, maybe planning, and taste both in a negative and a positive sense.

Coming back once more to the issue of having filled freezers, refrigerators, and pantries, it was said in the beginning that it can be seen as a kind of security. There seemed to lie satisfaction in filling up and having a good basic stock at home. Part of the reason seems to be that it can be facilitating as less things need to be purchased. Larger shopping expeditions are thus undertaken with a basic mental (or written) list of those products that should always be in stock. This reduces the mental effort involved in planning, purchasing, and preparing. Only the extras, the fresh items, and the dailys like bread and milk have to be purchased more frequently. Being able to buy the bulk at reduced prices can also be important which probably goes back to the question of being competent in household management.

Regarding loyalty, only one single person talked about herself as loyal to one chain. Not just loyal because this is where she shopped, but loyal to the point where she would be ready to defend the chain. She is also the one person that talked in terms of a chain, and not just a particular store.

To summarise, one finding was that decisions were taken on different levels, using different bases. Varying levels of flexibility in decision making and purchasing was found, as well as differences in how promotional materials were used by different households. For many of the households, a sense of satisfaction seemed to lie in having freezers and pantries filled with food products.

5.2.12 What Was Not Said

As a surprise to me came that most of these households did not talk about environmental concerns when discussing purchases of detergents and other similar products. My understanding was that families with small children would be particularly concerned about the environmental aspects of products. Detergents seemed to be purchased mostly on price, and the brand on campaign was what went into the shopping cart. No higher level of involvement seemed related to this. On the other hand, for those involved, the level of involvement was high. In this particular case there appeared to be a question of involved/non-involved. All households but one bought carrier bags in the store. Recycling, packages, or colouring were not mentioned either.

Very few commented on the personnel in the store as knowledgeable, and as a source of inspiration. They appear as given as the shelfs and the buildings.

At the same time they talked about the personnel as being nice and how good it is to be recognised. When we discussed where inspiration is found no one mentions the store, even though many seemed to use it as a source of inspiration, or at least to make decisions.

Very little was said about taste, and health. Of course these can be regarded as given a certain standard, but it was somewhat surprising that it was not commented on. Taste was more discussed in relation to weekend meals.

Very few commented on the level of the Swedish food prices. The only prices mentioned were for bananas and rice where the price level has changed since Sweden joined the EU. Those price increases have received attention in the media.

In summary, few of the households mentioned environmental concerns, the personnel in the store as knowledgeable, taste and health, or the level of the Swedish food prices.

5.3 Two Extreme Pictures of Everyday Behaviour

These two pictures are included as a basis for discussion. The households presented here are my own creations, even if they are influenced both by the households in this study, and by other households I have met. By making them more extreme, they are supposed to be easier to relate to and discuss.

5.3.1 The Knowledgeable Planner

This picture describes a household with very good knowledge of food, and preparations, and with food as a very high priority in their life. Being knowledgeable in food also means having a certain competence as shopper.

In this household, the meal is one of the most important activities. It is almost "sacred" and a symbol of what it means to be living as a family. Being competent gives security and adds to total wellbeing. This household is in command of planning and purchasing, and these are regarded as important acitivities. Their purchasing is driven by primary products. With each primary product is associated a meal, or several potential meals; the primary product is the base around which a meal is built. Primary products are chosen because they look good in the store or because they are advertised in leaflets. Planning can be made in advance, but as the competence is high, it is not too complicated to change at any time in the process if another option seems better, easier, or just more tasty. In this household, the menu is varied and the children are taught to and expected to eat and enjoy many different things. Ready-made products are rare and considered slightly inferior and, maybe also un-necessary. Shopping with this household is interesting. The walk in the store can be structured after type of product, starting with vegetables, fruit and main ingredients, instead of after layout. First things first, meaning primary products. Food is also a topic of

discussion, how to prepare, where to purchase, which recipes and so forth. The menu is planned in such a way that it can easily be changed. Meals can switch places or be replaced by other meals that the purchased ingredients can be used for.

Food is also a way of expressing a playful mind. Recipes can be used as a base, but the personal interpretation of the recipe and adding of spices, make them into personal expressions or modifications that express this households' taste. Nutrition or weight is not an issue, more so is taste which is really important. Purchasing can be done without a shopping list as a primary product by itself can serve as a base of association to what else has to be included to produce a meal. The meal is eaten together, and it can also be prepared together.

The social interaction in the household to a large extent circles around the meal. Prices of products are important, as a way of expressing good housekeeping. Quality and own choice rate, however, higher, and it is more an issue of getting what is wanted at a reasonable price. It is doubtful whether a reduced price can get this household to try something that is not strictly in line with their normal eating habits. The household is aware of its competence and demands competence from the stores it visits. Personnel and how the products are treated in the store is thus important. The important products here are primary products, the main ingredients.

This household can also use voice in the store to complain or suggest things related to the assortment. The household definitely has a relation to the store, which builds on quality and competence on both sides. When shopping, this household is particular about each choice. Vegetables and fruit are thoroughly scrutinised before they earn their place in the basket. Bringing children to the store is not considered an obstacle. This household has food-related memories.

5.3.2 The Uninvolved Eater

This household does not have food and eating as one of their areas of interest. Eating is something you do because you have to, but mainly you should try to spend as little time as possible dealing with the issue of planning, shopping, preparing. The taste of food is not something that gives you very high pleasure. If food per se is not interesting shopping certainly is not either. The only thing to be said about planning, shopping and preparing is - the less time and effort, the better. This is not a household that collects recipes, talks about food with friends and neighbours, nor is it a household which is interested in the social situation surrounding the meal. The menu is not so varied, which is one of their ways of reducing the amount of effort spent.

When money is scarce in this household it is problematic in the sense that more money can buy easier solutions. Less money means that the household is

forced to do somewhat more planning, which is considered very negative. The knowledge here is seen as enough. Due to lack of interest there is no incentive to gain increased knowledge. Doing that would mean spending more effort on the issue, which is not very likely or attractive. Shopping with this household means walking through the store basically following the layout. If any energy is spent on planning beforehand and using leaflets and advertising from the store, the prepacked branded products are receiving attention. The likeliness to try new products is not very high. If money is available, ready-made products are a good solution for this household. When the household talks about events, gatherings, and so forth, the food involved is rarely mentioned. Food for the weekend is more interesting than the weekday eating, but still an issue of lower involvement. This household will probably not use either exit nor voice in their store. Exit might be more likely as voice probably would demand too much effort and thereby act as a disturbance. Reducing effort is the lead theme in the household, and as long as some effort has to be spent; I almost interpret this as disturbing. The attitude is negative and everything involved is seen as an inconvenience.

The one thing that can be rewarding, is being successful in minimising effort. Every now and then a larger cooking of something basic, like meatsauce, is done and the freezer is filled. This is considered to be an effort that is valuable as it reduces energy spent otherwise. There is a feeling of pride (!) involved in taking one of the prepared meals from the freezer, even in this household. The pride in question is here related to time-minimising. The evoked set of possible meals is limited. The heuristics in decision making are important. The limited set of potential solutions, is per se a good strategy to minimise effort. This, related also to how little happiness could be gained by finding other solutions that would take more mental effort, shows that the household has a good strategy, but is better off when money can buy meals that are relatively easier to prepare and mentally more effortless.

5.4 How the Themes Relate

How the different households vary along the themes was shown in the first part, while the two pictures of the more extreme behaviours is one way to illustrate how the themes are related. When thinking of the different themes, a pattern emerged as some of the themes seem to be related to each other. This relation is here expressed using the concept of involvement as a hub, as illustrated in figure 9:

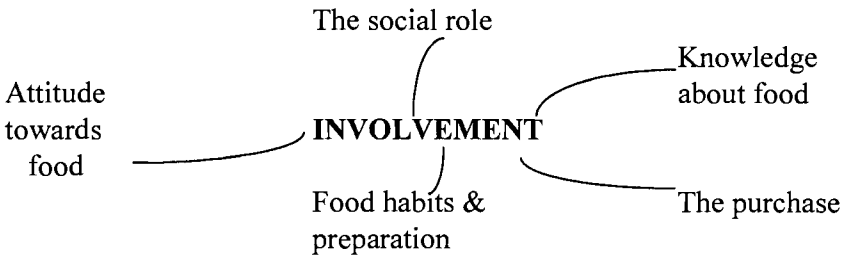


Figure 9. Involvement

For the household which has a high level of involvement regarding food and related issues, this is mirrored also in a good knowledge of primary products and cooking. This competence enables variation in menus, and facilitates the purchase. The social role of food is considered as important, and all these different ingredients act together to further confirm and strengthen the behaviour. For the household where involvement is low, much of the opposite is true.

The imaginary households are of the more extreme kinds, but many other levels of involvement do exist and can be discussed in terms of the model above. The described relation can also work when a household has high involvement in a particular issue, due for example to allergy, but involvement in the rest of the menu can be lower. One household is thus not statictly placed on one level, conclusively. Situational factors will affect the household's perception of a food-related problem. The relation between the themes that is illustrated above does not say anything about causality. The idea is rather to suggest that level of involvement is manifested through the themes.

Planning is one of the themes that was purposedly not discussed together with involvement. It is here, however, suggested that planning behaviour as a household characteristic, certainly is an important variable when studying consumer behaviour. Below, planning is related to the purchase and the store as a tool. The planning household will use the store to less extent than the non-planning household, and the purchase is of course completely different.

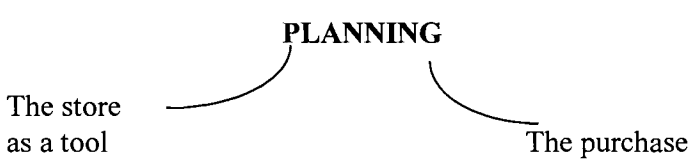


Figure 10. Planning

From the empirical, explorative study, a tentative suggestion is here made about the relation between involvement and planning. The figure below illustrates that all combinations of planning behaviour and level of involvement may exist.

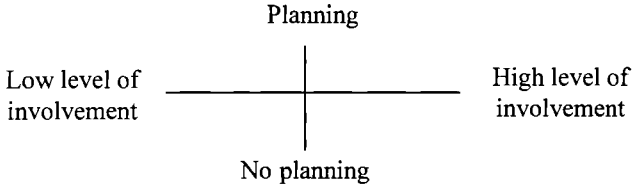


Figure 11. Planning and involvement

It is here thus suggested that these two dimensions, planning and involvement, can be useful as instruments when studying consumer behaviour with the grocery store in focus. From a store perspective the households who, in different situations, place themselves differently on the two dimensions will need different treatments by the retailer. The households included in the study are in the next figure placed according to how I perceived their respective levels of planning and involvement. Each star represents one of the households, those with an arrow have expressed a desire to engage in more planning.

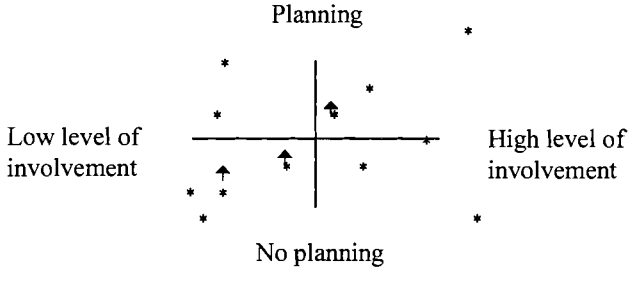


Figure 12. The studied households in terms of planning and involvement

This serves as an illustration of the large variation among the households. Reducing the information like this to just some point across two dimensions can be seen as throwing away most of the collected information. One advantage is however that it gives a picture of all the households related to each other, and to the important dimensions. The mapping done here of the households is based on their Monday – Thursday planning and shopping. A similar map for the weekend might look very different, why it must be remembered that situation is

important. One household can not conclusively be categorised into one of the four fields, but there must be openness for a variation within the households as well.

To relate to the two extreme pictures, these can be seen as illustrations of the involvement dimension, with one household with a very high level of involvement, and the other very low. They also serve to illustrate the reasoning behind level of involvement, and the consequences thereof.

5.5 ... and, the Role of the Store

As has been seen, the store is not something that actively occupies the minds of the households' included in the study. However, the store is always there. The store is involved whenever a purchase is considered, as the households adapt the purchase to the store in question, or choose store after which purchase to make. There is no question about it that the store is taken for granted. The personnel seems to be considered as being there to manage the supplies but are not speaking partners, and does not seem to be regarded as knowledgeable about food. Even when the store is actively used as a source of inspiration, it is rarely acknowledged as such. The mere idea of going to a discount store because of the fewer temptations there implies that temptations do exist in other grocery stores.

The store referred to, by the households, is the local store, not the store as a representative of a chain. It can be described as premises with a particular interior, not representative of a specific concept. The households have invested much time and energy in getting to know the stores, which might be part of the explanation of why they are so taken-for-granted. The taken-for-grantedness can be an expression of knowledge. Knowing someone or something fairly well can easily lead to taking it for granted, unless something happens that provokes a renewed evaluation.

The stores seem almost reduced to heuristics, as each store can be used for a particular purpose. The households did not seem to have been encouraged to communicate with their stores. The store visits, during which several did not ask for things that they could not locate even when personnel was passing by, indicate a hesitation to actively use the store personnel.

A few of the households had more active communication with their stores, and had used their voice-power to influence the assortment, with varying levels of success. These households gave the impression that they would continue to use voice, whenever they thought it would be in their best interest.

Taking the concepts of planning and involvement further, below is illustrated how they could be used, if supported by further empirical studies. Dividing the consumers, or shopper visits, after these, provides four basic groups. The role of the store can be very different depending on which group

the particular visit belongs to. For the store this can be a valuable way to segment the shopper visits and to structure the work in the store accordingly.

One important aspect is that the store can be regarded as providing very different services. The highly involved shopper can regard the store as a knowledgeable partner. A shopper with low involvement is more likely to see the store as an efficient provider. Level of involvement and level of planning could vary both within households, between shopping trips, and related to situational influences.

A tentative suggestion for how the store could treat its different shoppers is provided in the table below to illustrate the potential usefulness of this type of categorisations. For each group, a way to communicate, and aspects to focus on are suggested.

	Planning	**No-planning**
High Involvement	Seek Dialogue	Seek dialogue Recommendations
	Focus on taste-aspects	Knowledgeable personnel
	Quality	Taste - Quality
Low Involvement	Provide planning instruments	Facilitate purchasing
		Menus, easy to prepare
	Focus on time-aspects	Focus on time-aspects

Table 2. A retailer perspective on planning and involvement

5.6 Comments Related to the Theoretical Framework

Some of the theoretical concepts presented in the theoretical framework will be commented on here. The intention of this study was not to test their validity, but this is a way to relate this study to existing knowledge in the field.

The model by Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987, 1989), has been used as a way to structure my thinking about the households. In figure 13, the themes I have used in this study have been sorted into their labels.

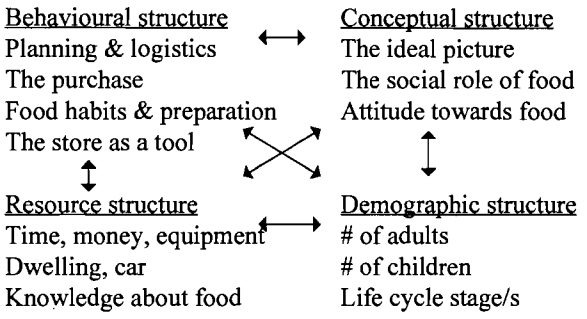


Figure 13. How the themes relate to the model by Engström & Hartvig Larsen

According to Engström and Hartvig Larsen the interaction, relations and interdependencies between the four structures are important in defining the household. When doing the classification of which theme belongs under which label, the interaction becomes apparent and complicates the task. Planning and logistics, for example, can be seen purely as behaviour, but there are also conceptual aspects of them, based on how they are perceived; the why-aspect. Overall, perception comes out as extremely important. Measurement of absolute resources is one thing, but how they are perceived might actually be stronger factors in explaining behaviour. Knowledge about food is here suggested as one of the households' resources, as it seemed of importance as resource in the household studies.

Life cycle stage/s is suggested as a factor of importance when discussing the situation in a household. Normally this is related to the age of the youngest child. Depending on the ages of that child the household will be categorised as in a certain stage of the lifecycle. Due to increased divorce rates and new families forming, households can have children in quite varying ages, thus living in two related life-cycle stages at the same time. The demands increases as the period which would have become calmer for the parents, when the children start acting more independently, is delayed by the arrival of a new infant. The years of a relatively high level of dependency are prolonged.

Tollin (1990) identified three dimensions of particular importance in her consumer study. Involvement, participation, and social relations were what she used to understand the grocery shoppers. The picture in this study is not completely in accord with her findings, as participation seems less important here. As her sample was larger, covered several stages of the lifecycle, and larger geographic areas, this can maybe explain the different response.

Involvement has already been commented on, and can be said to be a main theme in some of the households. This can be either in the positive sense, that they are extremely involved, or defined negatively, when they do not want to bother. Involvement is not dichotomous as many households seem more

involved regarding weekend eating than in weekday food planning. Several authors have argued that involvement should be regarded as a continuous variable, something which seems very much like common sense. It should also be considered that high involvement in these issues can take on a number of expressions. High involvement can be interest in food and cooking, which has been found here. High involvement can also be active, critical and demanding consumers, which is what could be expected on environmental issues.

One difference in involvement is whether it is involvement in the goal and/or involvement in the process. Anell (1979) described purchasing as a purely instrumental activity, undertaken in order to reach a goal with higher meaning. Does this mean that the act of purchasing is a low involvement activity? For some, certainly, but not in all cases. For the knowledgeable grocery shopper, the shopping trip can be an occasion to exercise competence, which leads to a higher level of involvement. For the actively concerned shopper who is worried about how live stock is transported before the slaughter, or who is concerned about what different kinds of sausages contain, a higher level of involvement is probably aroused in the purchasing situation. For the shopper with allergy considerations, a higher level of involvement is activated in the purchase. For the un-involved shopper and for the routine shopper, the more instrumental view upon grocery shopping can be correct. The point here is that a higher level of involvement in the goal of the activity might influence the act of purchasing as well. Peter and Olsen (1993) suggest the expression "felt involvement" to emphasise that it is a question of a psychological state experienced by the consumer in a given situation. They see involvement as the consumers subjective experience of the personal relevance in an object, activity, or situation. In a meta-analysis, Costley (1988), found that the effect of involvement is notable. However, definitions differ from study to study which make comparisons difficult. Impressions from this empirical study bring up the question of "involvement in what". Should we really discuss involvement in terms of product class, or is involvement maybe more related to the underlying need?

Participation in Tollins terms means 1) active preparation of food in the household from primary products, and 2) claims from the consumers on participating in decisions on how the manufacturers refine food. The households in Tollins study were found to prepare more food at home, and to be less inclined to buy products prepared by manufacturers. This part of the finding is supported here as well. Both financial reasons and reasons of mistrust against ready-made food were mentioned. However, what is served and consumed in most households needs very little preparation, both in terms of time and work. Fish fingers, spaghetti and many other frequently occuring

products basically just need heating. Participation in terms of being actively demanding and critical, using voice-power, was uncommon in this study.

Tollins third dimension, social relations, refers mainly to whether the consumption process is done by a single person or in company. As the households in this study all are families with young children, very few solitary meals are even possible. Among the knowledgeable and interested consumers, a meal consumed in solitude is no different than a meal when the other members of the family are present. This was to some extent regarded as an expression of respect for the own person. Other households had different opinions, and were more likely to be treating the meal completely differently when it was to be eaten alone. One woman was living with her children every other week. The weeks when she was living by herself were filled with simple "bachelor" meals, like spaghetti and catsup. Having to prepare proper meals when the children were there, she seemed to enjoy this life with more freedom, of which the bachelor food habits was an expression. Several of the women seem pleased with eating something easily prepared, like a youghurt and a sandwich. Feeling the demand of a cooked meal every day, they seemed to enjoy not having to plan and prepare. The men, at least according to their wifes, seem to be more in need of and willing to prepare a cooked meal even when they were going to eat it all by themselves.

The term heuristics, in Bettmans meaning of the word, has been used in the presentation of the results. Heuristics and consideration sets are concepts that seem very applicable when seeking an understanding in this consumer behaviour context. Many examples of routinised problem solving were found. When regarding what was found in the empirical study, it is clear that just three types of problem solving processes (extensive, limited, routine) are not enough. Even routine problems can in reality be solved with a more active information processing.

Context, environment and situation, were discussed earlier as factors to be treated more extensively in studies of consumer behaviour. The context can in itself be seen as creating a high level of involvement. The context of everyday decision making on food and purchasing has to some extent been illustrated in the study. How many, and which, of the different aspects, information, advertising, etc, that are influential in the decision process are impossible to say anything about in this study. As the store is involved in some way in all the households' decision making, studying their behaviour in that environment has been very informative. In this study, context provided a background that facilitated interpretation.

Use situation was defined by Engström and Hartvig Larsen (1987) as the importance of the situation in which a purchased product will be used. This

seems like a useful way to reach increased understanding of consumer buying behaviour.

Hirschman's (1970) notions of exit, voice, and loyalty were found as partly applicable even if exit in no case was used. Some of the consumers in the study used voice, with varying result. Many appeared loyal to a few stores, at least loyal in terms of recurrently visiting the stores and allocating large shares of their budgets to them.

6 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The aim of the study is to generate ideas for how to develop the grocery stores, in order to make them better adapted to the situation of their customers. To the extent that I had hoped that the studied household themselves would contribute ideas, the study is disappointing. As has been reported, they did not seem to consider the store in such terms.

The households planning and buying behaviour is adapted to how the stores are organised in terms of tangibles as well as intangibles. What is argued for here is to view how the stores can be organised from the opposite direction, taking the households as given. What would happen if we took this to the extreme and adapted the stores completely to how the households function and the problems they have to solve? Would it maybe be providing packed bags according to a shopping list for the planned shopper who had faxed in an order, and offering taste testing for the unplanned shopper in the stores' "daily dinner corner"? Would this even be appreciated by the consumers ?

Coming close to the consumers and their behaviour in the way it was done in this study, is very informative. Actually being there with the consumers when they approach the dairy section and see the ways in how the different households scan it and pick out their purchases, provides knowledge that can probably not be gained in any other way. To also have the opportunity to ask them for comments on their choices, still close to the dairy fridge, is invaluable as it provides extremely situation related information. As many of the decisions that we are interested in studying are routinised; using heuristics, choosing from a consideration set, etc, these decisions are difficult to get rich information on in any other way. The large variation in behaviour is very interesting, while there might have been a tendency earlier to instead focus only on the similarity in behaviour.

A manufacturer might think of himself as selling a brand, while the consumer is buying a solution to a problem. Changing the perspective can both be helpful and have implications for many different actors, involved directly or indirectly, in the food planning and purchasing process. If marketing behaviour from the supply side is institutionalised, it is not surprising if this also leads to institutionalised purchasing. Institutionalised purchasing can be an explanation of why the store seems to be taken as given. Still, it is disappointing that the households in this study do not mention the store as a source of inspiration. This could be because they do not perceive the store as communicating interest in their opinions, or due to lack of time and interest, or maybe just because they are not interested in regarding the store as a source of inspiration.

It was, as stated earlier, disappointing to find them taking the store as given. A very positive surprise was the interest they showed when giving me access, time, and in many cases offering me coffee or dinner. They seemed to enjoy discussing food planning and purchasing, as well as having company in the store. The self-assurence with which they opened their homes to me and allowed me to accompany them on their shopping trips, might be closely linked to how certain they were of their own behaviours' advantage for them. There were no negative aspects involved as the area is something that they know they master. Each and everyone is an expert on their own behaviour, and should be acknowledged as such. There might, however, be other areas where they would be reluctant to expose themselves as much.

The self-assurance and certainty that they display can be connected to a lack of interest in store development. If their strategies work just fine, why bother to change, or even think in terms of changes? On the other hand, when they seem so confident in their own behaviour and enjoyed having me around, they might also react positively if their stores communicated an active interest in their opinions. The expression "their stores" is chosen on purpose. When people discuss purchasing they do it in terms of the stores that they regularly frequent. Very few seem to be aware of the intended differences between the different concepts. Their perception is based on the difference between two different outlets, and they fail to recognise the similarity within chains. This is quite understandable as there might be large differences between two stores in the same chain. Even if consumers know that two stores belong to the same chain, they tend to see them as two separate units, and evaluate them as such.

This once more brings up the issue of the local store as being of importance, the store as what the consumers relate to, the store as a meetingplace, and the store as the instrument which has the chance to scan the consumers' reactions and opinions.

In doing this research many people I have met, at parties, dinners, friends of friends, etc., have told me about their shopping behaviour. Many times these stories have a little twist of "smartness" in them. The people I meet at parties are mostly educated people in their 30's and 40's. A fascinating thing about the subject is that most people seem to be genuinely interested in talking about it. An observation from these many encounters is that people talk about their store, or their stores. They do not discuss in terms of concepts or chains. Their perceptions are based around the particular store, its' personnel and assortment. When I tell them about my research, they all relate to their own behaviour which they can describe in a sort of structured way. The smartness is about how they make a good deal somewhere, have a particular product that they make a bargain on, and it is striking how they all give me a picture of a good buyer.

They outsmart the system! These people also seem to be pleased with their own behaviour, and have few suggestions for how to improve the stores.

On the other hand, the people I meet in the trade talk about concepts, rather than particular stores, except when they discuss their own purchasing behaviour. They do the same thing as everybody else, and talk about their particular stores, even if they sometimes judge them by different criteria, and are able to put them into a chain context.

Store switching has been claimed to be one of the reasons why the promotional program has evolved into its present form. In order to attract customers to the chain it offers something every week, and the focus has to a large extent been on prices. Each grocery retailing chain has thus concentrated on taking customers from the other chains, and on keeping its own clients. The customers have been regarded as price-sensitive store-switchers. Very little attention has been given to the fact that learning to know a store, the layout, the assortment, and the personnel, can be seen as an investment in time, and something that facilitates purchasing. Looking at the households included in this study, not all of their strategies include store-switching as a realistic alternative. A strategy can instead be to take advantage of a particular stores' promotional offers when they occur, but not to extend this purchasing to other stores. The concept of loyalty is connected to store switching. The strategy referred to above is a strategy of loyalty, and the efforts included in store switching are not judged to be worth what it might give in terms of good prices. As the promotional system is so large, the own store will soon offer the same product or category on deal. Of course there are customers who engage in store switching, but not everyone and probably not even the majority. Just by judging from statistics on households in particular life-cycles, and share of the population working, not that many seem to have time enough to switch stores that often.

Much effort has, however, been allocated to attracting the store-switching part of the customers. The other consumers, the loyal stock of customers should instead be regarded and treated with much respect and care as they are very important to maintaining the steady flow of sales in the stores. With the retailing stores' membership cards it has become much easier to see for how much a household purchases over a period of time, which can be used as an indication of how important the customer is for the store. How many households represent 50 per cent of the sales? Or 80 per cent? Why they shop in a particular store, and what can be improved in order to make them more satisfied, are interesting problems to deal with at the store level. The store is already today passively interacting with the consumers, what will happen if it is done actively? If more is found out about how consumers make their decisions, and which criteria are used, the communication can be related to that. If all

consumers do not behave in the same way, all communication should preferably not be done in the same way either.

What is really covered by the concept of loyalty? Once more consulting the dictionary[6] loyal means 1) *true or faithful (to duty, love, or obligation*), 2) *steadfast in allegiance; devoted to the legitimate sovereign or government of one's country* 3) *showing loyalty.* The loyalty that we normally talk about in relation to consumers frequenting a retail store, or buying a particular brand, is loyalty more in terms of repeated behaviour. Is the dictionary definition of loyalty possible to attain in the retailer-customer relationship? Even if that is a goal that seems farfetched to strive for, a more open and active relation could probably be reached. That demands a more active interaction than what is common today. By activating the relationships, the foundations upon which these rest might become more solid. The relation should build on mutual respect and understanding, in order to create an active communication which both parties could gain from. If the retailer communicates clearly that it is in his best interest to supply, at a cost, what the consumers demand, in products and services, the consumers might feel welcome to specify their demands. Retailers are already today engaging in this development and communcative activities. This has been more or less successful, and it is undoubtedly so that all stores can be better than what they are.

One research theme that has gained increased attention and interest is customer satisfaction and customer orientation (see, for example, Fornell 1992, Grönroos 1990, Parasuraman et al 1988). The focus has to a large extent been on development of theory and methods to measure customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. In this study the focus is more on how to accomplish this higher level of satisfaction, something which has also been a major concern of Fergal Quinn (1992), an Irish retailer with a strong focus on customer orientation as a way to reach long term profitability.

One good way to approach the issue is by regarding stores from a consumer perspective. This has to be done by the stores. When store personnel go shopping themselves they have to activate their "consumer eyes", both in the own store, and in other stores. All of us are consumers, which should make a consumer's perspective a fairly easy task to adapt. The question is not to try to detect faults or problems, it is rather to see the possibilites by a mere change of perspective. This work should not either ever be expected to be finished. It is more a question of starting a process. As long as there is a change in customers and their situations, there is always room for change in the stores. Constant adjustments and improvements are what should be regarded as a positive outcome of starting the process. Considering how the relation retailers –

[6] The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 8th ed., 1990, Clarendon Press, Oxford

consumers have become institutionalised, it should not be expected great demands for change from the consumers. The retailers have to take the initiative and be prepared to invest much time before any changes in the relations occur. To be realistic, it will take time before the consumers perceive it, and the retailers have to be persistent in order to build up trust. It is probably easy to give up after six months and say that "I told you, they don't care", but, give it another six months. Ask the loyal customers what they do not like about the store and try to do something about it. If it is not something that is possible to change, put up a sign to explain it. Use the store to communicate, many of the customers come there several times a week, and have many chances to be reached by this information.

The store as a promotional instrument, and as a means of communication, has not been treated to any higher extent in literature. The store can be seen as a communication device, with a large potential to reach particular groups. By gaining increased knowledge on who the visitors to the store are and their interests, communication can be tailored towards them.

The consumers are regarded and portraited in different ways by different actors. From the governmentally appointed Consumer ombudsman and others a picture of the consumer as weak, and in need of protection, appears. Media describes more active consumers, demanding environmentally good products and using voice-power. Not that many people seem to use voice, in terms of how many complaints/comments reach the manufacturers/retailers, and maybe none of these pictures is completely true. How do the consumers look upon themselves, and who do they think has the responsibility for ideas on improvements in terms of product features, customer services, etc ? A variation in opinions and attitudes should of course be expected also here, but it might be time to go to the consumers and see how they regard themselves. With that as a starting point, both for governmentally initiated activities, and other forms of communication, a good result should be obtained.

Overall there should be more interest in studying variation. The average consumer does not exist, and it is the mix of consumers, their experiences and demands, that have to be treated. Stores have consumers with varying household compositions, interest in food, price sensitivity and purchasing strategies. There might also be a difference between the purchases done on weekdays, compared to the weekend shopping. Another type of variation is between stores. Stores in a chain belonging to the same concept might have varying markets with different competition, infrastructure, and composition of consumers. By being good at serving this variation, and satisfying the varying needs, loyalty can be reached. With concepts and streamlining as a background, the stores can develop their own local profiles and relations.

Using a consumer perspective can be a tool to reach a better relation and understanding between the retailers and their customers. The retailers are in business to be profitable, on a long term perspective. Profitability can be reached by increasing the share of loyal customers through communicating effectively with them, using the store as an interaction device and by being better at serving their needs, and helping them solve their food related problems. If the retailers are persistent in this focus, it can also be used in their negotiations with the manufacturers, as the products after all should be there to help the consumers. The retailer has an advantage by being the one meeting the customers face-to-face and can use that both for own profits and to the service of the customers. The promotions and other activities done are paid for by the consumers, as they are included in the prices charged for the products.

This discussion has focused on the retailer-consumer relation and how this can be activated and hopefully improved. What are then the implications of this for the manufacturers? The manufacturers need to understand how their products are used, and which functions they have in the households. Why are they used, when, by whom, and together with what? The products are an expression of the relation between the manufacturers and the consumers. The products can also be regarded as one of the tools that the retailer uses in the retailer-consumer relation. For the manufacturers it is important to work actively with the store and concentrate not solely on the products but on their functions, which is related to the problem solving situation of the consumers. It must also, as commented on earlier, be understood that a variation also in functions and importance, might exist in how the consumers regard the product. By understanding this variation and actively working with this knowledge, the different potentials connected to the products can become better utilised. The manufacturers have a chance to become important partners with the retailers in managing and developing the retailer-consumer relation. Some of the manufacturers today already work with providing recipe folders in-store. How are these used, when, and by whom? Isn't it possible to increase usage by more active cooperation with the stores? The recipes might be one ingredient in the process of retailer-manufacturer cooperation, as long as they are something consumers demand.

Other actors with interest in consumer behaviour regarding food planning and purchasing have been mentioned earlier. This refers to, for example, goverment agencies interested in educating the population in general on health issues. Nutritional and health related communication should be involved when the consumers make their decisions on what to eat and what to buy. As this to some extent is decided in-store, this information might also be well communicated in the stores, if it is contextualised in terms of decision making in-store. Some information is aimed directly towards a group with a particular

predisposition. There might be a chance also to reach a particular group in-store, and to have the communication in connection to the products in question. This, of course, builds on investigating the target-group's behaviour and decision making to reach the best possible effect.

Much focus in the trade has earlier been on having the products in the store, and there has been a discussion on the war for shelf-space. If the store earlier to a large extent has been regarded as a place to supply products, this work hopes to inspire a change in perspective. The store as a communication device, the store as interacting, actively striving to satisfy its customers in a dialogue, is a somewhat different view. This view is not only about the retailer-customer relation, but involves all the different actors engaged in informing about, or providing, food related products.

6.1 ... and, Back to the Purpose

The first, and main purpose of this study was to describe and understand households' decision processes for food, with the role of the grocery retailing store in focus. The households' behaviour on a number of relevant dimensions has been described in the study. The dimensions, or themes, were then connected using the concept of involvement to provide a better understanding of the households' view upon food related issues. It is suggested here to use level of involvement in combination with planning, to understand which role the grocery retailing store can play in the households' decision processes. This illustrates a way to reason around what the retailer can supply, and should communicate, to different groups. The four types which were presented should not be regarded as households. Think of them as store visits. The situation can be influential on which category a household will belong to on a certain store visit.

The secondary purpose was to explore the usefulness of a method that allowed closeness to the consumer. Such a method was developed, participant interviewing. Applying this method in the study was experienced as rewarding, in terms of the knowledge gained. In hindsight, it is difficult to imagine another method that could have provided such rich data. When doing small scale exploratory studies like this, ethnographic methods are recommended for the researcher tempted to try it, along with the warning that at least this researcher found it to be exhausting.

The credibility of the study is for the reader to judge. In this report, attempts have been made to show which obstacles were perceived along the way, and to how the field work was approached and performed.

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

When a study of an exploratory nature is at the stage of reporting, there are of course many more questions that would be interesting topics for further research. Apart from the rather obvious suggestions of continuing this study, several of the theoretical concepts discussed in the framework deserve more attention, and to be empirically related.

Decision making is a topic that has been extensively treated in literature but still is far from understood. As has been shown in this study decision making related to households, and in different contexts, need to be researched further. When is a decision made? What is a decision? We can be interested in the first impulse and in the final purchase or action, but it is doubtful if this is one decision. The concepts used in this study, consideration set and heuristics, both deserve further treatment. Is the consideration set situation related, or does that vary as well?

The notion of *context* is also something that needs to be further researched. Context should not be seen as a disturbing variable but as an important explanatory variable by its own means. Exploratory research on the consumers' perceptions of different contexts, and the implications of them, would be of great value.

Grocery stores are wonderful real life laboratories to be used for experiments. If decisions are made in-store that is where interesting results can be gained. Scanner technology is a helpful instrument in data collection. The store can be used in different ways and regarded from many different perspectives, thereby offering an enormous potential for creative research. By using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods the results will not only show *how* consumers act, but can give insight into *why* they act as they do, and thereby provide a good understanding of the issues in question.

Considering how the consumers seem to frame stores not as chains or concepts, but rather as the physical units they visit, it seems wise to do more research on how particular *stores work in their business area*. Focusing on local stores instead of concepts, and starting from a group of consumers with an available set of stores might be a perspective that adds new insights. Each store exists in its own marketplace, which is important to be familiar with. Always using aggregate data and looking for similarities blinds out the variation which might be important knowledge for local managers.

It seems like an interesting task to further develop, or test, the combined dimensions *planning* and *involvement* as instruments to understand the role of the grocery retail store in households' food related decision making. Further empirical studies might reveal one or more dimensions that need to be added. In my opinion, it is still regarded as important to use a consumer viewpoint when

developing ways for grocery stores to build mutually rewarding relations with their customers.

This section would not be complete without a suggestion for further research in consumer behaviour using *ethnographic methods*. Particularly interesting would be to see ethnographic methods used in combination with surveys or other more commonly used instruments. Many of the fields of consumer behaviour where more empirical research is needed are such that ethnographic methods at least can give good insights into how to approach the topics.

References

Alvesson, M. & K. Sköldberg (1994), *Tolkning och reflektion. Vetenskapsfilosofi och kvalitativ metod*, Lund: Studentlitteratur

Anell, B. (1979), *Hushållen och dagligvarudistributionen*, (dissertation), Stockholm: EFI

Arndt, J. (1980), *Reflections on research in consumer behavior*, Stockholm: MTC

Arndt, J. (1986), 'Paradigms in Consumer Research: A Review of Perspectives and Approaches' *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol 20, No. 8, pp. 23-40

Atkinson, P. & M. Hammersley (1994), 'Ethnography and Participant Observation' in N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, U.S.A.: Sage Publications Inc.

Belk, R. W. (1975), 'Situational Variables and Consumer Behavior', *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 2, December, pp. 157-164

Belk, R. W., J. F. Sherry, Jr. & M. Wallendorf (1988), 'A Naturalistic Inquiry into Buyer and Seller Behavior at a Swap Meet', *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 14, March, pp. 449-470

Belk, R. W. (1991a), *Highways and Buyways: Naturalistic Research from the Consumer Behavior Odyssey* (ed.) Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research

Belk, R. W. (1991b), 'Epilogue: Lessons Learned' in Belk R. (ed.) *Highways and Buyways: Naturalistic Research from the Consumer Behavior Odyssey*" Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research

Bettman, J.R. (1979), *An Information Processing Theory of Consumer Choice*, Philippines: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co, Inc.

Bettman, J.R., E.J. Johnson & J.W. Payne (1991), 'Consumer Decision Making' in Robertson, T.S. & H.H. Kassarjian (eds.) *Handbook of Consumer Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

Berger, P.L. & T. Luckmann (1966), *The Social Construction of Reality*, Doubleday, N.Y.: Anchor Books

Blattberg, R.C. & S.A. Neslin (1990), *Sales Promotion. Concepts, Methods and Strategies*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Bowman, R. (1987), 'What's "in-store" for 1987', *Marketing & Media Decisions*, Vol. 22, No 1 (January), pp. 78, 80

Boyd, Jr, H.W. & S.J. Levy (1967), *Promotion: A Behavioral View*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Bryman, A. (1989), *Research Methods and Organization Studies*, London: Unwin Hyman

Brytting, T. (1991), *Organizing in the small growing firm. A grounded theory approach*, (dissertation), Stockholm: EFI

Burenstam Linder, S. (1969), *Den rastlösa välfärdsmänniskan*, Stockholm: Bonniers

Burgoyne, J. & D. Clarke (1983), 'You are What You Eat: Food and Family Reconstitution' in Murcott, A. (ed.) *The Sociology of Food and Eating*, Great Britain: Gower Publishing Company Ltd

Cline, S. (1990), *Just desserts – women and food*, London: André Deutsch Ltd.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1990), 8th ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press

Costley, C.L. (1988), 'Meta Analysis of Involvement Research' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 15, pp. 554-562, Provo, UT: ACR

Dagens Konsument (1994), no. 8, Aug/Sep, Västerås: ICA-Förlaget

Darden, W.R. & F.D.Reynolds (1971), 'Shopping orientations and product usage rates', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. VIII, November, pp. 505-508

Denzin, N.K. (1983), 'Interpretive Interactionism' in G. Morgan (ed.) *Beyond Method*, Newbury Park: Sage Publications, Inc.

Denzin, N. K. & Y. S. Lincoln (1994), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, U.S.A.: Sage Publications Inc.

Ehn, B. & O. Löfgren (1982), *Kulturanalys*, Malmö: Gleerups Förlag

Ekström, K.M. (1995), *Children's Influence in Family Decision Making* (dissertation), Göteborg: Graphic Systems AB

Ekström, M. (1990), *Kost, klass och kön*, (dissertation), Umeå Studies in Sociology No. 98, Umeå University

Engel, J.F. & R.D. Blackwell (1982), *Consumer Behavior* 4th ed., Japan: The Dryden Press

Engel, J.F., R.D. Blackwell & P.W. Miniard (1995), *Consumer Behavior,* 8th ed., U.S.A.: The Dryden Press

Engström, H & H. Hartvig Larsen, (1987), *Husholdningernes butiksvalg*, Köpenhamn: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck

Engström, H. & H. Hartvig Larsen (1989*), Revision af teorien om husholdningernes butiksvalg*, Working paper, nr 2, June, Institut for Avsätningsökonomi, Handelshöjskolen i Köbenhavn

Engström, H & H. Hartvig Larsen (1990), 'The interaction between households and stores – a theoretical approach', in H. Mühlbacher & C. Jochum (eds.*) Advanced Research in Marketing,* Volume II, Conference Proceedings from the Annual Marketing Conference of the European Marketing Academy, Innsbruck, Austria, May 22-25, 1990

Folkes, V.S. & T. Kiesler (1991), 'Social Cognition: Consumers' Inferences about the Self and Others' in Robertson, T.S. & H.H. Kassarjian (eds.), *Handbook of Consumer Behavior,* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

Fontana, A. & J.H. Frey (1994), 'Interviewing: The Art of Science' in Denzin, N.K. & Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research, U.S.A.:* Sage Publications Inc.

Fornell, Claes (1992), 'A National Customer Satisfaction Barometer. The Swedish Experience', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 56, No 1, pp. 6-21

Fürst, E. (1988), 'The cultural significance of food' in P. Otnes (ed.) *The Sociology of Consumption*, Oslo: Solum Forlag A/S

Genrup, K. (1988), *Mat som kultur*, Etnologiska hushållsstudier, Etnologiska Institutionen, Umeå Universitet.

Glaser, B. & A. Strauss (1967*), The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Strategies for Qualitative Research,* Chicago: Aldine

Grafton-Small, R. (1993), 'Consumption and Significance: The Shape of Things to Come', *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vol 9, No 2, pp. 89-99

Grunert, K.G., K. Brunsö & S. Bisp (1993), *Food-related life style: Development of a cross-culturally valid instrument for market surveillance*", MAPP working paper no 12, Denmark

Grönroos, C. (1990), *Service Management and Marketing*, Massachussetts/Toronto: Lexington Books

Gunnarsson, J. & R. Wahlund (1995*), Hushållens finansiella strategier. En explorativ studie*" Fonden för Handels- och Distributionsforskning, EFI, Stockholm

Haas, J. (1987), 'Prospects for Consumer Research' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol XIV, pp. 76-79, Provo, UT: ACR

Hager, C.J. (1988), 'Shopping for Variety in Red Meat, Poultry, and Fish' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 15, pp. 19-21, Provo, UT: ACR

Haglund, L. (1979), *Konsumtions- och köpplanering i hushåll,* (dissertation), Göteborg: BAS ekon. för.

Hammersley, M. & P. Atkinson (1983), *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Routledge

Heisley, D.D. & P.S. Holmes (1987), 'A Review of Family Consumption Research: The Need for a More Anthropological Perspective' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol XIV, pp. 453-457, Provo, UT: ACR.

Hill, R.P. (1993), 'A Primer for Ethnographic Research With a Focus on Social Policy Issues Involving Consumer Behavior' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 20, pp. 59-62

Hirschman, A.O. (1970), *Exit, voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States,* Mass. U.S.A.: Harvard University Press

Hirschman, E.C. & M.B. Holbrook (1982), 'The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun' *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 9, September, pp. 132-140

Hirschman, E.C. & M.B.Holbrook (1992), *Postmodern Consumer Research. The Study of Consumption as Text,* U.S.A.: Sage Publications/ACR

Holbrook, M.B. (1987), 'O, Consumer, How You've Changed: Some Radical Reflections on the Roots of Consumption' in F.A. Fuat, N. Dholakia & R.P. Bagozzi (eds.) *Philosophical and Radical Thought in Marketing*, U.S.A.: D.C. Heath and Company

Holmberg, C. (1992), *Effects of Feature Advertising and Other Promotions*, EFI Research Report, Stockholm

Howard, J.A. (1989), *Consumer Behavior in Marketing Strategy*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

Jansson, S. (1988), 'Maten och myterna' ur *Vår Föda*, Volym 40, supplement 2, Uppsala: Statens livsmedelsverk

Jansson, S. (1993), *Maten och det sociala samspelet,* Stockholm: Utbildningsradion samt Uppsala: Statens Lantbruksuniversitet

Julander, C.-R. (1989), *What's in the basket? Receipt analysis for marketing decisions: An exploratory study*, The Foundation for Distibution Research at the Stockholm School of Economics

Julander, C.-R. & P.-G. Persson (1993*), Toward a Theory of Promotional Effects in Grocery Retailing*", EFI Research Paper, # 6498, March, Stockholm: EFI

Kahn, B.E. & D.C. Schmittlein (1992), 'The Relationship Between Purchases Made on Promotion and Shopping Trip Behaviour', *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 68, No. 3, Fall, pp. 294-315

Kassarjian, H.H. (1982), 'Low Involvement: A Second Look' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 8, pp. 31-34

Kirchler, E. (1988), 'Household economic decision making' in W.F. Van Raaij, G.M. Van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Pscyhology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers

Kotler, P. (1980), *Marketing Management. Analysis, Planning, Implementation, and Control*, 4th ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Kotler, P. (1988*), Marketing Management. Analysis, Planning, Implementation, and Control*, 6th ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Kumar, V. & R.P. Leone (1988), 'Measuring the Effect of Retail Store Promotions on Brand and Store Substitution', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. XXV, May, pp. 178-185

Kvale, S. (1989), 'To validate is to question' in S. Kvale (ed.), *Issues of validity in qualitative research,* pp. 73-91, Lund: Studentlitteratur

Laaksonen, M. (1993), 'Retail Patronage Dynamics: Learning About Daily Shopping Behavior in Context of Changing Retail Structures', *Journal of Business Research*, 28, 1-2, pp. 3-174

Lincoln, Y. S. & E. G. Guba (1985), *Naturalistic inquiry*, U.S.A.: Sage Publications, Inc.

Linderstam, T. (1989), *Konsumenters informations- och inköpsstrategier*, Handelshögskolan vid Göteborgs Universitet

McKenzie, J. (1986), 'An Integrated Approach — With Special Reference to the Study of Changing Food Habits in the United Kingdom' in C. Ritzon, L. Gofton & J. McKenzie (eds.), *The Food Consumer*, Great Britain: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Mennell, S., A. Murcott & A.H. van Otterloo (1992), 'The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet and Culture' in *Current Sociology*, Vol 40, No 2, Autumn, Sage publications

Morgan, G. (1983a), 'Research as Engagement: A Personal View' in G. Morgan (ed.) *Beyond Method*, Newbury Park: Sage Publications, Inc.

Morgan, G. (1983b), 'Toward a More Reflective Social Science' in G. Morgan (ed.) *Beyond Method*, Newbury Park: Sage Publications, Inc.

Murcott, A. (1983), *The Sociology of Food and Eating*, (ed), Great Britain: Gower Publishing Company Ltd

Mårtensson, R. (1987), *Consumer Information Strategies: New Advertising and Media Research*, Lund: Studentlitteratur/Chartwell-Bratt

Nicosia, F.M. & R.N. Mayer (1976), 'Toward a Sociology of Consumption', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol 3, September, pp. 65-75

O'Shaughnessy, J. (1987), *Why People buy*, U.S.A.: Oxford University Press

Oakley, A. (1981), 'Interviewing women: a contradition in terms' in H. Roberts (ed.) *Doing Feminist Research*, London: Routledge

Parasuraman, A., V.A. Zeithaml & L.L. Berry (1988), 'SERVQUAL: A Multiple-Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality', *Journal of Retailing*, Vol 64, No 1, pp. 12-40

Persson, P.-G. (1992), *Basket Analysis: A New Way of Studying Short Term Effects of Promotions in Grocery Retailing*, EFI Research Report, November, Stockholm

Persson, P.-G. (1993), *Promotional Response Variation Across Product Categories*, EFI Research Paper, # 6529, December, Stockholm

Persson, P.-G. (1995), *Modeling the Impact of Sales Promotion on Store Profits*, (dissertation), Stockholm: EFI

Peter, J.P. & J.C.Olsen (1993), *Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy*, 3rd ed., U.S.A.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.

Pinson, C.R.A. & E.L. Roberto (1988), 'Consumer Behavior and the Marketing Activities of the Firm' in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.) *Handbook of Economic Psychology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing

Quinn, F. (1992), *Kunden är kung*, Västerås: ICA-Förlaget

van Raaij, W.F. (1988a), 'Information Processing and Decision Making Cognitive Aspects of Economic Behavior' in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.) *Handbook of Economic Psychology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing

van Raaij, W.F. (1988b), 'Introduction to Part II: Consumer Behavior" in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Psychology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing

van Raaij, W.F. (Sep 1993), 'Postmodern consumption', *Journal of Economic Psychology* Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 541-564

Rogoff, B. (1984), 'Introduction;: Thinking and Learning in Social Context' in Rogoff, B. & J. Lave (eds.) *Everyday Cognition. It's Development in Social Context,* U.S.A.: Harvard University Press

Salzer, M. (1994), *Identity Across Borders. A Study in the "IKEA-World"*, (dissertation), Sweden: Linköping Studies in Management and Economics, No. 27

Sandberg, J. (1994), *Human competence at Work. An interpretative approach,* (dissertation), Göteborg: BAS ekon. fören.

Sandberg, J. (1995), *How do we justify knowledge produced by interpretative approaches?* Paper presented at the 13th Nordic Conference in Business Studies, August, Copenhagen, Denmark

Sanders, C.R. (1987), 'Consuming as Social Action: Ethnographic Methods in Consumer Research' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol XIV, pp. 71-75, Provo, UT.: ACR

SCB (1995), *Statistisk Årsbok '95*, Årgång 81, Stockholm

Silverman, D. (1985), *Qualitative Methodology & Sociology*, Aldershot: Gower

Sjödén, P-O. (1991), 'Måltiden från uppfostringssynpunkt' *ur Måltiden och Måltidsordningen*, FRN rapport, 91.3. ((Centrum för omvårdn.vetenskap,Uppsala))

Sjöden, S. (1989), *Mat på hjärnan – om ätandets psykologi*, Stockholm: Legenda

Sjögren-de Beauchaine, A. (1988), *The Bourgeoisie in the Dining-Room*, (dissertation), Institutet för Folklivsforskning, Stockholms Universitet

Solomon, M.R. (1992), *Consumer Behavior*, U.S.A.: Allyn and Bacon

SOU 1987:44, *Livsmedelsutredningen*, Stockholm: Allmänna Förlaget

Spradley, J. P. (1979), *The Ethnographic Interview,* U.S.A.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Stone, G.P. (1954), 'City shoppers and urban identification: Observations on the social psychology of city life', *American Journal of Sociology*, July

Strauss, A. & J. Corbin (1994), 'Grounded Theory Methodology. An Overview' in N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, U.S.A.: Sage Publications Inc.

Supermarket, 5-6/95, May/June, Västerås: ICA-Förlaget

Södergren, B. (1992), *Decentralisering. Förändring i företag och arbetsliv,* (dissertation), Stockholm: EFI

Tollin, K. (1990), *Konsumentbilder i marknadsföringen av livsmedel*, (dissertation) Företagsekonomiska institutionen, Stockholms Universitet

Tordjman, A. (1988), 'A Review of the United States Food Retailing Industry', *International Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 3, No. 4, pp. 55-69

Tucker, W. T. (1967), *Foundations for a theory of consumer behavior,* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Tversky, A. & D. Kahneman (1986), 'Rational Choice and the Framing of Decisions', *Journal of Business,* Vol. 59, No. 4, pp. 251-278

Van Maanen, John (1988), *Tales of the Field. On Writing Ethnography*, U.S.A.: The University of Chicago Press

Walters, C.G. & G.W. Paul (1970), *Consumer Behavior. An Integrated Framework*, Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin Inc.

Wandel, M., A. Bugge & J. Skoglund Ramm (1995), *Matvaner i endring og stabilitet*, Rapport nr. 4, SIFO, Norge

Warlop, L. & S. Ratneshwar (1993), 'The Role of Usage Context in Consumer Choice: A Problem Solving Perspective' in *Advances in Consumer Research,* Vol. 20, pp. 377-382

Williams, R.H., J.H. Painter & H.R. Nicholas (1978), 'A Policy-Oriented Typology of Grocery Shoppers', *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 54, No. 1, Spring

LIST OF APPENDICES

#	Content	Pages
1	Letter to the households in Swedish	I
2	Letter to the households translated to English	II

APPENDIX 1

Jag, som heter Carina Holmberg, forskar på Handelshögskolan här i Stockholm. Det projekt jag håller på med nu skall kunna användas för att utveckla livsmedelsbutiker så de anpassas mer efter hushållens behov och problem. Därför är jag intresserad av hur man i vardagslag planerar vad man ska äta och hur man köper livsmedel för det.

Nu behöver jag hjälp av barnfamiljer i min forskning!

Jag vill få kontakt med barnfamiljer – med förvärvsarbetande eller studerande föräldrar – för att få tillfälle att prata om när-var-hur mat- och inköpsplaneringen sker och hur man tycker att det är. Är det här med mat jobbigt, kul, stressigt, eller ...? Barnfamiljer har jag valt eftersom det är en grupp som vanligen har begränsningar både i tid och i pengar. Ett dagis blev därför ett naturligt sätt att söka kontakt.

Min forskning kallas för konsumentbeteende, jag är alltså inte dietist eller kostexpert. Jag är inte huvudsakligen intresserad vad vad man äter, utan snarare hur man bestämmer vad man ska äta. För mitt arbete behöver jag få kontakt med hushåll med olika typer av beteenden, från välplanerade storhandlare till dag-till-dag inköpare. *Det finns inget beteende som är mer rätt än något annat,* för mig är det helt enkelt viktigt att se hur det verkligen går till.

Vem är då jag som vill få komma in i era hem? Jag är en 37-årig Söderbo utan egna barn. Mina syskonbarn som är 2,4 och 6 år bor hos mig ibland. Jag vet således att det kan vara svårt att få tiden att räcka till. Jag räknar inte med att vi ska sitta ner i lugn och ro och prata. Låt oss istället utnyttja de tillfällen som finns. Jag går väldigt gärna med och handlar, hem och packar upp, står bredvid under matlagningen och så vidare. Det ska inte kännas som om det tar en massa extra tid. Vi behöver inte ses mer än en gång, om ni inte själva vill det. Det kan ju vara roligt att fundera över hur man egentligen löser de där vardagliga rutinerna, och att få ett tillfälle att bidra till butiksutveckling. Vi spenderar ju en hel del både tid och pengar i samband med just livsmedelsinköp. I rapporten kommer de deltagande hushållen att vara helt anonyma.

Onsdagen den 25 januari finns jag på "dagisnamn" på eftermiddagen så att ni kan se hur jag ser ut, ställa frågor och anmäla intresse. Ring mig gärna på Handelshögskolan 736 95 67 eller hem 642 47 14, telefonsvararen är alltid hemma. Jag hoppas att jag lyckats väcka ert intresse, och att ni inte har något emot att deltaga i min undersökning.

APPENDIX 2

My name is Carina Holmberg and I am a researcher at the Stockholm School of Economics. The results of the project that I am currently working on can hopefully be used to improve and develop retail stores so they become more adapted to the different needs and problems of the household. Therefore I am interested in how households generally plan their meals and how they buy food.

Now I need help with my research from families with kids!

I want to get in contact with families with kids, where the parents either work or study, to have the opportunity to talk about when-where-how food and purchase planning takes place and how they feel about it. All this with food - is it fun, stressful, or ... ? I have chosen families with kids because this is a group that usually has limited funds and time. Therefore a daycare center became a natural place to look for contact.

My area of research is called consumer behaviour so I am neither a dietitian nor a nutritinal expert. My main interest is not what you eat, but rather how you decide on what to eat. For my work I need to get in contact with households that behave in different ways - from well planned bulk buyers to the day-to-day purchaser. There is no behaviour that is more correct than any other - to me it is simply important to see how it really happens.

So who is this person who wants to enter your home? I am a 37 year old living on my own in southern Stockholm. My niece and nephews, who are 2,4, and 6, at times live with me. I therefore know how scarce time can be. I do not expect us to be able to sit down under quiet and undisturbed cirumstances. Let us instead make use of existing opportunities. I will gladly go shopping with you, help you bring the groceries home and unpack them, keep you company whilst you prepare the meal, and so on. It is important that you don't feel like it takes a lot of extra time. We do not have to meet more than once - unless you want to. It can be fun to think about how you usually solve those everyday routines, and to get an opportunity to contribute to the development of the store. We do spend both a lot of time and money on buying food. In the report the households that participate will be totally anonymous.

During the afternoon of Wednesday the 25th of January I will be at "day-care center"so that you can have a look at me, ask questions and sign up if you are interested in participating. Feel free to call me at my university 736 95 67 or home 642 47 14 - my answering machine is always home. I hope I have succeeded in awakening your interest and that you will want to take part in my study.

PART THREE

STORES AND CONSUMERS – CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

1 INTRODUCTION

What characterises the grocery store – customer relation? Can grocery stores expect to have an active role in households management of everyday life? Can households, on the other hand, demand active participation and help from the stores? By which methods can we learn more both about food-related consumer behaviour and about the relation between stores and consumers ?

Sellerberg (1977) in a sociological analysis of the relation between customers and stores pointed to the role-taking of customers. The boundaries between buyer and seller became less strict as the buyers increasingly made references to how retailing must be profitable for the store-owners, customers thereby accepting conditions which could be seen as undesired by the customers but judged by them as necessary for business reasons.

In this part, two empirical studies of consumer behaviour related to grocery stores will be discussed. The contribution of each separate study will be treated as well as the synergies between the two. The grocery stores and their relations to consumers' food related problem solving and purchasing is regarded as one common denominator of the two studies.

From the viewpoint of the manufacturer, the store plays the part of a distribution channel, the importance of which is treated in the marketing literature (see for example Stern & El-Ansary, 1988). The first of the two studies discussed here implies that the store is important in the consumers' purchasing behaviour. When consumers were interviewed, in the second study, they seemed to take the store for granted. Even if the stores are involved in the households' planning and decision making, they were seldom acknowledged as influential.

The store can be regarded as the place, physically, where supply and demand meet. This will be discussed here before other aspects of the store are treated.

1.2 Where Supply and Demand Meet

From economic theory we learn that supply and demand will meet and match, in a theoretically perfect market, where the prices are used as instruments to regulate flows in the market (see for example Varian, 1990). If there is a shortage of a popular product, prices will increase until demand and supply are at the same level. The everyday reality where consumers go to a store, with economic and temporal constraints, as part of the daily problem solving of what to eat, brings many other aspects into the issue of how supply and demand meet and match.

Demand is here what consumers need and ask for in terms of store location, opening hours, service, assortment, etc. The supply side is represented by what they are offered through the combined efforts of retailers, manufacturers, and other actors. The grocery store can be regarded as a modern version of the traditional market place. Manufacturers get an opportunity to display their goods, while the consumers can come and see what is offered, and decide if this is in accordance with what they demand, at prices they are willing to pay.

Short term price promotion has been an extensively used instrument in Swedish grocery retailing, in the attempts to attract consumers to the stores. This builds on the assumption that a large enough share of consumers have time and interest enough to engage in store-switching. The instrument has been used by all actors, reducing the impact of it for a particular chain or retailer.

If price is not enough as a regulating mechanism in this market, there will be a need for others. Price is traditionally regarded as a carrier of information, conveying data on both quality and quantity. What other communication devices exist, and how do we increase our means of communication to improve the functioning of our markets? Can we identify better ways to easily improve the present flows of communication in order to better match demand and supply?

1.3 The Store as a Micro Market

The retailers have the advantage of meeting the customers face-to-face, and having the knowledge of their particular market place. Each store can be regarded as its own marketplace, with a particular set of conditions and pre-requisites. The store operates on a micro market with a particular set of customers, competition, and a bundle of resources including layout, store location, personnel, and a neighbourhood that largely affects what is the potential action range (Hernant, 1994). The task for the retailer is to develop skills to manage this micro market as well as possible given the conditions.

The task for each retailer is to connect the offers from suppliers and wholesalers in such a way that the customers find it attractive, and to add the right amount and kind of services to produce a valuable alternative when compared with its competitors. The retailer's advantage, compared to wholesalers and manufacturers/suppliers, is the knowledge of the conditions in that particular store or market. Ford (1990) highlights the important role of the retailer, given the knowledge that s/he has about the consumers in that particular market place. According to Ford, other actors might also gain from regarding the retailer differently and helping the retailer. Dawson (1995) discusses the increase in power of retailers relative to the power of other actors

in the distribution channel. According to Dawson, this power increase is caused by, for example, the pressure on shelf-space in stores due to increase in number of products, and growth in retailers own brands which have also been accepted by consumers.

Regarding each store as a micro market means acknowledging that stores differ. Groups of stores might be more or less similar, but it is important to take variation into account. By considering the variation and adapting the supplies both in tangibles and intangibles, the store can perform better. The reward for this might lie in more loyal customers, and thereby more stable business, but also a more changeable organisation which has potential to constantly be improved and adapt to the ever-changing micro market.

1.4 The Two Empirical Studies

The first of the two studies, which was reported in 1992, used scanner data from one store, and focused on the effects of promotions. Scanner data is an unobtrusive measure of actual purchase behaviour, as reflected in consumers' shopping baskets. Moreover, the database included data on various promotional activities undertaken by the retailer. Fourteen product categories were studied representing solutions to different problems that consumers have. Data on both in-store and out-of-store promotions were connected to the respective sales figures over a period of 165 weeks. With long time-series for individual products, patterns of promotional impact were identified.

The most intriguing result in this study was the large difference in effect on volume sold between in-store promotions and activities that would reach the consumer out-of-store. When an out-of-store promotion was not supported by special display, the volume sold was significantly lower, than when the product was also activated in-store. This could mean that the consumer needed to be reminded of the activity in-store. As activities that did not include any out-of-store elements also resulted in high sales volumes, a possible conclusion is that special displays in the store were the most important promotional activities. This indicated that many of the consumers used the store and were affected by in-store activities in their decision processes.

The second study used the results of the first as a starting point, discussing the role of the store in the households' planning and decision processes regarding food. Using participant interviewing as a method, some ten households with small children were accompanied to the store, observed, and interviewed. Their behaviour and opinions regarding purchasing, planning and other food related activities were studied. The households seemed to differ on the dimensions involvement in food and planning, why these dimensions seem useful as descriptors. Overall, the households differed both in behaviour and

attitudes towards food. The aim of the study was to discuss development of grocery stores from a consumer perspective. Most of the households seemed content with their own behaviour, and had few suggestions on how to improve the grocery stores.

While the first study found that consumers seemed to be using the store in the sense that their behaviour was strongly affected, the second focused on how they perceived the store and how they used it. The store seemed to have a role in their decisions, but was not explicitly acknowledged as influential.

1.5 Outline

Figure 1 illustrates the background to and the outline of this part. The last box in the figure illustrates what will be treated here, the numbers 1 to 4 referring to the different sections.

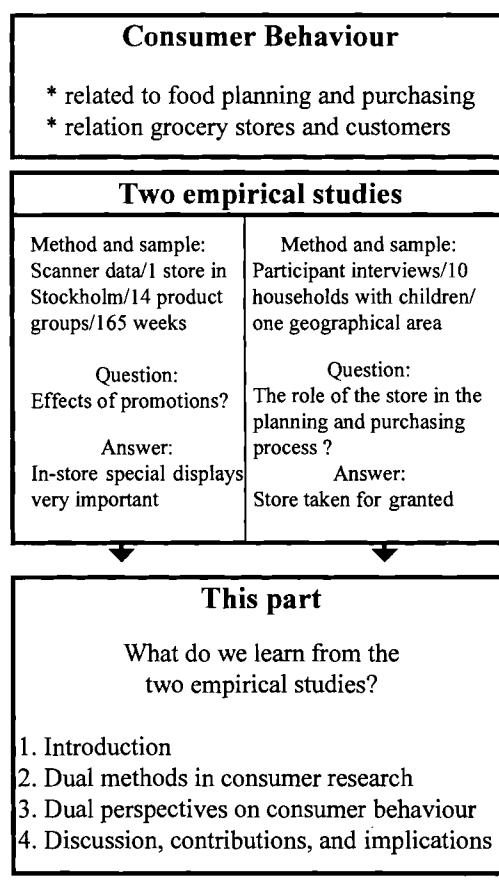


Figure 1. Outline

Wind, J., V.R. Rao & P.E. Green (1991), 'Behavioral Methods' in Robertson, T.S. & H.H. Kassarjian (eds.), *Handbook of Consumer Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Witkin. R.W. (199?), *Running a Commentary on Imaginatively Relived Events - A Technique for Obtaining Qualitatively Rich Discourse*" Unpublished paper, University of Exeter, U.K.

Woodside, A.G. & R.J. Trappey, III (1992), 'Finding out why customers shop your store and buy your brand: Automatic Cognitive Processing Models of Primary Choice', *Journal of Advertising Research*, November/December, pp. 59-78

Wärneryd, K-E. (1988), 'Social Influence in Economic Behavior' in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Psychology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing

Ölander, F. (1993), 'Consumer psychology for the consumer's sake? A note on ways of making consumer research more emancipatory', *Journal of Economic Psychology,* Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 565-576

2 DUAL METHODS IN CONSUMER RESEARCH

In consumer research, surveys and experiments have been used fairly often. When discussing which method to choose, it is often implied that a full array of methods is available. The problem to be researched should be guiding the choice of method. There are, however, a number of restrictions influencing the set of possible methods. The restrictions referred to are restrictions both in the person doing the research, and restrictions in the environment. The researcher is familiar with a set of methods, making these more likely choices. A specific research problem can often be framed in such a way as to make these methods more suitable choices. This is not only true for an individual researcher, but also for a group of researchers, or a department, which have etablished certain patterns of behaviour and research. The researchers in that environment can have a better understanding of certain methods than of others, which will also lead to their encouragement of research along the tried and travelled roads. Sandberg (1995) argues that is is not just a question of choosing a method, but also to understand what the implications are for which type of knowledge that can be produced.

When a method is chosen it is fairly common that the researcher familiar with quantitative methods tends to see the problem in question as one that is best shed light on with the help of quantitative data, and vice versa. Combining both qualitative and quantitative methods in one study, and/or in one person is unfortunately rather uncommon.

The two empirical studies in this thesis use different methods, one qualitative method and one quantitative method, to study consumer behaviour. One method, collecting scanner data, is unobtrusive and can therefore be used to describe fairly well what is actually happening under the identified circumstances. One must, however, be careful when speculating about why things happen or do not happen. The other method, on the other hand, focuses on the interaction between the researcher and the respondent, giving rich and close information, but of course with the researcher affecting the respondent.

These two ways of studying consumer behaviour will first be discussed separately, before the possible synergy of combining the two methods is treated.

Both presented studies had purposes including aspects of development, or testing, of method. Scanner data had not been used to any larger extent, even if the usage now is increasing with availability. Both studies have in common that they did not just use established methods according to well known critieria. Instead there was a dimension of exploration of methods and search for understanding of methods, which will be further discussed here.

2.1 POS Scanner Data

POS Scanner data has been available for some time, and the availability and accessibility seems to increase every day. The idea of using scanner check-outs, builds on products marked with bar codes that can be scanned. In order for the system to be introduced, agreements were made between representatives of retailers and manufacturers to ascertain that a standardised system of bar codes would be used on products. One of the arguments used was actually the potential of doing analyses, which had not been possible earlier.

During the time that scanner check-outs have been used, it seems that few of the analytical potentials have been used in practice (Garry, 1992, Thayer, 1990) something which unfortunately is true also for Sweden. Using scanner check-outs provides so many other values that the analyses have been put on hold, hopefully temporarily. Advantages for the retailer when using scanner check-outs is for example that the time demanding price marking can be eliminated, prices charged will be more accurate, report generation is facilitated, receipts with product specifications annotated are possible, and speed of check-out can be increased.

Compared to these, relatively easily achieved advantages, using scanner data for analytical purposes is quite cumbersome, which might be part of the explanation why the use of these possibilities have been delayed/postponed. Analysing scanner data enables analyses on levels that have not been that easily accessible earlier. This is one main advantage with scanner data, but can also be part of the explanation why it has not been used. Organisations with fixed structures and ways to perform transactions, might find it complicated to apply new tools that not only replace old tools but offer new fields of application, which are not all together known earlier.

When scanner data is discussed here it refers both to the methods used in collecting scanner data, but also to the POS scanner data as data. Researchers have used POS Scanner data in a number of studies, some of which are mentioned here. Shugan (1987), estimated brand positioning maps for toothpaste, mouthwash and dishwashing liquid with the DEFENDER model. Aspects of nutritional information at point-of-purchase were examined using scanner data for tinned soup, tomato ketchup, macaroni and cheese dinner, mayonnaise, and bran based cold cereal in a Canadian study by Muller (1983). Henderson (1988) used scanner data on bathroom tissue and caffeinated instant coffe in her study of how coupon redemptions interact with price and store promotions. The model of marketing mix, brand switching and competition by Carpenter and Lehmann (1985) was illustrated with scanner data for one frequently purchased staple food category. Bemmaor and Mouchoux (1991) studied short term effects on brand sales of in-store promotion and retail

advertising. Their study was based on a factorial experiment collecting scanner data for sparkling wine, regular ground coffee, liquid cleanser, disposable diapers, hair lacquer, and cat litter. A recent study by Dhar and Hoch (1996) compares the effectiveness of in-store coupons with off-the-shelf price discounts. In the study, scanner data for five product categories: beer, RTE cereal, analgesics, oral care, and soft drinks, were collected and analysed.

Researchers at the Foundation for Distribution Research have also used POS scanner data in a number of studies. Hernant and Persson (1995), for example, combined receipt data, data on promotions, and data from a customer survey in their study of deal proneness. In a study of promotional response and purchasing patterns in the confectionery category, Holmberg and Sandén-Håkansson (1994) used receipt data, promotional data, and item-level scanner data. Håkansson (1994) studied the value of strong brands using receipt data for breakfast cereals, lemonades, laundry supplies, pasta, snacks, ice cream, jam, frozen foods, and washing up liquids.

Scanner data has the advantage of being an unobtrusive measure of one particular aspect of consumer behaviour. Scanner data provides rich information and, when collected on a non-aggregated level, the data can be used for almost an infinite number of analyses. The researcher or analyst is probably to a large extent what provides the limitation of what can be done.

Analysing scanner data can be seen as allocating a personality to each item. The personality includes a particular way of behaviour, a promotion response, a particular pattern by which this number/person can be identified. Analysing scanner data is also a way to identify how each product is treated. How the product is treated, together with some of its particular traits, leads to the response pattern. That sounds relatively simple, doesn't it? Well, it is not. The picture is complicated further by other products' presence or absence. For the sake of realism it must be acknowledged that relations between products exist. These can, for example, be due to complementarity, substitutability, or just that consumers are seeking variation (Håkansson et al, 1995).

One advantage of scanner data is its potential quality. Missing values should normally not be a problem. The most intriguing aspect, in my meaning, is that it is so accurate. No interpretations have to be done in the first data collecting stage, while this of course can not be avoided in the analyses. Scanner data can be compared to some data used in natural sciences. Long time series are easily collected, and the large number of data points provide potential to engage in advanced statistical analyses. Scanner data is also suitable for experimental purposes, as it gives fast and accurate sales figures. However, the disadvantage of experimenting in a retail store is that it means disturbing the natural course of events and thereby disrupting a potential long serie of natural data.

As the world is never totally unproblematic so is, of course, not the universe of scanner data collection either. As is the case with all data, the output will never be better than the input. Computer problems, negligent register maintenance, inconsequent codings, etc., are examples of problems that might occur during scanner data collection.

When using scanner data from existing systems, not adapted for research purposes, it is fairly easy to use categories already defined in the system. Defining categories differently, on the other hand, is quite cumbersome. The categories used today are defined logistically. Dry products that do not need cold or frozen storage are treated in one way, while fresh products are in different categories. From a consumer perspective, frozen peas, canned peas, and fresh peas might be considered as alternatives in a decision situation. Analysing scanner data from such viewpoints is, however, rather difficult today. When regarding the recent discussion and work on category management, this type of problem is an example of what people trying to implement category management face (Pellet, 1994, AGRC, 1994). If category management is introduced to a larger extent, cross-category management might become both more realistic and applied, which should also affect the analytical possibilities in the scanner systems used.

Knowledge of the data and the type of products included in the sample is extremely helpful both in improving and assessing the quality of the data. At least at the early stage of data collection, familiarity with the routines in the store from which scanner data was collected, was a great help. It was then easier to determine whether outliers really were such, or if they could be explained otherwise. All categories are not as easily studied, why it can be wise to consider also practical data collection issues before deciding which categories to analyse.

Scanner data can be used for analyses from many different perspectives, where a consumer perspective might not be the first that comes to mind. The manufacturer can identify patterns of sales and promotion response, varying over seasons, stores, regions, and many other dimensions that are of interest to them. The wholesaler can use scanner data to improve the assortment and, as was said earlier, better understand the roles of different products in the assortment, and how they are related to each other. For the retailer that actively uses the data that is collected from the store's own check-outs, both buying and promotion behaviour can be improved. Persson (1995) used scanner data to build a retailer model for promotion planning. With own scanner data as a source when negotiating with the sellers, a retailer can make sure that purchases actually are adapted to the conditions of the local market-place.

Analyses can, for example, be done on environmentally friendly products, on private labels, on large packages, on cross-elasticities, on price reductions

larger than 15 per cent, on Monday-sales, or on.... Taking the data collection further can be done, for example, by using receipts to identify baskets, or combinations of products that were bought on the same purchase trip. The number of analytical possiblities indicate that it might be wise to save the data in unaggregated form, to keep the analytical possibilities open.

The empirical study referred to earlier (Holmberg, 1992) used approximately 165 weeks of data, for fourteen product categories, where each category contained several item numbers. Much time was spent cleaning and organising the data, before preliminary analyses were made to identify general patterns in the data. Using scanner data to make simple descriptions to illustrate how a particular market works, is a good starting point. Indexes were computed to take away the effects of market share from the comparisons. The dependent variable in regression analyses was indexes of volume sold, in kilos or litres. Kilos and litres were used as these measures are consumer close in terms of the fullness the different food products give. Using kilos or litres eliminates effects of package sizes and differences in price levels which might otherwise confound the analyses.

Promotional activities (except price reductions), were not automatically entered in the database but have been added, more or less manually. With these added to the observations, meaningful regression analyses could be made, where some had high explanatory values. Promotions seemed to be very important, and for some products almost the total variation in sales was explained by promotions. An interesting finding was that the variation between products was large, and that the products really seemed to have different personalities in terms of how the consumers responded to promotions.

Further analyses of some categories were made using PLS (Partial Least Square-Analysis). This kind of more complex analyses can be very helpful, but a good knowledge of the data is recommended to facilitate the interpretations. As the data are real market data there is always a risk of multicollinearity, which has to be considered.

2.2 Participant Interviewing

No elements of the unobtrusiveness found in scanner data are found in participant interviewing. The method builds instead on the absolute opposite, interaction between researcher and respondent. The method not only produces a very different type of data, but also puts strictly different demands on the researcher performing the work. What is said here about participant interviewing is valid for all methods based on interaction. This discussion is mainly based on Alvesson and Sköldberg (1994), Belk et al (1991), Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), and Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Participant interviewing is a combination of participant observation and interviewing, maybe better described as simultaneous observation and interview. The aim is to make interviews in connection with observation, where questions also can be made about observed behaviour when it occurs. It is believed that it thereby will be easier for the respondent to comment on routinised decision processes and behaviours related to such. As situational factors might play a part, it is a strength of the method to enable these to come in naturally.

The data produced are descriptions, rich in detail, but where much interpretation is needed in order to produce information, or presentable data. The data produced has depth, and can cover many different aspects, as it is quite likely that such are illustrated, directly or indirectly, during the empirical study. Analyses are made continuously during the empirical phase, thereby affecting the data production, as well as afterwards. New data are produced according to what the earlier interviews and observations have provided, or which (unexpected?) questions that have been raised.

The main advantage of the method is, of course, the close proximity to the respondent and his/her behaviour. This closeness makes it possible to identify the routinised actions that people do not explicitly consider, but that a large part of human behaviour consists of. This behaviour is also studied in the context where it normally takes place, and thereby we can reach a better understanding of how context influences, and in some cases maybe sets, boundaries for action.

The method, however, uses the researcher as the instrument. Depending on which line of argument is raised, the researcher can be regarded as both the strength, and as the weakness in the process. The person doing the research has several challenging tasks, or aspects of the method, to consider. One important issue is that the researcher has to establish a good report with the respondent. The researcher's ability to create this contact, can be related to the pre-understanding of the field of study and the ability to share the meaning of the respondents. Familiarity with the context can be important. The familiarity can create an interaction where the respondent can be comfortable enough to behave as if in a natural situation. This, of course, is also related to the topic of the study. The participant interviewing per se does not have to create an awkvard situation for those responding. The respondents are also given many chances to actively contribute, which can lead to them being pleased with participating in the study. This can also lead to the occurrence of unexpected turns, or events, which can be rewarding contributions to the study.

Participant interviewing allows the researcher to see what might have been difficult to discover otherwise, like routinised behaviours that are unconscious, or at least not explicitly considered by the respondent. The method can be useful in identifying variation, for example, between situations, or between

respondents. One of the disadvantages is that as the method is so demanding, there can probably never be more than a small number of cases included. These can, however, be both broad and deep.

The problems with the method are also related to the problem of studying one's own culture. It is difficult to perceive the taken-for-granted that is so familiar. The researcher becomes a limitation also in the sense that what is regarded as unexpected depends on the researcher's expectations. It is only what the researcher had expected to be said and done, or can imagine could be said and done, that will be perceived as possibly lacking.

The data produced are contextual, interactive, and not always so easy to present in a way that makes it possible for the reader to judge the process in which it was produced, and the quality of the interaction. Reporting studies performed with participant interviewing can be difficult, but using a narrative technique approaching story telling, can facilitate for the writer. How can the reader evaluate the quality of the research? The quality of the research is of course related to the quality of the researcher. It can thus be regarded as important for the researcher to, in the report, also try to establish trustworthiness for the own person in the capacity of researcher performing participant interviewing.

As a summarising remark on the method of participant interviewing, it has strong advantages in the possibility it offers to at the same time study behaviour, obtain explanations and arguments for it, and identify the routinised unconsidered decision rules. Enough has been said about the demands on the researcher - they can be mastered. This researcher certainly loved most of the minutes of it, and is rather proud of the data produced through it.

Otnes et al (1995) discussed shopping with consumers as a research technique and argued for its extended application. Their experiences were that combinations of shopping trips and in-depth interviewing provide rich and valuable data by which knowledge can be gained about different aspects of consumer shopping behaviour.

2.3 Combining the Methods Used: Synergies and Contrasts

The discussion in this section will first concentrate on comparing the two methods. Putting them beside each other highlights some of the particular qualities they possess. Secondly, the two methods in combination is discussed. What are the possible synergies in combining the two so different types of method, and are there any disadvantages?

From the separate presentations above, we understand that one method is strong on unobtrusiveness, while the other is focused on interaction between researcher and respondent. One method produces large sets of numbers, while

the other gives wordy descriptions of a few cases. One method collects data, while the other produces data. One method is useful to confirm hypotheses or theories, while the other, through searching, can generate theories or hypotheses. One method focuses on aggregates and similarities, trying to explain variation, while the other has more attention on searching for variation.

This list clearly shows that the methods are very different. Are they similar in any respect? Actually they have a quality in common, both being valuable for the explorative researcher. Scanner data is then somewhat more limited, as it is difficult to go beyond the dataset, while participant interviewing can be taken both broader and deeper as the study continues. Something else that they have in common, and that is a strength in both methods, is the closeness to consumer behaviour. This can be used as an argument for the quality of data in both methods. Scanner data is electronically registering the outcome of consumer behaviour, while participant interviewing allows observation of behaviour as it happens. Neither of the methods has to depend on the consumers themselves reporting about their behaviour after it has already taken place. Both methods also provide information produced in realistic contexts.

The demands on the researcher are very different in the two methods, which for the person doing the research might be the most important difference. One method demands much in terms of statistical knowledge and analytical skills. The other method demands an open and easy-going personality, that easily adapts to different situations, can keep track of the object of the study.

A distinction is made here between data collected and data produced. Data produced is already interpreted, while data collected is still regarded as "pure". Pure data is not meant to be the same as true data, but rather that there has been no modifications of the data in this early stage of processing. Participant interviewing can be regarded as a method that produces data, while scanner data can be collected without interpretation.

Interpretation is, of course, used also at work with quantitative data, but it might be relatively easier for the reader to assess how the interpretations are made in such a study. Survey studies build on the assumption that the questions are understood by the respondents in the way the researcher intended. After all, interpretation is an issue in all research; it is just sometimes easier to agree on the interpretations. Interpretations can, just like knowledge, be regarded as both time- and context-bound. A certain type of knowledge and interpretation is accepted and correct in society in a particular time period, but might be ridiculed by later generations.

What is then to be gained by combining the two methods? It seems obvious that knowledge from different perspectives is an advantage, as it helps to shed light on several angles of a phenomenon. The methods focus on different aspects, which then by necessity leads to these different aspects being

illuminated. If just one method is used, it is more likely that the study is skewed, or more singular in terms of focus. One advantage of treating several aspects or perspectives is that there can exist synergies in that, by looking from another direction, something can be added to the first perspective.

Using both these methods, scanner data and participant interviewing, in consumer behaviour research as was done here, gives more insight both in terms of how-questions and why-questions. The answers to the why-questions are often phrased as perceptions that consumers have, why it is essential to get close to the consumers to find these views. Also in the analysing phase using two methods can be of help. This gives a background or support, or maybe pre-conception, that can be used as guidance, particularly when analysing data produced through participant interviewing.

For the researcher combining quantitative and qualitative methods, an interesting aspect is that it offers very good potential to question one's own studies. The mere process of approaching an issue from several perspectives leads to questioning and constructive reasoning about one's own work. Of course we all try do to that anyway, but this combinatory work provides a natural instrument.

Another aspect is the researcher's personal growth and development. Being able to use so different kinds of methods, also means ability to read and understand studies using different methods. This in turn means being able to contribute to knowledge produced in different discourses, and contributing to discussions that run as parallell, but seldom crossing, tracks.

Tollin (1990) who used different methods in her study, points to the value of integration between a qualitative and a quantitative study. Tollin refers to Sieber (1973) who discussed integration as producing a new method and who argued that it is important to take advantage of the contribution of each method. With integration means that design, data collection, and analyses in one stage is influenced by what was done and found in an earlier stage. Tollin had positive experiences with the integration of methods in her study. She began with focus group discussions with consumers, the outcome of which was a base for a later consumer survey.

Both qualitative method, i.e., interviews, and quantitative method in the form of a survey were used in a recent study by Sandén-Håkansson (1996). The study focused on cooperation regarding media decisions between advertisers, advertising agencies, and media brokers. Some of the aspects involved in the study were treated by both methods, while others were covered by one only.

Working with several methods in one study of a phenomenon is called triangulation (Ghauri et al, 1995). Either data regarding an object can be produced by different methods, or different data can be collected illustrating the same issue. Triangulation also enables validating results and provides a holistic

and contextual picture of the studied object. This is something commonly used in, for example, historical research. Miles and Huberman (1994) points to the value of multimethod-design, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. They argue that such design can contribute with perspectives on the data collected, add value in the analysis phase, and enable creative insights into the issues studied as data and perspectives are turned around and questioned.

In conclusion, applying such different methods gave an interesting change of perspective for the researcher. This change of perspective helped the researcher to distance from the studied object, thereby contributing to the researchers' learning and understanding. The mere process of searching for an understanding of different methods, choosing among them and applying the two was inspiring and rewarding.

3 DUAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour as a field of research has received great interest during the past thirty years. With increases in consumption, and more room in the household budgets for private spending, followed also interest in how consumers make their decisions (Friedman, 1988). The research has to a large extent taken a producer perspective (Anell, 1979, van Raaij, 1988a, Ölander, 1993), resulting in a large number of studies on brand choice, price sensitivity, etc. Studies have, for example, used experimental designs studying choices between a few brands or products varying information, price, or display. Studies using a retailer perspective have partly focused on similar issues, but related these, for example, to the impact of promotions on profitability (for an ironic, but not erroneous treatment of this see Hitt, 1996). Maybe due to reasons of data availability, a small number of products have so far been used in this kind of research (Fader and Lodish, 1990).

An increased understanding of the consumers' decision processes and choice criteria is desired by marketers. With better understanding of consumers communication, product development, promotion, distribution, etc., can be adjusted accordingly, hopefully leading to a more efficient system. Large resources are today, and have previously been, allocated to promotional activities and product development, where the value of the activities is difficult to determine. Another problem is to identify to which extent these activities reach the intended target groups. Product development is one field where it is well known that succeeding is extremely difficult, and that investments in products that fail are very high. From a consumer perspective it can be argued that in the end consumers pay also for failing products, why it could also be in the consumer interest to increase the rate of success - or at least to reduce the rate of failure.

Critical voices regarding consumer behaviour research were presented in part two (see, for example, Anell, 1979, Arndt 1980, 1986, Tucker, 1967, Ölander, 1993). They pointed mainly to the field as fragmented, focusing on the individual as a rational actor, taking the private companies' perspective, and thus engaging in problems of less interest for consumers.

The two studies discussed here, study consumer behaviour from two different perspectives. The first study is more indirectly studying consumer behaviour, by inference of behaviour from sales and promotion data. Consumer behaviour can here be said to be studied from the perspective of the store. The second study takes almost the opposite perspective. This instead focuses on the store, from the consumers viewpoint, stepping as far back as into the household.

Each of these studies contributes with knowledge that adds to the understanding of aspects of consumer behaviour. Interesting is also to discuss to which extent the knowledge gained in the two studies can be combined, thereby contributing to a higher level of understanding.

3.1 Consumer Behaviour from a Store Perspective

The first study showed that in-store activities in the form of special displays are important in grocery retailing. Promotional activities that were supported by in-store activities, had larger response rates in terms of volume sold.

Consumer purchasing behaviour in the store was analysed with regards to promotions. The studied products were chosen to represent solutions to different kinds of problems for the consumers. About half of the products were expected to work as solutions to routine problems while the other half would represent problems demanding a higher level of information processing. All categories but two, soap and toothpaste, were edible. The categories were also sampled to differ on relative storability, relative impulse consumption attractivity, and relative purchase frequency. Apart from that they also varied in terms of how large share of category sales was obtained on promotion (from 11 per cent to 74 per cent).

Discussing the findings from this study, it is interesting to see that all fourteen product categories show large response in terms of volume sold when promoted. The variation in promotion response was high between product categories, sometimes within product categories, and between promotional instruments used.

The product categories were chosen to enable a discussion of the results related to consumer problem solving. Consumers' response to promotions seemed higher for food products than for non-food products. The results indicated that consumers have different heuristics for different products, something which ought to be intriguing to explore further. With the arbitrarily chosen products, no clear patterns emerged regarding the types of problems the products were supposed to be solutions to.

Effects of different types of promotions were also analysed. Considering the large allocation of resources on promotion, this is an interesting issue. With better knowledge of the consumers' behaviour and response patterns, the different promotional instruments available can be used with more finetuning. In-store promotions in form of price-reductions and special display rendered higher sales volumes than out-of-store promotions like feature advertising and leaflets. Most promotional activities combine several promotional instruments. One of the main conclusions in the study was that when the combination did not include display in the store, volumes sold were much lower. It seemed essential

for the manufacturer to ensure that the promotional campaigns were carried through with in-store activities.

The best choice of level of analysis would be the level that represents how consumers evaluate products and categories and make their decisions. Analyses on item-level showed large variations in promotion response between similar products in the same categories. This could for example be an indication of brand names being important. Using the pre-specified categories might limit the analyses, as the consumers decisions might include products from several of the retailers categories.

So why do consumers respond to promotions? They can have a number of, more or less conscious, reasons for that. To take advantage of price reductions is of course one reason, which can be applied for products that the the households normally use (Linderstam, 1989). Another strategy could be to use the displays in the store as a source of inspiration and a reminder. The grocery shopper is exposed to enourmous amounts of information and in order not to process all of it, facilitating heuristics are necessary (Bettman, 1979). Such heuristics can be to look through the promotion in the store to see if they inspire to a meal. The store can be used as an external memory (van Raaij, 1988b). The products or product groups that most frequently are promoted with in-store special displays will have larger probabilities to be encountered, and actively processed by the consumers.

Some categories, and items, seemed to have large shares of their sales when promoted, and were also promoted rather often. It could be assumed that consumers learn the system and use it, or that they are socialised into patterns of purchasing behaviour that are adapted to the grocery trade's patterns of marketing behaviour.

In conclusion, the main result in the study was that the store seemed important in the consumers' decision processes. Considering this importance it can be questioned why so much resources are spent on promotional activities that are such that the consumers can only encounter them outside the store. Promotions are, however, not only used as a tool directed at the consumers, but play an important part in negotiations and other interactions between manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers.

3.2 The Store from a Consumer Perspective

The second study approached the problem of the role of the store in households' planning- and decision processes regarding food. Starting from the point that the stores seem to be important, how do the stores handle this, and how do the consumers perceive the stores. Could the stores be improved in such a way that they might be better at helping the consumer with the problems that they come

to the stores to solve? For the stores, this could be a way to obtain loyal customers, which in turn could contribute to a larger share of stable business. The problem in the study is the daily (Monday – Thursday) decision making regarding food and related purchasing.

A focus in the study was context. Several authors (see, for example, Grafton-Small 1993, van Raaij 1993, Rogoff 1984, Tversky and Kahneman 1986, Warlop and Rathneswar 1993) have pointed to the importance for the field of consumer research to take context into consideration. It felt important to study planning and decision making in the relevant context. Therefore households with small children were accompanied when shopping for groceries, and interviewed in their homes while they were unpacking their purchases, and in some cases preparing dinner. The problem area seemed to interest the households, they were easy to get in contact with, and some explicitly said that they appreciated having another adult as company while doing the household chores.

The households were very different in the way they approached the daily food-related problem solving. The dimensions that seemed to discriminate most between them were involvement and planning. Households that were genuinely interested in food also seemed to believe that the social role of the meal is important, had more knowledge of primary products and cooking, and a more positive attitude to shopping. The households with less interest in food also had less interest in other food-related aspects. Shopping, cooking, etc., were to them activities that should be reduced, so they used a minimum of resources and energy. The planning dimension seemed un-correlated with aspects of involvement. For some households planning was regarded as an absolute necessity, while others could not imagine engaging in planning, mostly arguing that planning takes time, and what is then gained? The main argument for them would be to plan to win time, and not planning for the sake of order or organisation, or gaining control.

It was also interesting to see that the households varied so much in their behaviour and attitudes. The group could have been regarded as homogenous if studied from the outside, but in fact used many different strategies to manage the daily problem solving. One thing, however, that they were similar in, was in how they seemed to take the stores for granted. It can seem quite obvious that the store has to be involved in some way in how the consumers make their decisions. Just by deciding which store to visit on a particular occasion, or for a particular purchase, the store, with its characteristics, has already played a part. Another way was to decide the type of purchases based on which stores are passed on the way from work. The store is in both cases involved in the consumers' decisions, and plays a part, even if it is passive.

The observation studies also showed several different ways to directly or indirectly use the stores. Many heuristics seemed store-related, but were not acknowledged as such. The store was important, but not given credit for it. Examples were households that took almost all their decisions in the store, and other households where the majority of the purchases were decided in advance, but where for example displays were influential in the final decisions. If the store was regarded as having any role, it was mostly as a large storage room.

The households did not seem to think about the stores, and purchasing, as something that could be changed. It was at first disappointing to find that they did not have ideas or suggestions. However, this illustrates that the store is taken for granted, and that it is a well enough functioning system, where large differences between the stores are not perceived. If large differences were perceived, the dimensions that the stores differed on might have been suggested as changes. If the system was not functioning well enough, the stores might not be taken for granted to the same extent, and more ideas for change would probably have been found.

The focus on context was felt to be successful, in that it contributed to the knowledge gained in the study. By taking the consumers everyday situation into consideration, it is a good base both for practical applications and a good contribution to the theory in the field.

To summarise, the knowledge found in the study can be divided into two main types. The first is knowledge on consumer decision making, how planning and purchasing are done, in a realistic setting. The second is knowledge both on how the store is regarded, and the part it plays. Using this knowledge, the stores could be adapted to better take care of and treat consumers that differ on the basic dimensions planning and involvement. As the study is exploratory, no normative recommendations will be made other than that it seems wise to continue to explore the field of consumer planning and purchasing behaviour in realistic contexts.

3.3 Combining the Empirical Studies: Synergies and Contrasts

Looking at the two studies at the same time is both interesting and intriguing. Both treat consumer behaviour, but from different aspects. The results from the first study implied that the store seemed important. The households participating in the second study gave a different picture of their relation to the store. What they actually did, and how they perceived what they did, was not in total agreement with the interpretations made in the two studies. This could perhaps have been found by the second study alone, but becomes more visible when the results from both studies are contrasted.

What does this tell us then? One idea is that this is a quite obvious outcome given the promotional system, which has a large impact on how the stores are managed in Sweden today. An institutionalised marketing system might lead to patterns of institutionalised purchasing from the consumers. If there are no surprises, or activities that are somewhat out of the ordinary, there will probably be no re-evaluations made by the consumers either. If the supply system is predictable, purchasing easily adapts to that. It could even be regarded as a smart strategy from the consumers' side, as a way to economise with resources. Building up heuristics based, among other things, on the promotional campaigns can be a good way to run a household. One condition, however, is that the promotional system encompasses a varied assortment covering most product groups and that these occur with some regularity. Otherwise, if a varied menu is desired, other heuristics will also be needed to complement the purchasing strategy in order to reach the desired level of satisfaction.

Both studies have in common that they consider the value of context, and natural environment. Given that both studies are context based, it is possible to draw the conclusion mentioned above that there exists a difference between what the consumers do and what they say they do. Comparing interviews out of context with analyses of scanner data might have led to a different result. A common denominator in the two studies is also the concern with consumers' actual behaviour, not on what consumers say they do. Comparing what consumers say they do with what they actually do add to the understanding of how to value research and investigations reporting only what consumers say about themselves, or reporting only about the behaviour of consumers.

One conclusion we can draw from these two studies, is that the two of them together are more than just the sum of the two. When contrasting the views, in relation to the role of the store, different messages are communicated. The first study tells without doubt that the store is important in consumer decision making. Judging from that we would recommend programs to develop the stores, and carefully display products while controlling for marginal contributions. The second study tells us that consumers do not seem to regard the store as important, but that they use it as a tool in their decision making, without acknowledging it as such. Even if the second study indirectly shows us that the store always is important, we need the results from the first study to realise how important, and the extent of the impact of the marketing programs. No consumer studies will tell us that as bluntly, and as fully, as such a scanner data study can.

Both studies point to the importance of recognising the value of variation. The first study attempted to explain variation in volume sold, and to find variation in the form of promotion response. In the second study the different households behaviour were expected to vary, and variations were found on most

of the studied dimensions. Looking for the averages would, in both studies, hide the variation that in many respects were the results that provided most food for thought.

In the first study it was somewhat disappointing to find that the products chosen to represent different types of problems might not have been representative for those. The idea was that routinised problems would be solved differently than problems demanding more information to solve. Level of involvement would thus have been expected to be higher when the problem was of a more complicated character. The second study gave other insights into the concept of involvement, and it seemed that involvement was more related to situation and/or household. This could be an explanation why the expected results did not occur in the first study. Still another explanation could be that the products chosen were regarded by consumers as solutions to routine problems.

The differences found in the first study between response to promotions on products in the same category corresponds rather well to the behaviour of the consumers that was found in the second study. Several of them seemed to recognise the packages and have evoked sets with potential products which they were willing to purchase, particularly if price reduced.

The dimensions planning and involvement were suggested as ways to describe and understand households and/or situations. What are the implications of them when we combine them with the findings from the first study; that the store is important? When we know that the store is important, it is easier to relate the dimensions planning and involvement to how the store can work in order to arrange a good meeting with the customer. By being prepared to treat customers differently in different situations depending on how they are positioned on the planning and involvement dimensions, and not only related to a households' demographic characteristics, the store has a possibility to create a better relation with their customers. When acting upon this knowledge, and if the dimensions planning and involvement are confirmed, it is possible to find ways to relate them to activities and communication in-store.

In conclusion, the reward in terms of knowledge gained seems well worth the effort involved in doing two so different studies. However, it should be noted that the main contribution came from combining the two studies, comparing and contrasting them with each other.

4 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This last part discusses some important aspects of the results of the two studies, and of combining them, before the main contributions are briefly summarised. In conclusion, and to provide a further perspective, implications for some important actors are sketched.

4.1 Discussion

Large resources are allocated to carrying through promotional programs, which also seem to give large impact. Does this mean that they are successful? Different actors might provide different answers to the question of whether the resources could come to a more efficient use. For manufacturers the promotional program can serve as a tool to increase market shares, but at a risk of diminishing the value of the promoted brands. The retailers want to attract consumers to their stores, and use the promotional program as one of the instruments in that effort. From the household studies the impression was that some consumers have heuristics where promotions are a part. However, the consumers seemed to have low inclinations to switch to other stores than those included in their regular sets of stores.

The studied households seemed fairly pleased with their own behaviour. If they had not been pleased, these frequently occurring chores could have been major sources of irritation in the households, maybe also with consequences for their behaviour in other fields. Being pleased with their behaviour is a way to daily confirm that they are in control of their situation.

In this fairly institutionalised system the consumers' taking the stores for granted fits well. Retailers and manufacturers continue with almost the same program year after year, and the households respond with institutionalised purchasing and taking the stores for granted. No incentives seem to exist for either part to re-evaluate the established patterns. Maybe this is a way to describe how demand and supply meet in reality in one market; routine meets routine.

As it is overall a well functioning system, is it worth the effort to initiate changes? Once again, it might depend on who is answering. Some might say that information technology is driving so much development in grocery retailing that it is necessary to participate in order to stay profitable in this market. Information technology can be regarded as a driving force – but driving in no particular direction. It provides an opportunity, and is inevitable, and can be used to an advantage. On the other hand, it can be argued that the system

works so well, and that the actors in the market are so well established, that only marginal changes will occur.

When considering how much resources have been allocated recently into building efficient logistic flows and streamlining the activities, it is somewhat difficult to believe in the "marginal changes" only. Given that the changes are occurring, and that information technology is used to drive development in certain directions, it is interesting to speculate about what the next field of change will be.

As large resources have been allocated to the logistic flows and streamlining the distribution processes, one possible development in the rather competitive environment is more focus on the store. Information technology already enables advanced analyses on store-level, item-level, and receipt-level, it is only a question of using this potential to better match demand and supply. Developments in Efficient Consumer Response and Category Management are other driving forces that point to the increased importance of the store.

In conclusion, more analyses are recommended, particularly analyses from a consumer perspective. These analyses can be used as bases to initiate changes, changes that of course will have to be evaluated with further analyses. Given that the driving forces are strong it is probably better to be one of the actors driving development, and for example become market leader at matching demand and supply. Working with store development and the store-customer relation will probably neither be erroneous nor ever completed.

4.2 Contributions

What I regard as the contributions from these studies are here illustrated by some main points. Firstly, the dualism in the empirical studies is considered an important contribution. Using two approaches and two very different methods provides a broader perspective on the studied issues. Doing consumer research with the two different methods used, is thus regarded as a contribution per se. The two empirical studies both contained an element of method development, or modification. For researchers studying consumer behaviour in context, participant interviewing might serve as a valuable tool.

A further contribution of the studies is that they have both theoretical and practical relevance. More knowledge is needed about consumer decision making, and is valuable both for academic purposes and managerial/communication purposes. Another important aspect is that consumer decision making was studied in relevant contexts, and as context is supposed to be influential, this is regarded as a contribution when discussing the results from these studies.

4.3 Implications for Research

The two studies discussed here show that it can be valuable to study consumer behaviour with different methods allowing closeness to consumers. Research on frequently recurring problems, concerning most people, and using a large share of the household budget, must be encouraged. Using a consumer perspective is a way to broaden the issues studied, as the daily life for a consumer normally involves a wide range of decisions and situations. Allowing the complexity of daily life to appear also in consumer research is a way for research to come closer to the consumers situations, thereby almost automatically increasing the relevance of the research for consumers.

Consumer research emanating from the consumers' situations could be an instrument in the effort to build more cumulative knowledge in the field. Starting from the view point of the consumers the knowledge gained can be added even if encompassing totally different perspectives. In order to get closer to the consumers and their actual situation, more attention in research could be allocated to exploring variation. We know that the average consumers hardly exist, and if they do, we cannot expect them to be typical.

The researchers freedom and ability to choose and change perspective, to lift discussions above market and company constraints, is an advantage that probably can be both valued higher and used more. The researcher should, in my opinion, question the taken-for-granted, to see what is hidden and what it stands for. Using different methods was a help in the two studies discussed here, but other ways probably can work as well, just as long as the researcher is comfortable.

It is felt that the field of consumer research has much to gain by openness towards new perspectives, innovative methods, as well as by incorporating knowledge from related fields in the human sciences. These arguments have been raised by numerous authors earlier, but still seem relevant.

4.4 Marketing Implications

Using a consumer perspective in grocery retailing might be valuable. Businesses are supposedly interested in adapting their supply of products and services to better suit the customers demands. The reward for this adaption can be customer loyalty, but should also be in terms of profitability. If a business is better at adapting their supplies to existing demands, given that they are able to charge accordingly, the business ought to be more stable.

Implementing a consumer perspective can be regarded as one of several tools to develop business. Consumers differ, and adjusting the response to the variation can be a profitable way to build loyalty among larger groups of consumers. Working with less adaptation and finetuning mechanisms can be

wise for those in the large volume and low price business. All stores should not engage in the same activities, it is important to choose a strategy that fits the micro market and the own level of competence.

To regard each store as a particular market is a way to acknowledge the value of studying variation. By focusing on aggregates and similarities, all the rich information that could be found in the variation is overseen. With the sensitive instruments that today exist in the form of database marketing devices, and the like, a better potential exists to manage variation than what has been reasonable earlier.

Both manufacturers and retailers could probably gain from studying whether the dimensions planning and involvement, that were suggested here, hold for larger samples as well. Grouping consumers and/or shopping trips after other dimensions than just demographics is regarded as a practicable approach. It might be more difficicult to produce programs to deal with the different groups.

Retailers could use their contact with the consumers as a tool when negotiating with wholesalers and manufacturers, as they have the best knowledge of their local markets. Retailers are also interested in having a stock of loyal customers. One instrument in building this must be the consumers themselves. If the only communication between the retailer and his/her customers is through the exchange of products and money, many potential qualitative dimensions of this meeting are left out. The store is also a social place, and the store visit is a social exchange. The retailers have an advantageous position as their customers visit them a large number of times during a year. This gives many chances for social encounters and communication that could be used as a business tool.

For the manufacturer, the retail store is important as a distribution channel. The retailer can also be regarded as a business partner, and for the manufacturers it is wise to search for, to value, and to use the special knowledge that retailers possess. The manufacturers are experts on their products. The consumers are experts on how they use these products. The retailers know their local markets. When all this expert knowledge is used in combination all the parties involved stand the chance of coming out as winners.

More dialogue with consumers is recommended, as a source of inspiration, confirmation and critique. Wikström (1986), when discussing what would be demanded by the food industries in the 1980's and beyond, recommended improved communications systems with the consumers, and more differentiated retail structure.

4.5 "Consumer Ombudsman" Implications

With the label Consumer Ombudsman is here meant all societal actors with an interest in the eating and buying habits of the population. Many such actors are interested in changing, or influencing, the eating habits of the population, at least for some groups with a particular behaviour or belonging to a category with special physical risks. It is important for these actors to know where decisions are taken and where influences and inspiration come from. If the how and the why of decision making are understood, it is easier to develop means of communication directed at special target groups. For these actors the question of context might have particular relevance, as it is important to understand in which context different decisions are made.

As the studies here imply that the stores are important, it seems important also for societal actors to be involved more in the work of the retail stores. This is a way to get closer to the actual decision processes. For actors like the National Institute of Public Health, the store personnel can be regarded as an important instrument or means of communication. If the store is to be perceived as trustworthy by its customers, it can be in the interest also of the store to have a good understanding of, for example, physical implications of certain foods. It can thus also be in the interest of the store to cooperate, in order to learn more and develop the store.

If consumers buying behaviour is institutionalised it will demand much effort to inititate changes in behaviour. The studies discussed here show that it is possible to come close to the consumers' decisions processes, which seems like a good starting point when changes are concerned. If heuristics are important, how are they built and how are they modified? The point made earlier that it is important to both regard what people say they do and how they behave is also highly relevant here.

References

AGRC (1994), *Turning Traffic Into Transactions*, American Greetings Research Council with the cooperation of FMI, Food Marketing Institute, U.S.A.

Anell, B. (1979), *Hushållen och dagligvarudistributionen* (dissertation), Stockholm: EFI

Alvesson, M. & K. Sköldberg (1994), *Tolkning och reflektion. Vetenskapsfilosofi och kvalitativ metod*, Lund: Studentlitteratur

Arndt, J. (1980), *Reflections on Research in Consumer Behaviour*, Stockholm: MTC

Arndt, J. (1986), 'Paradigms in Consumer Research: A Review of Perspectives and Approaches', *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol 20, No 8, pp. 23-40

Belk, R.W. (ed.) (1991), *Highways and Buyways: Naturalistic Research from the Consumer Behaviour Odyssey*, Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research

Bemmaor, A.C. & D. Mouchoux (1991), 'Measuring the Short-Term Effect of In-Store Promotion and Retail Advertising on Brand Sales: A Factorial Experiment', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol XXVIII (May) pp. 202-14

Carpenter, G.S. & D.R Lehmann (1985), 'A Model of Marketing Mix, Brand Switching, and Competition', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol XXII (August) pp. 318-29

Dawson, J. (1995), 'Food retailing and the consumer', in David W. Marshall (ed.) *Food choice and the consumer*, Glasgow: Blackie Academic & Professional

Dhar, S.K. & S.J. Hoch (1996), 'Price Discrimination Using In-Store Merchandising', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 60, (January), pp. 17-30

Fader, P.S. & L. M. Lodish (1990), 'A Cross-Category Analysis of Category Structure and Promotional Activity for Grocery Products', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 54, October, pp. 52-65

Ford, R. (1990), 'Managing Retail Service Businesses for the 1990s: Marketing Aspects', *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol 8, No 1, March, pp. 58-62

Friedman, M. (1988), 'Models of Consumer Choice Behaviour' in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.) *Handbook of Economic Psychology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing

Garry, M. (1992), 'How's your scan data?', *Progressive Grocer*, October, pp. 83-84, 86

Ghauri, P., K. Grönhaug & I. Kristianslund (1995), *Research Methods in Business Studies: A Practical Guide*, UK: Prentice-Hall

Grafton-Small, R. (1993), 'Consumption and Significance: The Shape of Things to Come', *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vol 9, No 2, pp. 89-99

Hammersley, M. & P. Atkinson (1983), *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Routledge

Henderson, C.M. (1988), 'The Interaction of Coupons With Price and Store Promotions', *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 15, pp. 364-371

Hernant, M. (1994), 'Konsumenten & Butiken', *ICA-handlar'n Artikelsamling*, Solna: ICA Handlarnas AB

Hernant, M & P-G. Persson (1995), 'In Search for the Deal Prone Consumer: a Study of Consumers' Usage of Sales Promotions Introducing a New Type of Single Source Data', *FDR Working Paper Serie*, No. 11, Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research

Hitt, J. (1996), 'The Theory of Supermarkets', in *New York Times Magazine*, March 10, Section 6, pp. 56-61, 94, 98

Holmberg, C. (1992), *Effects of Feature Advertising and Other Promotions*, EFI Research Report, EFI: Stockholm

Holmberg, C. & U. Sandén-Håkansson (1994), 'Promotional Response, Sales Development and Purchasing Patterns – in the Confectionery Category', *FDR Working Paper Serie*, No. 8, Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research

Håkansson, P. (1994), 'Do Strong Brands Make a Difference?', *FDR Working Paper Serie*, No. 2, Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research

Håkansson, P., M. Hernant & P.-G. Persson (1995), 'Assortment Planning beyond DPP: POS Scanner Data and Indirect Product Profitability', *Proceedings from 24th EMAC Conference*, Vol 1, (ed.) Michelle Bergadaà, pp 405-424, France: ESSEC

Julander, C-R. & C. Holmberg (1987), 'Marknadsinformation från datakassor. Projektets uppläggning samt exempel på resultat', *EFI Research Report*, Stockholm: EFI

Lincoln, Y.S. & E.G. Guba (1985), *Naturalistic Inquiry*, USA: Sage Publications Inc.

Miles, M.B. & A.M. Huberman (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 2nd ed. U.S.A.: Sage Publications

Muller, T. E. (1983), 'Analysing information-display with electronic scanning systems', *European Research* (UK) Vol: 11, Iss: 4, October, pp. 136-142

Otnes, C., M.A. McGrath & T.M. Lowrey (1995), 'Shopping with consumers: Usage as past, present and future research technique', *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol 2, No 2, pp. 97-110

Pellet, J. (1994), 'Category Management: Changing the Face of Retail', *Discount Merchandiser*, Vol. 34, May, pp. 111-112

Persson, P.-G. (1995), *Modeling the Impact of Sales Promotion on Store Profits* (dissertation) Stockholm: The Economic Research Institute

van Raaij, W.F. (1988a), 'Introduction to Part II: Consumer Behaviour' in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. van Veldhoven & K.E. Wärneryd (eds.) *Handbook of Economic Psychology*, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing

van Raaij, W.F. (1988b), 'Information Processing and Decision Making. Cognitive Aspects of Economic Behaviour' in W.F. van Raaij, G.M. Van Veldhoven and K-E Wärneryd (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Psychology,* The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers

van Raaij, W.F. (1993), 'Postmodern consumption', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, vol 14, No. 3, pp. 541-564

Rogoff, B. (1984), 'Introduction: Thinking and Learning in Social Context' in Rogoff, B. & J. Lave (eds.) *Everyday Cognition. It's Development in Social Context*, U.S.A.: Harvard University Press

Sandberg, J. (1995), *Statistisk metod - dess vetenskapliga hemvist, grundläggande principer och möjligheter inom samhällsvetenskapen*, EFI Research Report, Januari, Stockholm: EFI

Sandén-Håkansson, U. (1996), *Från kampanjmål till mediemix – en studie av samarbetet mellan annonsörer, reklambyråer och mediebyråer*, EFI Research Report, Stockholm: The Economic Research Institute

Sellerberg, A-M. (1977), *Hur kunden möter affären. En sociologisk analys av relationen mellan konsument och affär,* Lunds Universitet: Sociologiska institutionen

Shugan, S.M. (1987), 'Estimating Brand Positioning Maps Using Supermarket Scanning Data' *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol XXIV, (February), pp. 1-18

Sieber, S.D. (1973), 'The Integration of Fieldwork and Survey Methods', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 78, No 6, pp. 1335-1359

Stern, L.W & A.I. El-Ansary (1988), *Marketing Channels*, 3rd ed., U.S.A.: Prentice-Hall International Editions

Thayer, W. (1990), 'How are we really using our scan data?', *Progressive Grocer*, August pp. 146-150

Tollin, K. (1990), *Konsumentbilder i marknadsföringen av livsmedel. En studie om marknadsföringens kontext inom svensk lantbrukskooperativ livsmedelsindustri*, dissertation, Stockholms Universitet: Företagsekonomiska institutionen

Tucker, W. T. (1967), *Foundations for a theory of consumer behaviour,* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Tversky, A. & D. Kahneman (1986), 'Rational Choice and the Framing of Decisions', *Journal of Business*, vol 59, No 4, pp. 251-178

Varian, H.R. (1990), *Intermediate Microeconomics. A Modern Approach*, 2nd ed, New York: W.W. Norton & Company

Warlop, L. & S. Ratneshwar (1993), 'The Role of Usage Context in Consumer Choice: A Problem Solving Perspective' in *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 20, pp. 377-382

Wikström, S. R. (1986), 'Food Consumption and Consumer Behaviour in the Future' in E. Kaynak (ed.), *World Food Marketing Systems*, London: Butterworths & Co.

Ölander, F. (1993), 'Consumer psychology for the consumer's sake? A note on way of making consumer research more emancipatory', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 565-576

THE FOUNDATION FOR DISTRIBUTION RESEARCH (FDR)

The Foundation for Distribution Research at the Stockholm School of Economics was founded in 1981 to address long-term needs of students, academicians, industry, and society for research and education concerning issues of trade and distribution. Specifically, the Foundation covers these areas:

- Research programs dealing with issues of trade and distribution to offer postgraduates exciting research opportunities,
- Research on issues of vital importance to the distribution of goods and services,
- Courses, course segments and other teaching assignments related to issues of trade distribution,
- Dissemination of results from research with significance for the distribution of goods and services,
- Continuing exchange of research ideas and results with researchers and educators in Sweden, the rest of Europe, and the United States.

The Foundation is supported by some leading corporations engaged in the distribution of goods and services, manufacturers as well as retailers and wholesalers. Sponsors are invited semi-annually to share results from the Foundation's research, teaching and other activities.

In this way and by other means, the Foundation for Distribution Research manages to conduct an ongoing discussion with corporations having an interest in its field of operations.

The present sponsors of the Foundation for Distribution Research are:

ADA AB
Ahlsell AB
Apoteksbolaget AB
ARLA ekonomisk förening
DAGAB AB
DLF Dagligvaruleverantörers Förbund
ICA AB
Kooperativa Förbundet
Kungsörnen AB
Svenska Nestlé AB
Svenska Tobaks AB
Telia AB

Foundation for Distribution Research (FDR)

THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE (EFI) AT THE STOCKHOLM SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

P O Box 6501, S-113 83 STOCKHOLM # Tel +46-8-736 90 00
Fax +46-8-33 94 89, E-mail, assistant: fondms@hhs.se

Publications from the Foundation for Distribution Research, From 1992 —

FDR Working Paper Series

Mägi, A. (1995), *To Run a Store*: A Study of 14 ICA-Retailers, FDR Working Paper Series, No. 13. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research (in Swedish).

Sandén-Håkansson, U. (1995), *Logotype Exposure in Television Commercials* - an exploratory study, FDR Working Paper Series, No. 12. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

Hernant, M. & P-G Persson (1995), *In Search of the Deal Prone Consumer* - A Study of Consumers' Usage of Sales Promotions Introducing a New Type of Single Source Data. FDR, Working Paper Series, No. 11. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

Sandén Håkansson, U. (1994), *The Media Choice Process And Its Actors* - A Descriptive Study of Advertising Campaigns, Media Choice And Co-operation. FDR Working Paper Series No. 10. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research(in Swedish).

Wahlund, R. & Gunnarsson, J. (1994), *Household Financial Strategies* - Results Fram An Empirical Study on Economic Psychology of the Household Financial Behaviour. FDR Working Paper Series, No. 9. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research (in Swedish).

Holmberg, C. & U. Sandén (1994), *Promotional Response, Sales Development and Purchasing Patterns - in the Confectionery Category.* FDR Working Paper Series, No. 8. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

Hernant, M., C Holmberg & P-G Persson (1994), *An Empirical Study of Consumers' Reference Prices in a Promotion Intensive Product Category.*FDR Working Paper Series, No. 7. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

Fossum, L. (1994), *Pricing of Fast Moving Consumer Goods* - An Exploratory Interview Survey with Decision Makers, FDR Working Paper Series, No. 6. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research (in Swedish).

Mägi, A. & Julander, C-R. (1994), *Perceived Quality, Productivity and Profitability in Retailing*, FDR Working Paper Series, No. 5. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research (in Swedish).

Håkansson, P.& M Söderlund (1994), *Cannibalisation Among Consumer Goods* - an empirical study of the introduction of new products in the milk category, FDR Working Paper Series, No. 4. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

Mägi, A., M. Eliasson & C-R. Julander (1994), *Productivity and Profitability in Grocery Retailing*, FDR Working Paper Series, No. 3. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research (in Swedish).

Håkansson, P. (1994), *Do Strong Brands Make a Difference?* FDR Working Paper Series, No. 2. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

Sandén, U. (1993), *Marketing Mix and Market Share* - a descriptive study of advertising and promotion behavior in two consumer product categories. FDR Working Paper Series, No. 1. Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research.

EFI Research Reports and Research Papers

Fredriksson, O. (1992), *Computer Communication within Distribution Systems*, Licentiate thesis, EFI Research Report: Stockholm: EFI (in Swedish).

Gunnarsson, J.& Wahlund, R. (1995), *Household Financial Strategies* - An Exploratory Study. EFI Research Report. Stockholm: EFI (in Swedish).

Gunnarsson J. (1996), *Three Studies of Financial Behavior*. Licentiate thesis, EFI Research Report, Stockholm: EFI.

Holmberg, C. (1992), *Effects of Feature Advertising and Other Promotions*, Licentiate thesis, EFI Research Report, Stockholm: EFI.

Håkansson, P. & Söderlund, M. (1995), *The Swedish Alcoholic Retailing Monopoly And Its Customer. A Discussion Material to Estimate Consequences of A possible Deregulation of the Industry for Alcoholic Retailing.* (1995) EFI Research Paper 6549. Stockholm: EFI.

Julander C-R. & P-G. Persson (1993), *Toward a Theory of Promotional Effect in Grocery Retailing*, EFI Research Paper. Stockholm: EFI.

Mägi, A. (1995), *Customer Satisfaction in a Store Performance Framework*, Licentiate thesis, EFI Research Report. Stockholm: EFI.

Persson, P-G. (1995), *Modeling the Impact of Sales Promotion on Store Profits.* A dissertation for the doctor's degree in philosophy. Stockholm: EFI.

P-G Persson. (1992), *Basket Analysis: A New Way of Studying Short Term Promotional Effects in Grocery Retailing*, EFI Research Report. Stockholm: EFI.

Persson, P-G. (1993), *Decomposing Promotional Elasticity*, EFI Research Report. Stockholm: EFI.

Persson, P-G (1993), *Promotional Response Variation Across Product Categories*, EFI Research Report. Stockholm: EFI.

Sandén-Håkansson, U. (1996), *From Campaign Objective to Media Mix*: A study on the co-operation between advertisers, advertising agencies and media agencies. Licentiate thesis. EFI Research Report. Stockholm: EFI (in Swedish)

Journal Articles and Conference Papers

Fredriksson, O. & M. Vilgon (1993), 'Evolution of Distribution: Prerequisites for and Outcomes of Inter-organizational Information Systems', in Ebers, M. (Ed.), *Proceedings of the European Science Foundarion Workshop on Inter-organizational Networks: Structures and Processes,* Berlin, 6-7 September, 1993, Paderborn University, pp. 553-587.

Fredriksson, O. & P.G. Holmlöv (1992), *Intelligent Food Distribution Networks in a Common Market Europe*, paper presented at the Executive and Researcher Seminar 'The Swedish Food Industry and the European Market', Bro, 21-23 October.

Gunnarsson, J. (1995), 'Ownership of Risky Assets, Attitudes Towards Financial Risk Taking and the Use of Spouse Data in Analysis of Household Financial Behavior', in Nyhus, E.K. & S.V. Troye (Eds.), *Frontiers in Economic Psychology*, Proceedings of the 1995 IAREP Conference, Bergen, Norway, pp. 290-310. Bergen: NHH.

Gunnarsson, J. & R. Wahlund (1994), *Household Financial Strategies - They Do Exist!* Paper presented at the IAREP conference in Rotterdam, July.

Gunnarsson, J. & R. Wahlund (1994), 'Saving Behavior over the Life-Cycle And Time Preference in Financial Strategies', In Antonides G. & W.F. Van Raaij, (eds.), Proceedings of the IAREP/SABE conference *Integrating views on economical behavior*, pp. 70-88. Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit.

Julander C-R. (1992), 'Basket Analysis: A New Way of Analysing Scanner Data', in *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, Vol. 20, No. 7, 1992, pp 10-18.

Julander C-R. & M. Eliasson (1993), *A Causal Model of Labor Productivity* - an empirical test using PLS, paper presented at EMAC Conference, Barcelona, Spain, May 25-28.

Wahlund, R & J. Gunnarsson (1995), *Subjective Discounting and Household Financial* Strategies, paper presented at the IAREP workshop on Household Saving Behavior at Tilburg Universiteit, Holland, October 27.

Wahlund, R. (1995) *Confirmation Bias among Professionals*, paper presented at the IAREP annual conference in Bergen.

Others

Julander, C-R. (1995), *The Wholesalers Role in the Information and Communication Society*, a lecture by the winner of the Söderbergska Handelspriset. Stockholm & Göteborg: Torsten & Ragnar Söderbergs Stiftelser.

Wahlund, R. (1995), *Recruiting Graduates from the Stockholm School of Economics. The Stockholm School of Economics' Corporate Image Barometer 1995* Stockholm: Stockholm School of Economics Corporate Partners (in Swedish).

Wahlund, R. (1994), *Recruiting Graduates from the Stockholm School of Economics. The Stockholm School of Economics' Image Barometer 1994.* Stockholm: Stockholm School of Economics Corporate Partners (in Swedish).

Wahlund, R. (1994), 'Psychology and Ethics' in Bergkvist, L., R. Wahlund, & K-E. Wärneryd, (eds.) (1994), *Ethics and Finances*, Stockholm: SNS (in Swedish).

Wirsäll, N-E. & P.G. Holmlöv (1994), *The Capricious consumer - Reflections on A Seminar About Strategies And Trading* Stockholm: Foundation for Distribution Research (in Swedish).

EFI
The Economic Research Institute

Reports sice 1992

Published in the language indicated by the title

1992

Charpentier, C., Ekonomisk styrning av statliga affärsverk.
Edlund, P-O., Karlsson, S., Forecasting the Swedish Unemployment Rate: VAR vs. Transfer Function Modelling. Research Report.
Eklöf, J.A., Varying Data Quality and Effects in Economic Analysis and Planning.
Eliasson, M., Julander, C-R., Productivity in Swedish Grocery Retailing. - changes over time and a causal model.
Ewing, P., Ekonomisk styrning av enheter med inbördes verksamhetssamband.
Fredriksson, O., Datorkommunikation i Distributionssystem. Erfarenheter och effekter vid införandet av två multilaterala interorganisatoriska informations-system - exemplet BASCET Infolink AB. Research Report.
Fredriksson, T., Policies Towards Small and Medium Enterprises in Japan and Sweden. Research Report.
Företagsledning bortom etablerad teori, red. Sjöstrand, S-E., Holmberg, I., *EFI/Studentlitteratur.*
Gerdtham, U., Jönsson,B., Sjukvårds-kostnader i de nordiska länderna. Research Report.
Hedvall, M., Produktkvalitet som konkurrensmedel i producentvaruproducerande industri. Research Report.
Holmberg, C., Effects of Feature Advertising and Other Promotions.Research Report.
Jansson, D., Spelet kring investeringskalkyler. Om den strategiska användningen av det förgivet-tagna. *Norstedts Förlag/EFI.*
Jennergren, L.P., Näslund, B., Valuation of Executive Stock Options. Research Report.
Kokko, A., Foreign Direct Investment Host Country Characteristics and Spillovers.
Ljung, A., Intressentstrategier.
- En longitudinell studie av utvecklingen i två svenska företag.
Mårtensson, P., Mähring, M., Information Support From Staff to Executives. - An Explorative Study. Research Report.
Rabiee, M., A Review of Demand for Telecommunication: An Analytical Approach. Research Report.
Paalzow, A., Public Debt Management. Research Report.
Persson, P-G., Basket Analysis.
A New Way of Studying Short Term Effects of Promotions in Grocery Retailing. Research Report.
Sjöstrand, S-E., On Institutions and Institutional Change. Research Report.
Södergren, B., Decentralisering. Förändring i företag och arbetsliv.
Thodenius, B., Användningen av ledningsinformationssystem i Sverige: Lägesbild 1991. Research Report.
Tollgerdt-Andersson, I., Sjöberg, L., Intresse och kreativitet inom tjänsteproducerande företag. Research Report.
Wahl, A., Könsstrukturer i organisationer. Kvinnliga civilekonomers och civilingenjörers karriärutveckling.

1993

Ekvall, N., Studies in Complex Financial Instruments and their Valuation.
Flink, T., The Development of High-Speed Trains - An Industrial Dynamics Approach. Research Report.
Gerdtham, U-G., Hertzman, P., Boman, G., Jönsson, B., Impact of Inhaled Corticosteroids on Asthma Hospitalization in Sweden: A Pooled Regression Analysis. Research Report.
Gun-Ho Cha, Reappraisal of Market Efficiency Tests Arising from Nonlinear Dependence, Fractals, and Dynamical Systems Theory.
Hertz, S., The Internationalization Processes of Freight Transport Companies.
Nilsson, K., Förhållanden som påverkar rapporteringstiden - En studie i tre koncerner. Research Report.
Redovisningens roller, red. Samuelson, L.A., Östman, L.
Ruist, E., Sambandsanalys med ordinal-skalevariabler. Vilka statistiska metoder kan användas? Research Report.

Skogsvik, K., Accounting for Pension Obligations. Research Report.
Sjöstrand, S-E., Om företagsformer.
Stein, J., Strategy Formation and Managerial Agency. A Socio-Cognitive Perspective.
Söderlund, M., Omvärldsmodeller hos beslutsfattare i industriföretag - en studie av svenska leverantörer till fordonsindustrin.
Sörensson, T., Swedish Convertible Bonds and their Valuation.
Tyrstrup, M., Företagsledares arbete. En logitudinell studie av arbetet i en företagsledning.
Uddén-Jondal, E., Wage Formation in a Unionized Economy.
Whitelegg, J., Hultén, S., Flink, T., High Speed Trains. Fast Tracks to the Future.

1994

Andersson, H., Ett industriföretags omvandling. En studie av Hägglunds förändringsprocess 1922-81 med bas i företagets produkter, relationer och resurser.
Andersson, H., En produkthistoria. *(separat publicerad bilaga till ovanstående)*
Cowan, R., Hultén, S., Escaping Lock-in: The Case of the Electric Vehicle. Research Report.
Dahlfors, G., Jansson, P., Essays in Financial Guarantees and Risky Debt.
Företag och marknader i förändring - dynamik i nätverk,
red. Mattsson, L-G., Hultén, S.
EFI/Nerenius & Santérus Förlag.
Helgesson, C-F., Coordination and Change in Telecommunications. Research Report.
Lundström, T., Wijkström, F., The Swedish Nonprofit Sector. Research Report.
Nessén, M., Essays on Exchange Rates and International Finance.
Niemeyer, J., Essays on Market Microstructure -Empirical Evidence from Some Nordic Exchanges.
Nilsson, K., Rapportering i svenska storföretag 1993 Delrapport 1.
Faktiska tider och påverkande faktorer för månatlig resultatrapportering. Research Report.
Nilsson, K., Rapportering i svenska storföretag 1993 Delrapport 2.
Rapporteringstider för kvartals/tertialsrapporter Research Report.
Nordenlöw, L., Entreprenörskap i industriella nätverk. Research Report.
Norén, N-E., Om Flexibilitetspåverkande beslut. Research Report.
Normark, P., Medlemsägda företag. Organisering av strategiska förändringar.
Nyman, K., Studier av inkomstfördelningar med hjälp av mikrosimuleringsmodeller. Research Report.
Thodenius, B., Användningen av ledningsinformationssystem i Sverige: Lägesbild 1993 Research Report.
Sjöholm, G., Redovisningsmått vid bolagisering. Utformning och effekter.
Wijkström, F., Det organiserade ideella arbetet i Sverige. Research Report.
Wirsäll, N-E., Holmlöv, PG., Den nyckfulle Svensson. Reflektioner efter ett seminarium om strategier för handeln. *Fonden för Handels- och Distributionsforskning, EFI*

1995

Becker, T., Essays on Stochastic Fiscal Policy, Public Debt and Private Consumption.
Blomberg, J., Ordning och kaos i projektsamarbete - en socialfenomenologisk upplösning av en organisationsteoretisk paradox.
Brodin, B., Lundkvist, L., Sjöstrand, S-E., Östman, L., Styrelsearbete i koncerner
Brännström, T., Bias Approximation and Reduction in Vector Autoregressive Models. Research Report.
Ekonomisk politik i omvandling.
Lars Jonung (red)
Gunnarsson, J., Wahlund, R., Hushållens finansiella strategier. En explorativ studie. *Fonden för Handels- och Distributionsforskning, EFI.*
Höök, P., Chefsutveckling ur könsperspektiv - Mentorskap och nätverk på Vattenfall - Research Report.
Levin, J., Olsson, P., Looking Beyond the Horizon and Other Issues in Company Valuation. Research Report.
Mägi, A., Customer Statisfaction in a Store Performance Framework. Research Report.
Persson, P-G., Modeling the Impact of Sales Promotion on Store Profits.
Roman, L., Institutions in Transition.
A Study of Vietnamese Banking.

Sandberg, J., Statistisk metod - dess vetenskapliga hemvist, grundläggande principer och möjligheter inom samhällsvetenskapen. Research Report.
Sandberg, J., How Do We Justify Knowledge Produced by Interpretative Approaches? Research Report.
Schuster, W., Redovisning av konvertibla skuldebrev och konvertibla vinstandelsbevis - klassificering och värdering.
Söderberg, K., Farmartjänsten - Ny kooperation inom lantbruket. Research Report
Söderqvist, T., Benefit Estimation in the Case of Nonmarket Goods. Four Essays on Reductions of Health Risks Due to Residential Radon Radiation.
Thorén, B., Användning av information vid ekonomisk styrning - månadsrapporter och andra informationskällor.

1996

Andersson, P., Concurrence, Transition and Evolution - Perspectives of Industrial Marketing Change Processes.
Andersson, P., The Emergence and Change of Pharmacia Biotech 1959-1995.
The Power of the Slow Flow and the Drama of Great Events.
Asplund, M., Essays in Industrial Economics.
Holgersson, C., Höök, P., Ledarutveckling för kvinnor - Uppföljning av en satsning på Volvo - Research Report.
Sandén-Håkansson, U., Från kampanjmål till mediemix - en studie av samarbete mellan annonsörer, reklambyråer och mediebyråer. Research Report.
Stein, J., Söderlund, M., Framgång i arbetet, strategier för att utföra arbetsuppgifterna, arbetsuppgifternas karaktär och utbildnings-kvalitet. En empirisk studie av civilekonomer. Research Report.
Söderlund, M., Och ge oss den nöjda kunden. En studie av kundtillfredsställelse och dess orsaker och effekter. Research Report.
Wijkström, F., Den svenska ideella sektorn och pengarna. Research Report.