Are retailers prisoners of the past?

– A CASE STUDY OF IKEA KITCHEN DEPARTMENT

Examensarbete – Master i företagsekonomi

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Abstract

Consumer behaviour has changed, today consumers do not solely search for information in the physical store prior to a complex purchase. Technological development and online stores have enabled consumers to search for information whenever and wherever they want. This has led to consumers being more informed than ever. The change and development of consumer behaviour is an important research subject, as companies must understand their consumers in order to create the best business strategies and business models possible. Therefore, is the aim of this thesis to gain a deeper understanding of this changed consumer behaviour and if the physical store might have a different role during consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase.

The design used was a case study of IKEA's kitchen department. Our intention was to understand important aspects of consumer preparation, information search and behaviour prior to a complex purchase. Therefore, was a mixed method strategy was used, which allowed us to understand if the role of the physical store has changed during consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase. This was studied through observations, questionnaire and interviews. Due to the usage of eye-tracking technology during the observation, we could study the respondent's behaviour more in detail than previous research has done. The conclusion of the study is that the physical store still has an important role when consumers purchase complex products. Foremost, due to consumers' having a great need to touch and feel the product, and to gain the whole picture of what they intend to purchase. Therefore, was the main conclusion that the role of the physical store prior to a complex purchase is to complement the information available online, by enabling consumers to interact with the products in a real world environment.

Keywords: Behaviour in store, Consumer behaviour, Information search, Complex purchase, Servicescape, Store layout, Store format, Multichannel, Webrooming, and Theory of planned behaviour.

Sammanfattning

Konsumenters beteende har förändrats och i dag söker kunder inte efter produktrelaterad information enbart i den fysiska butiken inför att de ska genomföra ett komplext köp. Teknisk utveckling och butiker online har möjliggjort för konsumenten att söka information var och när de vill. Detta har lett till att konsumenter är mer informerade än någonsin. Denna förändring av konsumentbeteende är viktigt att studera eftersom företag måste förstå sina konsumenter för att skapa hållbara affärsmodeller och strategier. Därför syftar vår studie till att skapa en större förståelse för detta förändrade konsumentbeteende och hur det påverkar den fysiska butikens roll när konsumenten förbereder sig inför ett komplext köp.

Studien är design är en fallstudie av IKEA:s köksavdelning. Vår intention var att förstå viktiga aspekter av konsumentens förberedelse, informationssökning och beteende inför ett komplext köp. För att få en större förståelse för om den fysiska butikens roll har förändrats användes en mixad metod. Detta studerades genom observationer, enkäter och intervjuer. Genom att använda eye-tracking utrustning under observationerna kunde vi studera respondenternas beteende mer djupgående än vad tidigare studier gjort. Vilket resulterade i att studiens slutsats är att den fysiska butiken fortfarande har en viktig roll när konsumenten förbereder sig inför ett komplext köp. Framförallt förser butiken konsumenter med möjligheten att känna på produkten, samt att ge dem ett helhetsintryck av vad de ska köpa. Vår huvudsakliga slutsats blev därför att den fysiska butikens roll inför ett komplext köp är att vara ett komplement till den information som finns tillgänglig online genom att möjliggöra för konsumenten att interagera med produkterna i en verklig butiksmiljö.

Nyckelord: Behaviour in store, Konsumentbeteende, Informationssökning, Komplexa köp, Servicescape, Butikslayout, Butiksformat, Multichannel, Webrooming, and Theory of planned behaviour.

Table of Content

Table of figures and tables

1 Introduction

This first chapter is used to explain the background to this thesis subject. In the background it is explained how the technical development have made a great impact on how consumers behave and thereby why businesses stand before great challenges in their operations. In the problem formulation we present the development of the problem. This chapter then ends with a text explaining the outline of this thesis, which is visualised with a figure.

1.1 Background

Prior to the use of the internet, physical retailing was based according to concepts of providing consumers with information, inspiration, instant gratification and the ability to touch and feel merchandise (Brynjolfsson, Hu & Rahman 2013). The main focus was put on consumer in-store behaviour, store layout and design in order to best sell products (Mulhern 1997). Previous research has focused on how the physical retail stores could use different factors to affect consumer behaviour, experience, satisfaction and optimize retail sales. For example, physical stores can affect consumer shopping behaviour through music, scent (Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar & Oppewal 2011), colours (Bellizzi, Crowley & Hasty 1983) and in-store layout (Granbois 1968; Singh, Katiyar & Verma 2014). The store were then the only place where consumers could perform their process of purchase decision-making (Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019; Kotler 1973; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007) However, during the past decades these physical stores have met a new big challenge, namely the digitalization (Johansson 2018; Moström 2018), which is defined as follow: "*Digitalization: Integration of digital technologies into everyday life by the digitization of everything that can be digitized.*" (BusinessDictionary n.d.).

The digitalization has meant big transformations affecting society. More so, it has been described by Brynjolfsson, Hu and Rahman (2013) as one of the key divers to the drastic changes in retail. These changes have allowed businesses within the retail industry to become both more globalised and digitalised (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015). Which in turn has resulted in the rise and growth of e-commerce (Grewal, Motyka & Levy 2018). For example, in Sweden the revenue of the e-commerce industry has more than doubled over the last five years (Postnord 2019). Consumers now have the opportunity to compare, examine and purchase products wherever they are (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Cochoy, Hagberg, Petersson McIntyre & Sörum 2017). Although the digitalization has meant both opportunities and challenges for businesses and consumers in many aspects, the physical retail still has some advantages compared to retailing through other channels. Compared to e-commerce, physical retailing can provide consumers with instant gratification and the possibility to touch and feel products before purchasing (Brynjolfsson, Hu & Rahman 2013). However, the digitalization has opened up for consumers to use a big variety of channels such as in-store, social media or internet to start and complete their decision journey (Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019). Therefore, department stores must look past the traditional way of operating their businesses and focus more on how the consumers actually act and want it. Because, if retailing businesses continue to work as they always have, their survival would probably be both hard and costly (Moström 2018).

1.2 Problem formulation

Although consumers have the possibility to purchase almost all products online, they still visit physical stores (Mowrey, Parikh & Gue 2018; Rathee & Rajain, 2019; Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014). Especially when purchasing complex products, as almost half of these products are still bought in the physical stores (Postnord 2019). A complex product or purchase is characterised by a high perceived risk, is expensive and involves searching for a great amount of information (Mitchell 1992; Mossberg & Sundström 2011). According to researchers, store layout still has a large impact on both how consumers behave in store and how much they spend (Krasonikolakis, Vrechopoulos, Pouloudi & Dimitriadis 2018; Mowrey, Parikh & Gue 2018). However, existing research about store layout and atmosphere is based on how consumers, prior to digitization, behaved when making decisions (Griffith 2005; Moström 2018). Whereas models such as the Buying Behaviour and the AIDA model have been the main frameworks for stores' design and to understand the role of it (Johansson 2018). However, consumer behaviour has changed a lot since then. Earlier, consumers searched and evaluated alternatives at the same time, and it took place in the physical retail store. Instead, consumers today have the possibility to come well informed (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Jonsson, Egels-Zandén, Hagberg, Lammgård & Sundström 2017; Johansson 2018; Palmer 2000). Even though both consumers and the retail environment are changing, the design of the physical stores has more or less remained the same (Grewal, Motyka & Levy 2018).

Today most consumers are prepared, they have knowledge about what colours, price range and styles that are available among the products (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Hagberg, Sundström, & Egels-Zandén 2016; Shen 2012). This, in combination with the possibility to carry through their buying process anywhere at any time (Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019) has led to consumers not only using one single platform or channel during their decision making process, they are using plenty of them (Aw 2019; Cao 2012; Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019; Frambach, Roest & Krishnan 2007; Zhai, Cao, Mokhtarian & Zhen 2017). A major consequence of this multichannel behaviour is that it has led to businesses losing the customers during their decision process (Nunes & Cespedes 2003) and that they are no longer in control over the information consumers take part of (Lemon & Verhoef 2016). In addition, a result of the increased number of channels to choose from consumer behaviour has become even more unpredictable and complex (Coughlan 2001; Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018). Consumers are now shopping in the way each separate individual find most convenient and give them the highest utility (Arora & Sahney 2017). Several researchers, reporters and industry experts have discussed this issue and have all agreed on the fact that retail is changing and to stay competitive and efficient, businesses need to develop their business concepts (Arora & Sahney 2017; Conick 2017; Jonsson et al. 2017; Lemon & Verhoef 2016; Postnord 2019; Pousttchi & Dehnert 2018). As consumers are used to the many pros of the online stores, they also expect the same convenience in the physical store (Johansson 2018). Although research indicates this fact, some retailers still have a hard time adjusting their physical stores to the new consumers need (Johansson 2018; Moström 2018).

The opportunities for consumers to combine channels in any way they want has resulted in new shopping phenomenon such as multi-channel, webrooming and showrooming (Arora & Sahney 2017; Grewal, Motyka & Levy 2018). These many ways for consumers to perform their decision making does not only affect the use of different channels during the purchasing process (Jonsson et al. 2017), it also affect how consumers behave when visiting the physical store and what consumers find important in the store environment (Cochoy et al. 2017; Keen,

Wetzels, De Ruyter & Feinberg 2004). This means that retailing (both online and physical) has to adapt to this changing and more complex behaviour of consumers (Madahi & Sukati 2016; Sundström & Ericsson 2015). However, in order to do so there is a need for businesses to understand the prepared and well-informed consumer and how they perceive the role of the physical store prior to performing a complex purchase, which is an area of research that is relatively unexplored.

1.3 Research purpose

Consumer behaviour has changed, they are more informed than ever and have the possibility to plan and prepare their purchase long before visiting the physical store. It is therefore important for businesses to understand how these "new" consumers both prepare and act (Owen 2003; Pousttchi & Dehnert 2018). This is an area that needs to be researched as companies need this information to better develop their business models to meet consumers' needs and changed behaviour. *Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of the changed consumer behaviour and if the physical store might have a different role during consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase.* This will be researched through a case study of the IKEA kitchen department, as kitchen purchases could be considered to be a complex purchase. By using observations, questionnaire and interviews, we have the ambition to understand important aspects of consumer preparation and behaviour prior to and during the visit of the physical store. Thereby, to better understand the role of the physical store in the changing retail environment.

1.3.1 Research questions

RQ1: How do consumers prepare and which factors affect consumers to prepare prior to performing a complex purchase?

RQ2: How does a more informed and prepared consumer behave in the physical store environment?

RQ3: What role does the physical store have for a more informed and prepared consumer prior to performing a complex purchase?

1.4 Thesis outline

Chapter 1 - Introduction: In the first chapter, the background and problem formulation of this thesis is presented. In addition, the purpose and research questions are presented as well.
Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework: In the theoretical framework, relevant theories used for understanding and interpretation of the empirical finding is described.
Chapter 3 - Methodology: In this chapter, the thesis research design, strategy and sampling approach are presented and described. Explanations of each method used for the data collection and analysis is included.
Chapter 4 - Consumer preparation and behaviour: In this chapter is data from observations, questionnaires and interviews presented according to themes found.
Chapter 5 - Analysis: In this chapter we compare, interpret and explain the empirical data with theories presented earlier in the thesis. The purpose of the analysis is to ultimately fulfil the aim of this thesis by analyse and answer the research questions.

Chapter 6 - Discussion & conclusions: In this chapter, we aim to make sense, motivate and discuss the findings. Further, a summarization of the finding to then provide an answer to the purpose and research questions of this study is precented.
Chapter 7- Implications & further research: In the final chapter, both research and managerial implications is presented together with the proposed further research. In addition, is this thesis limitations also presented.

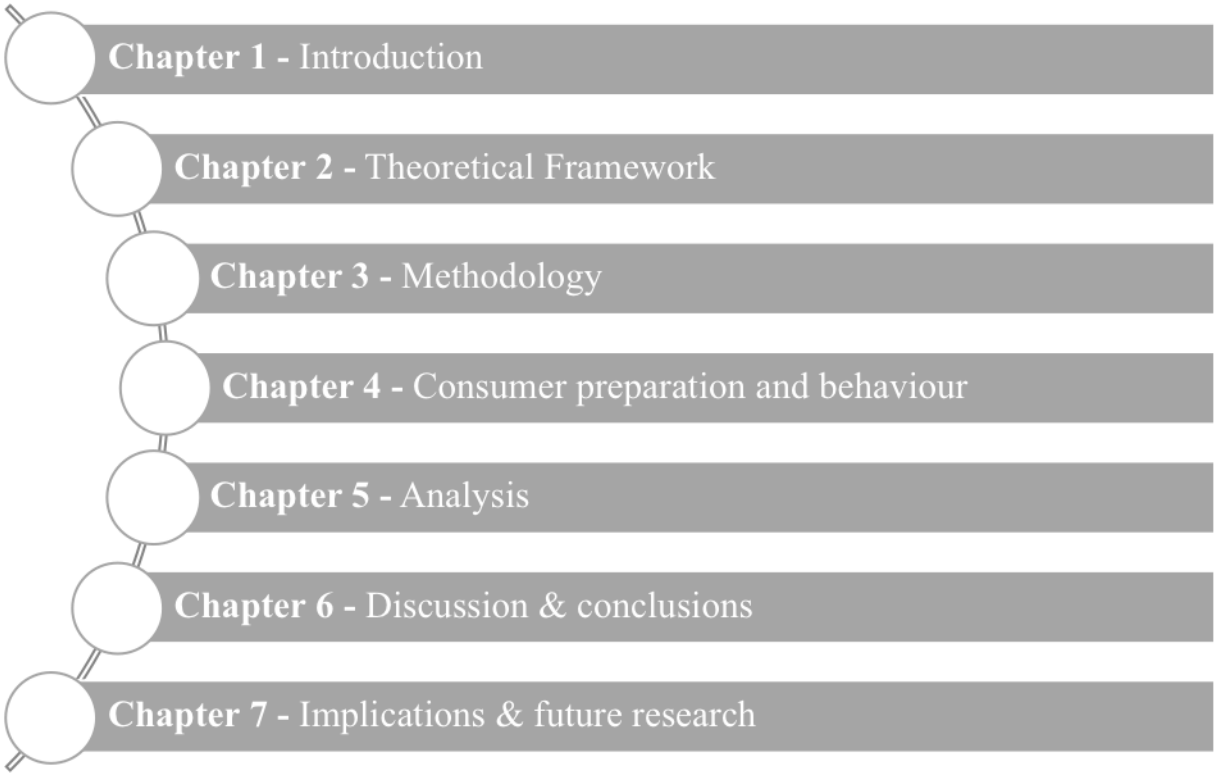

Figure 1, Thesis outline

2 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter is this thesis theoretical framework presented. Firstly, an elaboration of how, according to theory, consumers traditionally have behaved when making purchases. However, this behaviour is believed to have changed. Therefore, the second part is an explanation of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), to be able to understand why consumers behave in a certain way when planning to make a complex purchase. In addition, an elaboration of the impact digitalization has had on consumers, which includes theories concerning multichannel and webrooming behaviour is presented. The final part of this chapter is previous research concerning servicescape, mainly focusing on the physical dimensions, which will be used to understand how consumers interact with the store environment.

2.1 Former consumer behaviour and old models

Earlier, before the use of technical devices to search information, consumers mainly searched their product related information in the physical store. If not, then the information was gathered from family, close friends, advertising on tv, radio or in magazines (Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Palmer 2000; Udell 1966; Westbrook & Fornell 1979). The gathered information was mainly about prices, available colours and product range. Furthermore, consumers information search and evaluation of alternatives did occur at the same time, most often in the physical store (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015). Early research within retailing and consumer behaviour conducted by Tauber (1972) presented that consumer interacted with the physical store for many different reasons but two of the primary reasons was to search for information prior to purchase in a goal-oriented manner, or to browse around without having an explicit goal. When doing so consumers had to find their way through the store to find what they were looking for (Bloch, Ridgway & Sherrell 1989). Therefore, due to consumers need of finding information and evaluate alternatives store layout was very important, as the store also then was the primary place for doing so (Löfgren 2005; Titus & Everett 1995).

Today consumers search information through many different sources such as blogs, reviews and social media. This has resulted in that consumers most often knows the price, available colours and product range when they arrive at the physical store (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015). Consumers also share their experiences on platforms such as blogs and social media which also is available to a larger number of people and contribute to an even wider range of available information about the product or available options (Wolny & Mueller 2013; Simonson & Rosen 2014; Hagberg, Sundström, & Egels-Zandén 2016). This affects how consumer make purchases which furthermore affects the traditional models of buying behaviour (Aw 2019; Jonsson et al. 2017). The traditional buying behaviour model assumes that the consumer is rational when conducting a purchase (Darley, Blankson & Luethge 2010; Lemon & Verhoef 2016; Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014). However, consumer buying behaviour has changed since the model first was developed and along with it consumers does not behave in a rational manner when conducting a purchase (Moström 2018).

The consumer buying behaviour model is a traditional model of information processing, which foremost describes how rational consumers make their purchase decisions (Darley, Blankson & Luethge 2010; Lemon & Verhoef 2016; Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014). The process describes five different stages and/or actions the consumer moves through while making a purchase decision. These are need/ opportunity recognition, information search,

evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and outcome of purchase/ post-purchase behaviour (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Darley, Blankson & Luethge 2010; Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019; Lemon & Verhoef 2016; Parment, Kotler & Armstrong 2012; Rosenbaum, Percy & Pervan 2015; Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg 2013; Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014). In addition, consumer information search is and has for a long time been a part of the pre-purchase process in buying behaviour model (Bloch, Ridgway & Sherrell 1989; Solomon et al. 2016). It is defined as "*the process by which the consumers surveys their environment for appropriate data to make a reasonable decision*" (Solomon et al. 2013 p. 342). It means that prior to a purchase, consumers search for the right information in order to solve their problem (Jepsen 2007). This stage in the buying behaviour model is considered critical, therefore is knowledge in how consumers perform their information-search crucial for firms (Akalamkam & Mitra 2018; Moorthy, Ratchford & Talukdar 1997).

Another well used model to understand consumer behaviour is the AIDA model, which was developed in the late 1800s by Elmo lewis. The model is built on four stages to provide insights into how to attract and understand consumers. These four stages of the model are Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (Hadiyati 2016; Hassan, Nadzim & Shiratuddin, 2015; Lee, Song, Lee & Petrick 2018; Michaelson & Stacks 2011; Pashootanizadeh & Khalilian 2018). The AIDA model is used to understand how businesses could attract consumers through their advertising. For example, this might include how packaging, price and store design is communicated to create a consumer desire for a specific product. The AIDA model is similar to the buying behaviour model, but it describes how advertising should be organized based on how far the consumer has come in their buying process. Just as the buying behaviour model, AIDA has been and is still used by marketers to understand consumer behaviour and how marketers best should act to make the consumer go through with a purchase (Hadiyati 2016; Pashootanizadeh & Khalilian 2018). However, as new technologies like the internet have been introduced, big transformations both in society and the retail industry have occurred (Pousttchi & Dehnert 2018). Although these transformations in both the retail industry and consumer buying behaviour are the buying behaviour and AIDA still used to understand consumer behaviour and how to design the physical environment to best gain consumer attention (Jonsson et al. 2017; Moström 2018; Titus & Everett 1995).

2.2 Theory of planned behaviour

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) will be used to explore why consumers search for information prior to a complex purchase. As explained earlier, there is reason to believe that consumer behaviour has changed, old models such as AIDA and Consumer buying behaviour model are still used as a framework for how stores are designed (Aw 2019; Edelman & Singer 2015; Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019; Johansson 2018; Jonsson, Stoopendahl & Sundström 2015; Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Lemon & Verhoef 2016). As AIDA and the buying behaviour model is traditionally used to gain an understanding for how consumers behave, can TPB make us understand why consumers behave in a certain way, i.e. which the underlying factors driving that behaviour is (Ajzen 1985; 1991; 2005).

To gain knowledge in why consumers behave in a certain way can the theory of planned behaviour be applied (Ajzen 1985; 1991; 2005). It is a theory based on social psychology used to explain which factors influencing individuals' intention of performing a specific behaviour. When studying behaviour, Ajzen (1985) meant that it is of most importance to understand the factors influencing intention since actions are controlled by intentions. TPB explains the intention of performing a certain behaviour with three underlying factors (Ajzen

1985): attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen 1991; 2005). These three factors are affected by an individual's own beliefs (Ajzen 1991, Ajzen & Fishbein 1980). The factors' deal with the degree of positive or negative attitudes a person has towards the intended behaviour, their perceived normative prescriptions, the individuals perceived degree of difficulty (or comfort) when performing the intended behaviour (Ajzen 1991; Ajzen 2005).

The first factor, Attitude towards the behaviour, is the behavioural beliefs concerning the potential consequences following a certain behaviour i.e. to what degree an individual has a positive or negative attitude towards the intended behaviour (Ajzen 1991; 2005). The second factor, Subjective norm, deals with the perceived normative prescriptions or normative beliefs. More specifically, it is the individual perception of whether or not important persons have an opinion about how the individual should or should not behave in a certain way regarding the intended behaviour (Ajzen 1991; 2005). The final factor Perceived behavioural control is guided by control beliefs, which is referring to the individual's perceived degree of difficulty (or comfort) of executing the intended behaviour. Additionally, according to Ajzen (1991) this factor also reflect a person's past experiences and anticipated barriers and obstacles. However, it is important to note that the importance of these factors may vary across different situation and behaviour (Ajzen 1991; 2005; Cooke & French 2011).

TPB has primarily been used within medical and social research, but more recent studies have applied the theory to explain human behaviour within the business and purchasing area. For example, TPB has successfully been applied to explain online grocery shopping where the attitude towards the behaviour was the most significant factor predicting the behaviour (Hansen 2008). In addition, Judge, Warren-Myers and Paladino (2019) used the TPB to explain intentions of purchasing products that have a sustainability certification which is a behaviour mainly influenced by subjective norms. Furthermore, TPB has also been applied in research about webrooming behaviour, whereas attitudes towards online channels, attitude toward purchasing in offline channels and the individuals' perceived ease to search for information online (Arora & Sahney 2018). TPB has also been used in different aspects of multichannel behaviour (Madahi & Sukati 2016; Pookulangara, Hawley & Xiao 2011). For example, the research made by Madahi and Sukati (2016) showed that perceived behavioural control was the only one of the three factors which did not predict intention to channel-switching behaviour. This is also shown in research conducted by Pookulangara, Hawley and Xiao (2011), who’s findings showed that attitude towards the behaviour and subjective norm are influencing the channel-switching behaviour.

2.3 Impact of digitalization on consumers and retailers

A consequence of the digitalization is that consumers now have access and are exposed to more information than ever before, which has made consumers less sensitive to information from companies (Soto-Acosta, Jose Molina-Castillo, Lopez-Nicolas & Colomo-Palacios 2014). As if this was not enough, information is also shared between consumers and friends on multiple platforms. A consequence of the mobilisation of the internet, is that consumers also have access to the information wherever they want, whenever they want (Edelman & Singer 2015). The use of mobile connectedness and the greater amount of available information, therefore, provides consumers with the advantage of comparing prices from a various number of retailers which in turn contribute to greater competition between companies (Cochoy et al. 2017; Hagberg, Sundström & Egels-Zandén 2016; Jonsson et al. 2017).

The increased use of digital devices and the change it has resulted in when consumers search for information has contributed to a new empowered consumer with a more complex consumer journey and consumer buying process (Aw 2019; Edelman & Singer 2015; Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019; Jonsson, Stoopendahl & Sundström 2015; Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Lemon & Verhoef 2016; Wang, Lin, Tai & Fan 2016). Therefore, businesses need to have the courage to develop their strategies rather than using strategies that previously have been successful (Owen 2003). The online and physical "world" should not be used or viewed separately but as a complement to one another (Jonsson et al. 2017; Pauwels, Leeflang, Teerling & Huizingh 2011). The physical store is important because it can reduce perceived risk connected to the purchase for the buyer (Arora & Sahney 2017; McCabe & Nowlis 2003). Especially when there is a high risk involved in the purchase i.e. a complex purchase (Mitchell 1992). A purchase is considered to be complex when the purchase is of personal relevance and when it represents a high level of perceived risk (Mitchell 1992; Patterson 1993). When complex purchases are made, consumers most often take more time and effort to conduct it (Mitchell 1992) and an attitude about the product is developed before the purchase is performed (Fill & Turnbull 2016). The complex purchase is strongly connected with buyers perceived risk. One way for the buyer to reduce the perceived risk is to gather more information to feel more comfortable in the decision that is about to be made. The gathering of information is therefore an important part as it reduces the perceived risk for the buyer (Mitchell 1992).

Consumers believe that there is a difference between the product information presented online and in reality, as they believe it to be hard to appreciate the product in an online context, which indicates the importance of the physical store (Rathee & Rajain 2019; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007; Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014). Additionally, the store layout is even more important when purchasing a complex product, because these types of purchases are made less often consumers do not know where the product is located in store and consumers do not like to spend time searching for the product (Bitner 1992). Therefore, the physical store should be used as a complement to the online store to create a greater consumer experience which also is a way for companies to create a competitive advantage (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015).

It is not only the physical store that can be valuable for the consumer, rather the physical store and the online store combined (Pauwels, Leeflang, Teerling & Huizingh 2011). Even though consumers believe the physical store to be important, the great variety and extension of products online is a challenge for physical stores to compete with, due to the limitation of space and area of the store. As one of the greatest problems for retailers is to have the same wide selection of products and offerings in the physical store as the online store can provide consumers (Hagberg, Sundström & Egels-Zandén 2016). This is another reason for retailers to combine online and physical stores, as it enables them to provide a greater range of products and offerings as the limitation of space is not an as great issue in the online context as the physical (Anderson 2006; Hagberg, Sundström & Egels-Zandén 2016). The combination of online and physical store therefore becomes important, both for the company and the consumers (Amit & Zott 2001; Hagberg, Sundström & Egels-Zandén 2016).

2.4 Multi-channel

The competitive environment in the retail industry, due to the global competition along with the greater demand from consumers, has led to many new technical solutions to satisfy consumer needs. The many solutions have also led to a large number of touchpoints between the company and the consumer (Aw 2019; Arora & Sahney 2017; Arora & Sahney 2018; Gensler, Verhoef & Böhm 2012; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015; Wang, Lin, Tai & Fan 2016). Consumers use multiple numbers of channels, they combine the best from each of the different channels to get the greatest benefits while shopping (Aw 2019; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007). Movement between different channels might depend on whether the consumer is pleased or not with what specific channels offer (Balasubramanian, Raghunathan, & Mahajan 2005). Earlier research within this area by Shankar and Winer (2005) mean that a great part of all consumers at least uses two sources when they search for information prior to purchase. More recent research (e.g. Aw 2019; Arora & Sahney 2017; Arora & Sahney 2018; Frasquet, Ieva & Ziliani 2019; Larke, Kilgour & O'Connor 2018) also confirm this consumer behaviour, as their research indicates that consumers prefer to use multiple channels when they conduct their information search prior to purchase. It is also proved that consumers who use multiple channels in their purchase journey are more satisfied and loyal to their retailers which furthermore generate value and profitability (Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2019).

There is a great amount of research indicating that multichannel is the new way for retailers to work in order to create value both for themselves and consumers. Consumers prefer to use more than one single platform when they gather information (Arora & Sahney 2017; Aw 2019; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). The development has even come so far that we are moving from a multichannel to an omnichannel retail model (Larke, Kilgour & O'Connor 2018; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). This is due to the changing need and behaviour of consumers. More specifically, when retailing started to become more digitised, companies created web pages, started to use multiple touchpoints and worked towards a multichannel management. However, these touchpoints were not directly connected to one another to create a flow of events that together created the greatest value possible (Larke, Kilgour & O'Connor 2018). Moreover, it was the need for consumers to create a better flow between the online and physical world that was the start of omnichannel management. Therefore, omnichannel management has a greater focus on creating a seamless flow between online and physical touchpoints (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015; Wang, Lin, Tai & Fan 2016).

Physical and online events could be used and consumed simultaneously in multichannel management. Therefore, must the retail industry use the physical stores to meet the consumer need and create an atmosphere that connects online and physical events (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). Due to changes in consumer behaviour retailers can no longer work according to models and concepts that have worked in the past, instead, they need to develop their concepts (Hall & Towers 2017). An example of this can be to provide consumers with WiFi enabling them to search for information or inspiration while they are in the physical store. Retailers could also provide consumers with a tablet station where they can search for product information. Solutions for retailers are to provide consumers with the possibility to charge their mobile phones to create an environment that fulfils consumer needs (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). In addition, according to research made by Garnier & Poncin (2019) consumers use catalogues although they can find pictures and product information online. Some consumers use them along with searching on the web as a compliment, which can be viewed as an old way of using media. However, this can also be seen as an example of how retailers can use their online and physical channels as complements to one another, whereas the format

of the store is vital as it contributes to the real experience (Garnier & Poncin 2019; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015).

2.4.1 Webrooming

Phenomenon's that have occurred due to consumers using multiple channels during their purchase process are showrooming and webrooming, which are different types of consumer behaviour prior to purchase. When consumers behave according to the showrooming phenomenon, they visit a physical store and then buy the product on an online platform (Arora & Sahney 2017; Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2019; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). Webrooming, on the other hand, is when consumers go online to collect product information and then purchase the product in a physical store (Arora & Sahney 2018; Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2016; Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2019; Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). Today, when consumers are about to make a complex purchase, they might combine both online and physical sources of information prior to their purchase. When doing so, almost one-third of all consumers behave according to showrooming and two-thirds behave according to webrooming (Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2019).

Webrooming is today the most common behaviour associated with the multichannel phenomenon (Arora & Sahney 2018; Aw 2019; Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018), and as consumers are using their mobile devices more extensively during their purchase journey this behaviour is believed to become even more common (Aw 2019). There are different reasons for webrooming behaviour, one of them is to be certain of making the right decision as consumers prepare themselves by searching for information online prior to their purchase. This information can for example be related to the price of the product. It can also be online reviews on social networks or chat forums where other consumers share their experience of the product or brand (Arora & Sahney 2018; Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2016) as consumers often believe other consumers experience to be much reliable (Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2016). All the information available online can furthermore be hard to find in the store. Another reason, as explained earlier, is to reduce the perceived risk connected to the purchase (Aw 2019) as the physical store enables the consumer to touch and feel the merchandise, due to online pictures and product information being hard to appreciate (Arora & Sahney 2018; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007). Furthermost, research has shown that consumers who combine multiple sources of information prior to purchase are more satisfied with their purchase. Therefore, it is of greatest interest for companies to enable this behaviour and create environments where the consumer can behave in that manner (Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2019; Wang, Lin, Tai & Fan 2016).

2.5 Store layout and servicescape

Service is a way for companies to stand out in the competitive marketplace and also an innovative way of increasing economic value (Pine & Gilmore 1998). Between what earlier was viewed as a product and what was viewed as a service is today blurred out as companies need to offer consumers more than only the product. They need to provide consumers with the total experience, meaning to provide consumers with a seamless product and service experience (Hagberg, Sundström & Egels-Zandén 2016). Today, consumers are more involved in their service offering as they are informed and do more themselves some due to the fact that they are more informed (Fill & Turnbull 2016).

For a long time, retailers' main interest was to motivate consumer purchase behaviour (Buttle 1984). By using servicescape as a marketing tool retailers can guide and help consumers to behave in a preferable way (Bitner 1992; Kotler 1973). Servicescape is a framework used to explain how different factors within a service environment affect consumers and how retailers can use this to create environments suitable for their business (Bitner 1992). As consumer in store behaviour is strongly correlated to the store layout (Bitner 1992; Park, Jeon & Sullivan 2015; Spence, Puccinelli, Grewal & Roggeveen 2014; Turley & Milliman 2000; Widyastuti 2018). The servicescape can affect consumers through both atmospheric and physical dimensions (Bitner 1992). Therefore, it is of greatest importance that retailers use these different dimensions to guide consumers and make consumers behave in a preferable way. How those dimensions are used will not only impact consumer purchase but also consumer satisfaction and experience of the retailer (Nell 2017; Widyastuti 2018). Although retailers have worked with the dimensions in different ways, they have not considered that consumers are more prepared and informed when they visit the physical store (Bitner 1992; Holmberg 2018).

2.5.1 Physical dimensions and Atmospheric

Atmospheric and physical dimensions was for a long time ignored by business owners but has later been recognised as an important way to influence consumer buying behaviour in the physical store (Bitner 1992; Spence, Puccinelli, Grewal & Roggeveen 2014). The usage of the physical store has changed as online purchasing has become more common. Despite this change, the physical store is still important for customers as it is the only way for them to touch and feel the merchandise before making a purchase (Mowrey, Parikh & Gue 2018; Rathee & Rajain, 2019; Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014). Therefore, atmospherics and physical dimensions is still an important part of the business strategy as it affects consumer behaviour and satisfaction and is called the silent language in communication (Bitner 1992; Kotler 1972; Smith & Burns 1996).

The physical dimension is an important part for retailers when creating the store atmosphere as it is a part of communicating the concept and knowledge for the consumers in how to behave (Hultén 2012; Smith & Burns 1996). The physical dimensions in a store can be used to help consumers navigate, this involves symbols, signs and artefacts (Bitner 1992), which represent the more tangible aspects in the store design (Bäckström & Johansson 2006). In the store environment do consumers use all their senses which therefore becomes a part of the atmospherics. The different senses used are sight, sound smell, touch and in some cases taste (Hultén 2011). However, the ability to only smell or see the product are in many cases not enough when evaluating a product prior to purchase. The ability to touch the product is vital when purchasing home equipment, due to by touching the product the customer can feel attributes such as the weight and material used (Hulten 2012). Therefore, it is also important that the store environment enables customers to pick up, inspect and compare different available alternatives in the store (Krishna & Morrin 2008; McCabe & Nowlis 2003). It is therefore important with the possibility to touch the product when evaluating products prior to purchase. The ability to touch products also reduces the perceived risk related to the purchase (McCabe & Nowlis 2003).

The physical dimensions can also be used for communication. For example, signs can be used as explicit communication in order to guide consumers. Therefore, signs in store can provide information without the presence of any employees and the knowledge in how to behave (Bitner 1992). Another example is guiding arrows throughout the customer loop in a physical

store, which has been shown to help consumers moving in the right direction in store (Zheng 2012). In addition, Bitner (1992) argue that it is an important part of the in-store signage used to guide customers through the store environment without missing anything. However, physical factors are not only used for the purpose of communication, but it can also be used to affect consumer experience and behaviour in a desirable way. By using visual displays or visual merchandising in the store environment, retailers can increase the consumer interaction with products and further also have a positive effect on purchase intentions (Park, Jeon & Sullivan 2015).

The service provided in the servicescape is also an important part of how customers experiences the environment and their overall satisfaction. Service is both consumed and provided at the same time which makes it hard to control as it does not only depend on the employee but also the customer interacting with the employee. Therefore, must both employees and customers have the possibility to perform the service in the best possible way. This is an important part of the environment: it should be created to ensure the best possible environment to perform a great service (Bitner 1992; Fuentes, Bäckström & Svingstedt 2017). Another factor influencing consumer behaviour and satisfaction is the materials, artwork and furnishings used in the environment. This is due to them communicating a meaning and an overall impression (Bitner 1992).

Today most consumers own a phone, most often a smartphone, which if used in store also becomes a part of the servicescape. The smartphone can contribute to more ratios of returns as it is shown that consumers spend more time in store when using their phone due to them diverting from the customer loop (Grewal, Ahlbom, Beitelspacher, Noble & Nordfält 2018). But it can also take the consumer attention away from the signs and products (Fuentes, Bäckström & Svingstedt 2017). Smartphone technology used in store could affect consumer behaviour is store (Grewal, Roggeveen & Nordfält 2017). Although it might take attention away from the store, it could also be used as a complement for consumers to find product related information (Grewal et al. 2018).

2.6 Usage of the Theoretical Framework

First, we defined that AIDA and buying behaviour model are traditionally used to understand how consumers behave when making purchases. However, the consumers preparation online is more extensive prior to a complex purchase than the preparation was earlier. By defining theories about multichannel and webrooming we can understand how consumers use online channels when preparing. We also need to understand why consumers search for information prior to purchase. This can be explored by the use of theory of planned behaviour (TPB), which is a theory used to understand which factors affecting consumers to perform a certain behaviour. Furthermore, servicescape is used to understand how the prepared consumers interact with the store environment, as this is a part of their preparation prior to a complex purchase. How these theories are related to one another is visualized in figure 1.

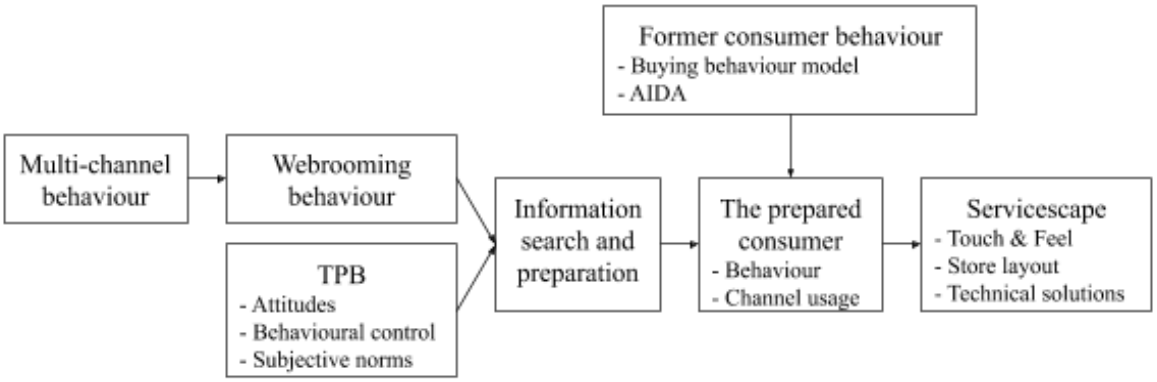

Figure 2, Usage of the Theoretical Framework

3 Methodology

In this chapter we introduce and argue for the methodological choices made in this research. More specifically, how these are used to answer our research questions and fulfil the aim of this thesis. The thesis research strategy and design will be argued for in the first two parts of this chapters. Furthermore, is the collection of data described in-depth, as well as the sampling approach and analysis. Finally, the quality of this research is presented and discussed.

3.1 Research design

The aim of this thesis was to gain a deeper understanding of the changed consumer behaviour and if the physical store might have a different role during consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase. To explore this further a case study design was chosen, where the case was the IKEA kitchen department. The units researched was the kitchen department in three different IKEA stores in Sweden, namely the department stores in Bäckebol, Kållered and Jönköping. This case was chosen because of the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the consumer behaviour and the role of the physical store prior to performing a complex purchase. IKEA is a Swedish company that provides consumers with home furniture (IKEA 2020a). They are a multinational company with more than 430 department stores in 50 markets worldwide, which also makes them the world's largest retailer for home furniture (IKEA 2020b). By choosing IKEA's kitchen department we were able to explore how consumers prepare and act prior to a kitchen purchase, which based on our theoretical framework could be considered as a complex purchase. In addition, was the case formed together with employees responsible for the IKEA concept, as they wanted to understand how their consumers behave prior to a kitchen purchase. This because IKEA aspire to becoming a leading multichannel retailer (Hultman, Johansson, Wispeler & Wolf 2017) and therefore also have multiple channels of information available to consumers.

While performing a case study, the researcher focus on getting a deeper understanding for a specific natural setting by studying action, situations, experiences and processes in that setting (Denscombe 2018). The case can be a single organization, location, person, or event (Bryman & Bell 2015). As this study mainly focused on the consumers within the IKEA kitchen department, was case study a suitable design for this study. The main focus of a case study is to understand how processes and relationships operate within a social context. This due to the interest in both what is happening and why it is happening (Denscombe 2018; Bryman & Bell 2015). The use of this research design is also preferred when having research questions beginning with "How" and "Why" (Denscombe 2018; Yin 2014), which made the design well suited for the current study. Moreover, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) state that researchers conducting a case study should have multiple perspectives which make it possible to incorporate various methods and approaches in order to make sure of a high validity of the study. Based on this reasoning, we chose to use multiple methods, which also will be further discussed in following chapter, 3.2 research strategy.

3.2 Research strategy

The research strategy chosen for this study is mixed method, also called triangulation, which is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative method (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011; Denscombe 2018; Bryman & Bell 2015). The primary reasons for using this strategy is to overcome the shortcomings with the two methods alone (Bryman & Bell 2015; Holme, Solvang & Nilsson 1997) and to acquire the full picture of a problem (Denscombe 2018). In this research we used observation, questionnaire and interviews. Furthermore, Holme, Solvang and Nilsson (1997) mean that it is beneficial to use a mixed method as the result might strengthened each other. Based on these reasonings, the strategy of this study is a mixed method.

A mixed method design allow researchers to collect qualitative and quantitative data simultaneous or/and sequential (Bryman & Bell 2015; Creswell & Plano Clark 2011). In this research, the collection of data has been collected both simultaneous and sequential. In the first part of collecting data, it occurred simultaneously through the observation and the self-administrated questionnaire. This since the observation method only provide information about how consumers behave but not why they behave that way (Denscombe 2018), therefore the questionnaire was used as a complement to the observations. Moreover, as the observation and questionnaire did not give the in depth understanding that was needed to fulfil the research purpose, were interviews performed as well.

3.3 Sampling

There are two different approaches that can be used when sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Denscombe 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). As this was a case study a non-probability sampling was used, mainly due to the limited knowledge in the probability of each participant to get selected and because the population is unknown. When using a non-probability sampling there is no predetermined number of participants decided when starting the research (Denscombe 2018). This support our argument that this research was a non-probability sampling used, as we did not have a predetermined number of observations decided. This because the number of observations made was dependent if the information found in the observations and participants available. In addition, is participants chosen because of them having special knowledge needed to participate (Bryman & Bell 2015; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). In this case, participants had to be in the process of buying a kitchen. This also makes the sampling subjective, as the participants are selected due to their purpose of them entering the kitchen department. As a subjective sample aims to provide the best possible participants due to their relevance and experiences in the subject (Denscombe 2018).

Additionally, there are two different aims connected to sampling that can be made, namely representative and explorative (Bryman & Bell 2015). In this research, for the observation, questionnaire and interview, an exploratory sampling approach was used. Explorative sample does not need a large sample representative for the whole population, instead the sample need to have special knowledge or insights in the subject in question (Bryman & Bell 2015; Denscombe 2016). The participants in this study therefore needed to be at IKEA with the purpose of search information prior to their kitchen purchase as it was required of them to be relevant in this research. As this mean that they had to have some special knowledge in the area, which is typical for an exploratory sample (Denscombe 2016). An exploratory sample was also used in the interviews, as thoughts and experiences were examined with the aim to complement the observation and questionnaire with deeper insights.

The sample size can be decided according to three different approaches: statistic, pragmatic and cumulative. Cumulative approach is preferable to use when the research not have a need or a great number of respondents, and when the research primary is qualitative. In a cumulative approach is the number of respondents dependent of the information gathered, and it is the researcher who decide when the information collected is sufficient (Denscombe 2018). In this research has a cumulative approach been used for both observations, questionnaire and the interviews. It was used because the quality of the information gathered was the foundation for our decision to end the primary data collection, which is a result of an appreciation of the data to be extensive enough.

When conducting observations and questionnaire at IKEA, we asked every individual that was looking at kitchen in the kitchen department if they were there to search information prior to a kitchen purchase. If they were so they had the possibility to participate in the study. Each participant were assigned abbreviation "P" represent participant, followed by the number that was based on the order in which they participated. The total number of participants in the observation was 21. However, due to some minor technological issues with the eye-tracking device, was the number usable observations videos 19. Where P3 and P18 was unusable, see empty cells in Appendix A, and therefore was their answers in the questionnaire not used either. The interviews were made to complement the observations and questionnaire for one main reason, namely because of the participants in the observation and questionnaire did not provide with enough information. Therefore, the interviews were not conducted in the IKEA department stores. However, the respondents was chosen based on the fact if they had bought a kitchen in the last two years or was currently in the process of buying a kitchen. This was a demand made due to the fact that buying behaviour might have been influenced by technical solutions and usage of technical devices could have changed during the last two years. With this considered, the total number of respondents was six which and is presented in Appendix B. In addition, does the abbreviation "R" represents respondent, followed by the number they were assigned in the order they were interviewed.

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Literature research

To explore the existing theory within the area of this research, a literature research is necessary. Ejvegård (2009) define literature as articles, essays and books i.e. all printed material, but also information found online. Furthermore, a literature research is a way to not only to determine theoretical knowledge in the area, but also to discover concepts, theories and research method that can be applied (Bryman & Bell 2015). In this study, a literature research was of high relevance in order to explore and understand the topic. The literature research started by gaining a greater understanding for how consumer behaviour has changed since the introduction of the internet and mobile connectedness in order to help IKEA map out how their consumers behave. It began by identifying relevant keywords, which then were used during the process of searching and developing the literature used in this thesis. The main keywords used was; Behaviour in store, Consumer behaviour, Information search, Complex purchase, Servicescape, Store layout, Store format, Multichannel, Webrooming and Theory of planned behaviour, these keywords were used both individually and combined. The main sources for the literature research was peer reviewed articles and course books. These were primarily collected from Borås University search engine Primo and google scholar. Furthermore, the authors also performed a snowballing method in the literature research.

Which is a method where the researcher uses the list of references in the articles and books used to discover more literature within the area of research (Wohlin 2014).

3.4.2 Observation

Together with employees at IKEA the sampling question was formed. As the intention with observation was to gather information about how consumers behave searching information prior to their kitchen purchase the question was *"are you here with the intention to gather information prior to a kitchen purchase"*. This question was asked in order to only get participants that were relevant for this study. Furthermore, participants who were not there to gather information were excluded as they would not have behaved in the same manner as a kitchen customer and thereby could their participation in the observation show inaccurate behaviour. If the customer was willing to participate, they were informed about the thesis and its aim, the eye-tracking device and information in how the information gathered would be used. Before starting their participation, their anonymity was also ensured. Which according to Bryman and Bell (2015), Dalen (2015) and Holme, Solvang and Nilsson (1997) is important for the participants' integrity. The participant was informed to behave as they would have done when not wearing the eye-tracking glasses, as this was of much importance for this research findings. They were also informed to take their time and that they were the one to determine when they were done using the eye-tracking device. This because only the participant would know when they were done gathering information. The observations took place in kitchen department in three different IKEA department stores as it was the behaviour of consumers in this department that were investigated. The three different store locations ensured our sample to consist of participants with a different demographic background. Thereby were the participants from the three different IKEA stores not viewed separately, as if there would be a comparison between the different stores. This was possible due to the IKEA stores being much similar in their design and format.

When gathering information about a behaviour, observations is a great way of doing so as a real situation is being investigated. This because a person often is not aware how they actually behave, which could be problematic when performing an interview where the respondent is asked to explain how one behaves (Bryman & Bell 2015; Denscombe 2016). In this observation, eye-tracking technology has been used. By using eye-tracking glasses the observers can capture the participants eye movements and area of interest. This then result in an understanding for how the participants interact with the environment, what catches their attention, drives their behaviour and influence their decision making. This is a technology which enables new insights and opportunities when studying behaviour in different environments (tobii pro 2019). Which in comparison to ordinary observations, provided us with the possibility to in depth see what the consumer actually where looking at. Furthermore, as the glasses are mobile it enabled the study to be made in the real environment without researchers interfering with the consumer behaviour.

The observations were saved as video files, which contained recorded sound, the eye movement together with how consumers move around in the store. When an observer is observing a participant is it important to catch the behaviour and take notes at the same time as the behaviour occurs, as it is easy to forget or miss important behaviour if it is not written down instantly (Denscombe 2016). However, the eye-tracking technology ensures that no behaviour was missed as the observer can watch the movie multiple times. This also ensures that the observers do not disturb the natural behaviour of the participants as they follow the participants from a computer instead of being in the direct surrounding. Therefore, while

observing participants from the computer, important thoughts was immediately written down. During the observations, the observers tried not to participate in the social setting, as we attended not to interfere with the behaviour of the participants, which indicate that it was a non-participant observation (Bryman & Bell 2015). However, the participant was informed about them being observed as they had to use eye-tracking glasses and to fulfil the requirements of being at IKEA with the mission of gathering information prior to a kitchen purchase, which indicate a participating observation. Therefore, did the observers strive to be non-participating but in some extent the observation has elements of being a participant observation.

According to Bryman and Bell (2015) an observation can be either systematic or unstructured. The observations performed in this thesis consists of elements of both, primarily due to the eye-tracking technology used. The design of the observation has elements of an unstructured observation as no observation schedule have been used because the authors strived to understand and provide a rich description of how the participant act in the store environment. This because all details together enable the observer to develop a narrative account of the behaviour observed (Bryman & Bell 2015). As the participants behaviour was recorded an observation scheme was not used. The observations also have elements of being systematic due to theories being the foundation for understanding why consumers behave in a specific way. As the behaviour of the participants was directly registered and due to the use of theory to understand what to observe, is a structured observation preferred (Bryman & Bell 2015). In addition, one of the disadvantages with an observation is that it does not reveal why a respondent behave in a certain way, it only tells the researcher how a person behaves (Denscombe 2016). Therefore, the observations in this research were complemented with a questionnaire containing questions based on TPB. This because TPB can be used to get an understanding for why a certain behaviour is performed (Ajzen 1985).

3.4.3 Questionnaire

After the use of the eye tracking device, participants answered the questionnaire. As observations do not provide an answer for why a participant behaved in a certain way (Denscombe 2016), therefore was the observations combined with a questionnaire. This because when opinions or perceptions are examined, a good method to collect the material is interviews or questionnaires (Bryman & Bell 2015). The questionnaire was performed by the participant and the we did not interact with the participant during the execution. As interaction by the researcher according to Denscombe (2016) and Bryman and Bell (2015) may have impact on the results.

The questionnaire was designed and managed through google forms, which is a program used to design questionnaires. Google forms also compile answers from the participants when the questionnaire was completed. During the data collection in the IKEA department stores, the questionnaire was provided to the participants by a computer after they had participated in the observation. When designing a questionnaire, it is important to provide the participant with information about why the questionnaire is made, what it will be used for and that the information given is anonymous (Denscombe 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). Therefore, the questionnaire started with a text explaining that the questionnaire will be used to gain an understanding for why a person behave in a certain way as a complement to the observation. Followed by instructions about how the questions will be asked. Furthermore, leading questions was excluded as leading questions may provide false and unreliable answers (Denscombe 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). After the questionnaire was formed it

was tested on other students to try if the formulations if the questions were easy to understand. As it is of great importance that the questions are understandable, as if they would not be the information provided by the questionnaire would might not be reliable because the participants need to understand the questions to answer them truly (Denscombe 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009).

The questionnaire was a self-administered questionnaire, because it was written down by the respondent. Due to the nature of a questionnaires, the researcher does not personally need to be in contact with the person answering the questions. This ensures that no new attitudes are formed or that the researcher is providing the participants with new information. This is important because it could question the reliability of the answers (Denscombe 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). Furthermore, a questionnaire is preferable to use when the questions asked are quite uncomplicated and the answers are easy to write down by the participant. Especially when the questions asked are connected to attitudes (Bryman & Bell 2015; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). For a questionnaire to be characterised as scientific does three criteria need to be fulfil. The first criteria are that the information must be useful for the analysis connected with the research made. The second criteria are that the questions in the questionnaire must be written down and be exactly the same to all the participants. The third criteria are that the questions are asked directly to the person of interest (Denscombe 2016). All these three criteria are fulfilled in the execution of the questionnaire, as it was self-administered.

3.4.3.1 Operationalisation

Our questionnaire consisted of both open and closed ended questions, which can be seen in Appendix C. Closed questions are questions where the participant can choose between different predetermined answer alternatives, for example, a Likert scale questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). The factors within TPB, explain in our theoretical framework, is most often measured with Likert scales, which are used to get an indication of how much or little a person agree with different statements connected to the factors in TPB (Ajzen 2019). Each of the three factors within the theory of planned behaviour, presented in section 2.2, was operationalized with two to three statements connected to each factor. An example of this is the statement *"I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase",* which measure the participants attitude towards the behaviour, all statements can be viewed in appendix C. Furthermore, all these statements was measured with a Likert scale between 1-7, where 1 is "I strongly disagree" and 7 is "I strongly agree". By having a 7-pointed scale we provided the participant with the possibility to provide a neutral answer, in this case 4. Which according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) is important when using Likert scales.

In addition, open ended questions were also used, which is questions without predetermined answers. Here the participant needed to write down the answer. However, the questions may be useful when the researcher is uncertain of the response which is can be the case when a new research area is explored (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). Therefore, open ended questions were used to provide insights in what type on information sources that the participant preferred to use, and why they were so. The questionnaire ended with demographic questions about gender, age and living situation. These questions were asked in order to gain an understanding of each participant. Furthermore, participants had unlimited time to answer the questionnaire. Which according to Denscombe (2016) is another important

factor which ensures the answers to be as correct as possible when a self-administrated questionnaire is managed.

3.4.4 Interview

Semi-structured interviews were made separately in order to complement the information gathered in the observation and questionnaire. This because, there was a need of deeper insights in how consumers search for information. Opinions, feelings and experiences was explored to get greater insights in consumer behaviour, are interviews according to Denscombe (2018) preferable. There are different types of interviews that can be made: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews (Denscombe 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). According to Bryman and Bell (2015) and Dalen (2015) are semi-structured interviews a flexible way of conducting interviews. Therefore, in this research semi-structured interviews were made with predetermined questions, which was not necessarily presented in same order during each interview. As the use of predetermined questions and subjects without a strict order of asking them allows the respondent to develop their own arguments and ideas (Denscombe 2018; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). All questions were asked in a way that allowed the respondent to in-depth explain their experience and perceptions. Furthermore, did the researcher try to have a neutral role during the interviews, trying not to affect the respondent's answers. Which could affect the trustworthiness of the research made (Denscombe 2018; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). All interviews made was personal interviews. A personal interview is an interview made where only the one respondent and the researcher are present (Bryman & Bell 2015; Dalen 2015; Denscombe 2016).

An interview guide was developed which can be seen in Appendix D. According to Dalen (2015) should an interview guide be made in every project conducting interviews, which furthermost is important when doing semi-structured interviews, although it is flexible it still need a frame of what is to be discussed (Bryman & Bell 2015). An interview guide is made to find themes connected to the problem formulation of the study (Bryman & Bell 2015; Dalen 2015). These themes should then be developed into questions (Dalen 2015). The interview guide was made to bring the researcher with some flexibility as the interview guide help the researcher to stay within the themes even if questions are reformulated during the interview process. In the interview guide two themes were developed: Preparation prior to a kitchen purchase and the future role of the physical store. The questions and the two themes were also connected to the theoretical framework concerning multi-channel behaviour, servicescape and the future of the physical store. The interviews were held in a manner which gave respondents the possibility to freely discuss their opinions and experiences during their kitchen buying process.

Prior to all interviews the respondent got information about their anonymity and how the information gathered would be used. Which according to Dalen (2015) is important to get the respondent to participate and to answer the questions truthful. The first question asked was also an easy question to answer. This was made consciously, as an easy first question to answer may result the respondent to feel more comfortable in the situation (Denscombe 2016; Dalen 2015). As it according to Denscombe (2016) it is a good way of starting the interview by asking an easy answered question which provide some information about the respondent.

All interviews were audio recorded. This to ensure that no information was left or missed. Furthermore, the researcher had access to a notebook, which was used to write down

important thoughts connected to the respondents' answers. According to Denscombe (2016) and Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) is the use of field notes also a great compliment to the audio record as the audio recording can miss out important information in how the respondents behave. Three interviews was made face to face and three was made over the phone. Each audio recording was transcribed. By transcribing the material, the interviews are easier to analyse (Dalen 2015). When transcribing the material, the researcher also has the possibility to get to know the respondent even better by thinking through what was said (Bryman & Bell 2015). Therefore, thoughts, made by the researcher, during transcription was written down as comments in the transcription document. In the transcriptions of the interviews was the tone of voice and sounds such as mmm or hmm written down to ensure no information to be left out. Which according to Bryman and Bell (2015) and Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) is important conducting transcriptions.

3.5 Thematic analysis

Once all data was collected a thematic analysis was performed. The reason for choosing thematic analysis is that it is a flexible approach, in the use of theory, research question, sample size and choice of method (Clarke & Braun 2017). A thematic analysis is an analysis that aim to emphasise on common patterns or themes within the data (Bryman & Bell 2015; Fejes & Thornberg 2019; Sayre 2001). It is also the most common approach used to analyse qualitative data (Bryman & Bell 2015). In this research, the themes used was based on patterns found in the data, which also were chosen on the basis of our research questions. The thematic analysis of the eye-tracking recordings, questionnaires and interview transcriptions was done both separately and in combination. The themes found was touch and feel, comparing products, service and mobile use. These themes were based on actions, repetitions and differences found in the data.

When studying factors within in TPB, researcher usually form and test hypotheses (Ajzen 2019). However, because of the fact that there were only 19 valid questionnaire answers with attached observation, no statistical analysis was conducted. Instead the mean value for each factor studied was calculated to see which statements got the highest mean value. These mean values were then used in combination with the other collected data during the analysis. In addition, was the servicescape theory foremost used to interpret and understand the behaviour and act of each respondent in the physical store shown in the observations. To conclude, was thematic the most suitable way to analyse the data because of the use of multiple and mixed methods consisting of eye-tracking recordings, questionnaires and interviews.

3.6 Quality of the study

According to Bryman and Bell (2015) is an evaluation and discussion of the quality of a study important to ensure its trustworthiness. Qualitative research should be evaluated according to a few different elements or factors to ensure its trustworthiness and authenticity. These are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman & Bell 2015; Creswell & Plano Clark 2011; Lincoln & Guba 1985), which are to be discussed below.

3.6.1 Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability

As an attempt to assure the credibility of this study has a mixed method been used, because it according to Bryman and Bell (2015) allows researchers a cross-checking of the data. The usage of mixed methods also enables the researchers to develop a deep understanding of a

complex social reality (Denscombe 2018), in this case the process of prepare prior to purchasing a kitchen. This is important since a credibility of a study is connected to the extent which the researcher can show that the collected data measures what it is intended to measure (Bryman & Bell 2015; Denscombe 2018). In addition, is the transferability also considered. The transferability of a study is related to what extent the findings of the study can be applied to other situations (Denscombe 2018). Both Bryman and Bell (2015) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the transferability in a qualitative study should be more about generating a thick description with the possibility to transfer to other situations, rather than scrutinize its likeness of existing in other contexts. Therefore, in the study, the transferability is strengthened through providing as extensive description of the consumer behaviour studied as possible. Moreover, as this study is a case study it is important to note that transferability is hard to achieve, and according to Bryman and Bell (2015) should researchers instead concentrate on developing a deep understanding for the case and its uniqueness, which we have done.

Dependability is whether the data collection and analysis performed would result in consistent finding, i.e. if someone else could do the exact same study and then obtain the same results (Bryman & Bell 2015; Lincoln & Guba 1985; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009). To do so, Lincoln and Guba (1985) mentioned the importance that researchers provide extensive information about the chosen methods and procedures that has been used during the study. We have therefore chosen to thoroughly explain our methodological strategy and design. Further has each part of the study, namely observations, questionnaire and interviews been described in detail (see section 3.4 Data collection). Although Bryman and Bell (2015) mean that researcher objectivity is impossible, have efforts been made to minimize us undermining and influencing the results, namely by standardise the techniques used for data collection and analysis. Which is important for the confirmability of the study and should therefore not be ignored. However, as this is a qualitative research where all material is processed in some way and then interpreted, it is unavoidable that the analysis and findings is affected by the researcher beliefs, knowledge and values (Bryman & Bell 2015; Denscombe 2018).

3.6.2 Potential weaknesses

This thesis has a few potential weaknesses that might have affected the quality of the findings. First and foremost is the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus. Since a big part of the data collection in the study was carried out in three IKEA department stores, their decreased number of visitors as a result of the virus (TT 2020) possible have had an effect on the number of consumers available and willing to participate in this study. This is also one of the reasons we chose to complement our data with semi-structured interviews (section 3.4.2.3). Furthermore, an additional potential weakness of the study was the use of eye-tracking glasses, even if participants were asked to act as normal as possible it could have some effect on their behaviour. However, although this potential weakness the researchers found this method to collect data as the most useful and accurate in order to observe the actual behaviour.

As the data was gathered in Swedish, all initial reduction and coding was done in Swedish as well. However, all citation and descriptions were translated before the presentation of the empirical findings and following chapters. To avoid potential mistakes in the translation, this was double-checked by the two authors of this study.

4 Consumer preparation and behaviour

In this chapter the we present the result of the empirical data from the 19 observations and questionnaire and the 6 interviews. The chapter is divided according to three main headings, namely the research questions in this thesis. Throughout the presentation of the empirical data, participants (P) is referring to the participating consumers in the observation and questionnaire, respondents (R) is referring to the respondents participating in the interview.

4.1 How do consumers prepare and which factors affect consumers to prepare prior to a complex purchase?

Consumer preparation is how consumers have prepared themselves during their process of purchasing a kitchen. The participants and the respondents were either in the phase of planning their purchase or had already gone through with their purchase of a kitchen. As earlier explained was this study divided into two parts. First part was an observation and questionnaire at three IKEA stores, where the participants first wore an eye-tracking device and then answered a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of questions connected to the TPB model presented and questions about how they had prepared prior to their visit. Separately from the observation and questionnaire were interviews made to complement and provide deeper insight in consumer behaviour.

4.1.1 Source of information

In the questionnaire the respondents answered the question, *"in what way have you prepared prior to visiting the store today"*. All answers is presented in table 1 below. All participants except participant P7 had prepared themselves by searching online prior to their visit in the IKEA store. When doing so, it was primary different kitchen resellers home pages that have visited. P6 and P4 had also searched information in blogs. P11 and P21 had more precisely used Pinterest and participant P11, P19 and P21 had also used Instagram. Four of the participants (P1, P6, P7 and P21) had also been in the IKEA store earlier, making this the second or third time visiting the store. Participant P6 and P21 had also been to showrooms finding inspiration. One of the participants (P6) had talked to a craftsman in preparation prior to the store visit. Two of the participants (P7 and P13) had been to a meeting with employees at IKEA to draw their kitchen. In the questionnaire participant P16 wrote that (s)he prefers to prepare herself/himself at home online and then uses the physical store to feel and touch the different alternatives. Furthermore, participant P12 also wrote that (s)he prepared herself/himself online and then in the physical store make the final decision. Participant P10 prefer to search for information home prior to visiting the store before meeting any of the kitchen salespeople. In addition, P21 also watched tv-shows and P7, P10, P11, P20, R1, R3 and R4 talked to friends and family when preparing.

Table 1, Information source used

Information source	**Participant**
Kitchen reseller webpage	P1, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, P14, P15, P16, P17, P18, P19, P20, P21, R2
Google	All participants and respondents (except P2 & R6)
Previous visits to IKEA	P1, P6, P7, P21, R4, R6
Pinterest	P11, P21, R1, R4, R5
Instagram	P11, P19, P21, R4, R5
Youtube	R5
Kitchen showrooms	P6, P21
Drawing meeting at IKEA	P7, P13
Tv-shows	P21
Talked with friends and family	P7, P10, P11, P20, R1, R3, R4
Hemnet & Home Magazines	R2, R5

Of the respondents in the interviews except R6 prepared themselves by searching for information prior to visiting the physical store. R1 started to search for information and inspiration at Pinterest, where R1 also found a kitchen (s)he liked. However, R1 then changed her/his mind when (s)he saw it in the physical store. R2 started by searching on google with the search word "kitchen" where (s)he then by clicking on the different pictures was transferred into different companies' online pages. On these pages, (s)he then found kitchens that could be of interest. R2 also explained that (s)he uses hemnet.se to search for inspiration not only related to her/his kitchen purchase but most often do so to find inspiration related to decoration and furnishing. This behaviour was made as R2 believe pictures is of people's home not to be as styled, they are pictures of reality and brings a wider range of inspiration than home magazines or company online pages. Moreover, R3 started by searching information online and talking with neighbours who had recently bought a new kitchen. During the process R3 also visited different physical store before actually buying the kitchen. R4 started by searching inspiration on Pinterest and Instagram where R4 found one kitchen which he really liked and saved the pictures of that kitchen. (S)He used these pictures to find the kitchen which (s)he then purchased. R4 used the picture searching for a similar kitchen online and when (s)he found similar kitchens, R4 went to the different retailers providing these similar kitchens. R5 started by searching for inspiration on hemnet.se and Pinterest where (s)he saves pictures on the kitchen which (s)he enjoyed, (s)he also used vlogs on youtube to gain information about different retailers and how kitchens could be designed. Furthermore, did R5 also use printed magazines to find inspiration. R6 went to different retailers to see the range of different kitchen available and the information about the different kitchens. There (s)he talked to the employees who helped her to design different alternatives available. When R6 had chosen the reseller (s)he went to the reseller a couple of times before the purchase was made.

4.1.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

All participants in the observation had in some way prepared themselves before visiting the physical stores. Therefore, in the questionnaire the participants were asked questions with statements connected to the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) in order to discover which factors best explaining why the consumers prepare and search for information before doing a complex purchase. The statements are: (1) I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase, (2) I think it is fun to search information prior to performing a complex purchase, (3) I have learned from friends and family that it is important to search

information prior to performing a complex purchase, (4) I think it is easy to search information prior to performing a complex purchase, (5) I think I am good in searching information prior to a complex purchase, (6) I know how to search information prior to performing a complex purchase. Overall, the first statement "*I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase*" (mean 6,37) together with the factor "*I think it is fun to search information prior to performing a complex purchase*" (mean 5,74) is the factor that got the highest mean. Moreover, the factor with the lowest mean (4,42) was "*I think it is easy to search information prior to performing a complex purchase*" see Table 2.

Table 2, Mean and Median of statements (TPB)

	I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase	**I think it is fun to search information prior to performing a complex purchase**	**I have learned from friends and family that it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase**	**I think it is easy to search information prior to performing a complex purchase**	**I think I am good in searching information prior to a complex purchase**	**I know how to search information prior to performing a complex purchase**
Mean	6,37	5,74	4,84	4,42	5,68	5,32
Median	7	6	5	4	6	6

4.2 How does the more informed and prepared consumer act in the physical store environment?

Even though all participants were prepared before visiting IKEA, they spent different amount of time in the kitchen department as the observation time ranged between 2 and 45 minutes, see Appendix A. The observation aimed to foremost answer the research question RQ2: *How does the more informed and prepared consumer act in the physical store environment?* During the observation was an important part how the participant interacted with the store environment, how the participants stood while observing the different kitchens and if and how they touched the different materials. The different themes used was Touch and feel, Comparing products, Usage of Service and Mobile usage. Which is described in the following text. More detailed information such as time spent in the kitchen department can be found in Appendix A.

4.2.1 Touch and feel

In the various kitchen did all participants in some way touch the different materials with their hands. For example, did P4 try how different handles felt while opening kitchen cabinets. Some of the participants opened different cabinets trying how they felt to open. More precisely participant P4, P5, P8, P15, P17 and P17. Some of the participants looked at different storage solutions in the different kitchens, more precisely participant P5, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P16, P17 and P20. Some of the participants was also nocking of the different kitchen cabinets and countertops to hear the sound of the knock. This was participant P2, P7, P8, P9, P15, P16, P17 and P20. This behaviour can be seen in figure 3 where P15 is knocking on a countertop.

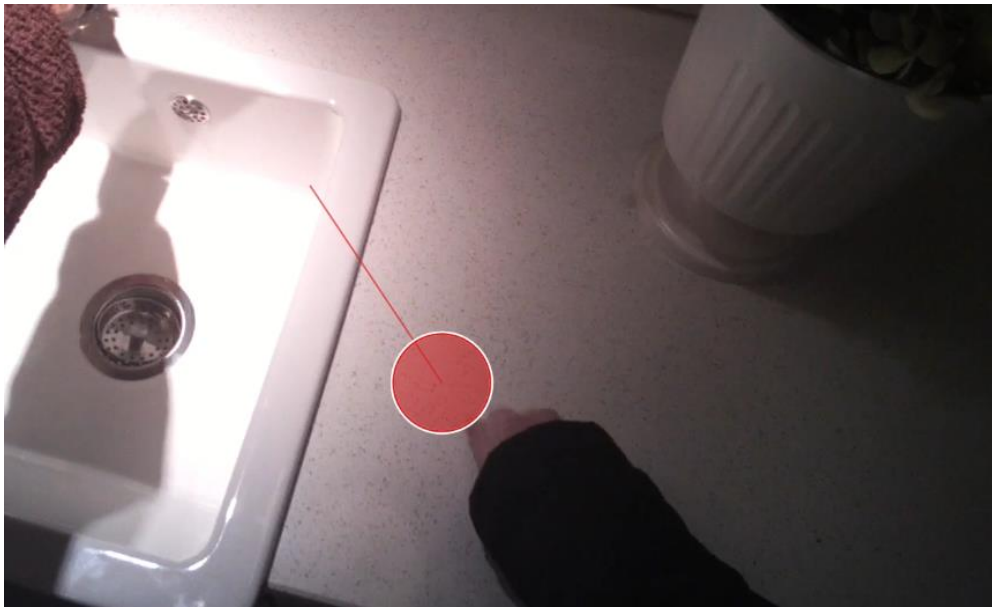

Figure 3, P15 knocking on a countertop

There were also participants who scratched some of the kitchen cabinets with her/his thumb, namely participant P4 and P13. Participants P8 did even pitched a kitchen cabinet and P7 pinched a countertop, which can be seen in figure 4.

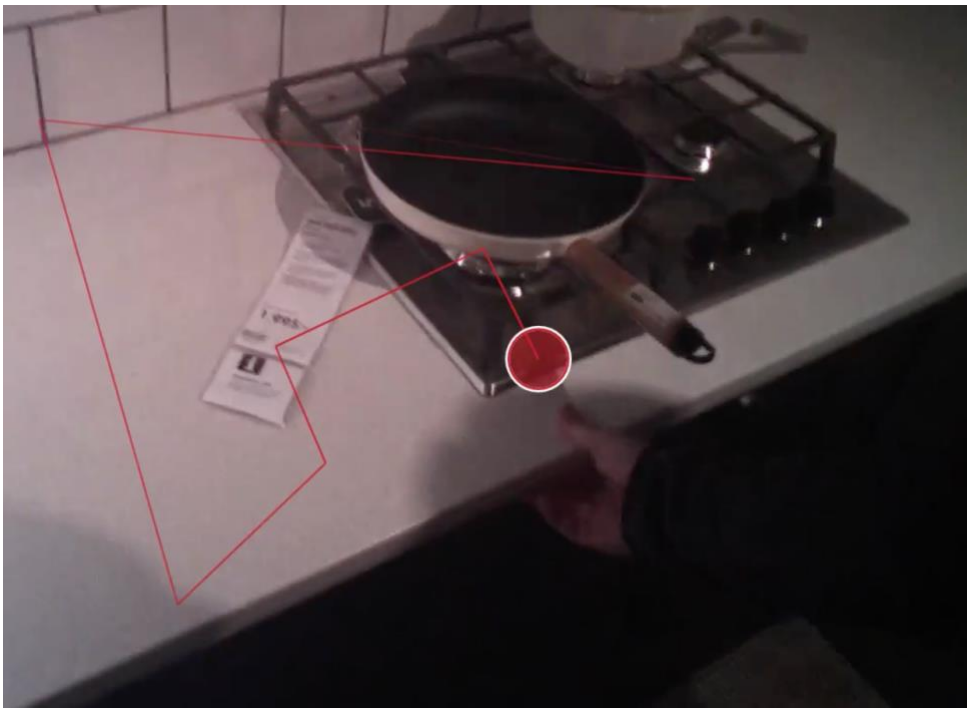

Figure 4, P7 pinching a countertop.

During the observation were there some participants changing their minds about products which they, prior to their visit, thought could be an option for their new kitchen. As there were some participants who mentioned, when interacting with a kitchen, that the kitchen cabinet they had looked at online was not what they expected in reality. The participants who changed their mind in some way interacting with the store environment was P2 who became more determined to use a different colour on the kitchen cabinet doors than (s)he first thought. Furthermore, was the solution P5 had found online not meeting their expectations as the

solution was found to be rickety in reality. Another kitchen solution, which P5 had looked at prior to their visit was found to have too little storage possibilities. In addition, did Participant P8 changed her/his mind when touching and knocking on the cabinet, because when doing so (s)he became uncertain of their choice as P8 believed the kitchen cabinet to be of bad quality.

4.2.2 Comparing products

All participants in some way did compare products as they when walking by the different assembled kitchens looked at how different countertops and kitchen cabinet doors could be combined. However, there was some participants who in the end of the kitchen department used samples of kitchen cabinets or countertops to find the best match. This can be seen in figure 5 where participant P1 is putting a countertop under a kitchen cabinet door. More precisely was P1, P8 and P13 behaving in this manner.

Figure 5, P1 using a countertop to see which kitchen cabinet door to choose.

Other participants stood in the end of the kitchen area but were only looking at the different available options without matching different samples together. Participant P8, P15, P17, P20 and P21 look at different kitchen cabinet doors and countertops. Participant P2, P4, P5, P11, P19 more precisely looked and compared different colours of kitchen cabinet doors. When comparing countertops some participants look at how they had been worn differently. Another example is P8 who compared different kitchen cabinet doors and when doing so became uncertain of their choice as the kitchen cabinet door they had previously chosen was perceived to be dirtier than the other. A similar behaviour could be seen by P4 who i the end of the kitchen area compared the quality of the different kitchen cabinet doors. An additional behaviour was that P2, P6, P7, P10, P13, P14, P15, P19 and P21 repeatedly placed themself outside different assembled kitchens to watch them from distance.

4.2.3 Usage of Service

The IKEA warehouse provide their consumers with service, to get service from IKEA employees do consumers need to take a queticket and wait for their turn. Which can be seen in figure 6 where P17 is taking a queticket.

Figure 6, P17 taking a queticket to get service.

Of the 19 participants was it only 3 of them asking for service or interacting with the IKEA employees. This was participant P5, P17 and P21. More precisely was P5 about to ask the employees for help but decided to walk back to look at the different kitchen solutions one more time before asking for help. While waiting for their turn was P5 looking in an IKEA catalogue. The service was related to questions regarding measures of a kitchen cabinet and which cabinet that is most common. P17 was asking for service where the personnel had to answer questions related to measures and information about a countertop. Furthermore, while waiting for service P17 read information about different countertops and therefore missed her/his turn. Participant P21 interacted with employees at IKEA to book a meeting to get help to draw their kitchen.

4.2.4 Mobile phone usage

Of the 19 participants was it only P5, P8, P10 and P12 who used their mobile phone and one participant (P1) was walking with it in her/his hand during the observation but did not use it. Primary was the mobile used to take photos, which can be seen in figure 7 where P5 is taking a photo of a kitchen with their mobile phone. Participant P5, P10 and P12 was using their phones to photograph different solutions in the kitchen. More precisely was P5 taking pictures of different kitchen solutions, the one they believed to be most relevant for their kitchen. Participant P10 used it to photograph information related to products and to photo different refrigerators and ovens. Participant P12 used it to photograph different kitchens to later

remember how the different kitchens looked. Participant P8 use her/his phone to look at a photo of a countertop on the phone to then try to find one with a similar appearance.

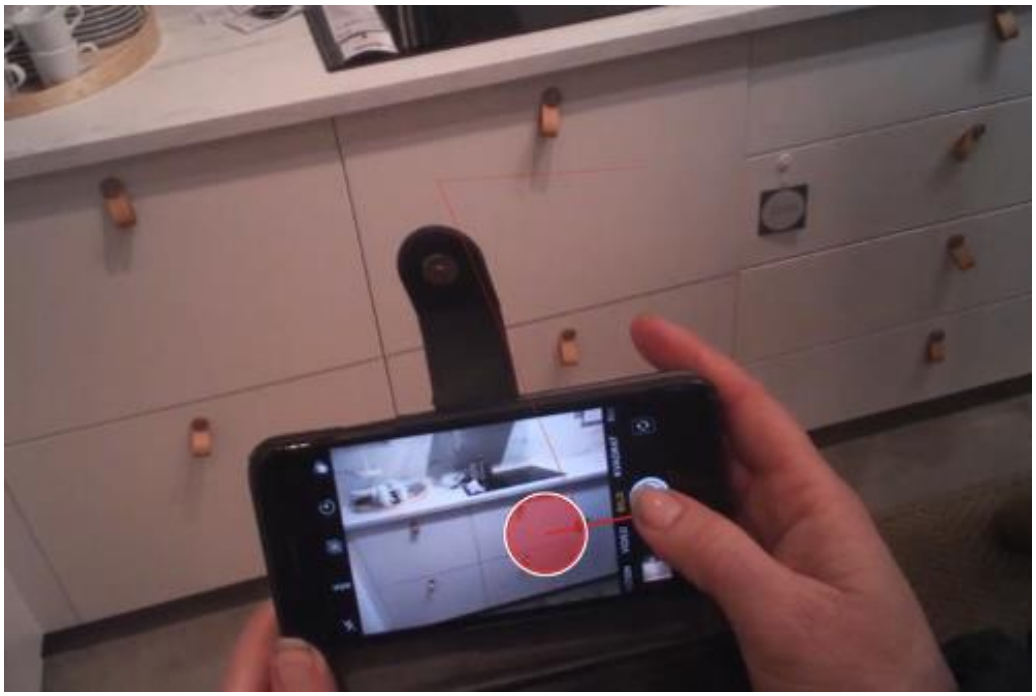

Figure 7, P5 taking photo of a kitchen

Another thing that occurred during the observation was that participant P10 tried to find information about a sink without finding it in the store, (s)he did not either use the phone to find the information online. A behaviour that was also observed in P5, P8 and P17, who also tried to find product related information without using their phones.

4.3 What role does the physical store have for a more informed and prepared consumer prior to performing a complex purchase?

All participants in this study had either performed a purchase of a kitchen or were in the process of planning their kitchen. Therefore, to gain a deeper understanding of what consumers think of the physical store and what they want from it, the authors asked both participants in the observation and questionnaire and the participants in the in-depth interviews about their thoughts and feeling about the physical store role during their individual process of purchasing or planning their kitchen.

4.3.1 Reasons for consumers to visit the physical store

The majority of the participants in the observation visit the physical store with the only goal of look at the kitchen department. However, all participants answered the question "*as you were prepared prior to your visit to the store, why did you come here?"* in the questionnaire. Several participants mentioned that their main reason for visiting the IKEA physical store was because they wanted to see and touch and feel the products in reality. As P16 stated:

"Because I want to feel and see how it really looks in reality, not only see it in a picture"
- P16.

The ability to touch and feel the product was also mentioned by the respondents R3, R5 and R6 in the interviews, as a very important part of why they visited the physical store. Moreover, did participant P19 also mentioned the same argument for the visit to the physical store as P16. However, (s)he also meant that the physical store is important to visit because (s)he believed that there is an incredibly large difference between the reality and the pictures online. In addition, the participants also wanted to see colours and different solutions available, which they meant is hard to see in a picture or in IKEAs own program for drawing kitchens. This is also evident in the in-depth interviews made, whereas all respondents mentioned the importance of being able to see the product in reality. For example, R3 pointed out that:

"*I want to see the cabinet doors live and I want to feel it too*" - R3

Further, they also highlighted that there is a big difference between pictures and the real world. R2 states that it especially applies when looking for a specific colour. In addition, R1 said that if the kitchen they looked at before was not assembled in the store, they would not go there. Respondent R1 also mentioned that a visit to the physical store is a way to make the purchase of a kitchen feel less risky as it involves a lot of money.

By visiting the physical store, they could get the total picture of what IKEA could offer and what they wanted. In combination with this, a few participants also mention that they visited the physical store to see and feel the quality of the goods offered, which was mentioned to be a potential deal-breaker for them. Furthermore, did about one-third of the participants in the observation visited the physical store, mainly for inspirational reasons. For example, P15 wrote in the questionnaire:

"I want to see it in its context. It is a big source of inspiration." - P15.

The primary reason to visit the physical store was for some of the participants, namely P7, P8, P11 and P13, that they had booked a meeting with an IKEA employee, in order to get help to draw their kitchen. Furthermore, did respondent R1 and R4 also mentioned that one important reason for visiting the physical store was that they wanted to sketch their kitchen together with the personnel. In addition, did respondent R1, R3, R5 and R6 also pointed out the importance of personal service that is available in-store and not online.

4.3.2 The importance of the physical store

Similar to the reasons why respondents visit the physical store, those reasons are also what respondents think is important in the physical store. However, the importance of different characteristics varied across the respondents. According to respondent R5, was it important to be able to compare and test different combinations of countertops and cabinets. This however leads to the importance of touch and feel the products. Almost all respondents mentioned the possibility of touch and feel the different parts of a kitchen as a very important feature. As a part of the possibility to touch and feel the kitchens, respondents R1, R3 and R6 said that when they visit the physical store to make this sort of complex purchase the assembled kitchens as an inspirational tool is incredibly important. This because it is crucial to see the kitchen of their choice before buying it. More or less all participants and respondents mentioned what they wanted the most in the physical store was the assembled kitchens. For example, P7 wrote:

"[...] foremost, it has to be assembled kitchen so that you can see it, because it is very hard to visualize by oneself" - P7

The main pros of having many assembled kitchens was that it offers the possibility to interact with the kitchen (P7), it is inspirational (R1 and R4) and it makes it easier to look at certain details (R1, R4, R5 and R6). Furthermore, participant P2 wrote that (s)he wished the kitchen department to be separate from other departments in the store and that it would be bigger. In addition, P14 wrote:

"I would prefer peace and quiet, but I like that it is assembled and not only a lot of cabinet doors on a wall" - P14

Another feature that respondent R1, R2, R3, R4 and R6 all emphasised was that the personnel plays an important role in the physical store when buying a kitchen. However, there are a few different perspectives on the role of the personnel. Respondent R1, R2, R3, R4 and R6 wanted help designing it, so that the kitchen would be the best possible. More specific, respondent R4 thinks that as a first-time buyer of a kitchen, it is hard to get all the details right by themselves, therefore the knowledge and service from the personnel is very important. Therefore, the salesman and the personnel in the kitchen department is a very important part of the physical store. A great example of the importance of personnel, R2 said that when they were buying their kitchen, it was the salesman and her knowledge that actually was the deciding factor when choosing which retailer to choose. However, some participants and respondents still want to do a lot by themselves. For example, P21 liked to have the possibility to sketch their kitchen by themselves when being in the physical store. A way to do so was suggested by R1 who said that the physical store should incorporate tablets, digital techniques and online tools for customers to use while in the physical store.

5 Analysis

The purpose of this fifth chapter is to use the theoretical framework presented in chapter two as a foundation to interpret, compare and explain the empirical data presented above in chapter six. Moreover, this will be done in regard to the three research questions in this study.

5.1 How do consumers prepare and which factors affect consumers to prepare prior to a complex purchase?

According to previous literature have consumer preparation and information search prior to a purchase traditionally been conducted in the physical store (Kotler 1973; Tauber 1972; Titus & Everett 1995; Udell 1966; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007; Westbrook & Fornell 1979). Compared to this, the findings in this study indicate the opposite, as the consumers rather prefer to prepare and search for information through a greater number of channels prior to purchase then the physical store only. The information searching process has in literature been described as a linear process carried through a set of predetermined steps following each other, namely information search then evaluation of alternatives, which is followed by a purchase decision (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Darley, Blankson & Luethge 2010; Ewerhard, Sisovsky & Johansson 2019). This study indicates the contrary, participants and respondents within this study describes their process of information search as a movement between these two steps. An example is R1, who moved between online channels and the physical store many times prior to buying their kitchen. This due to consumers now have the possibility to search, compare and evaluate products all the time and are not dependent on where they are located (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Cochoy et al. 2017), which the findings in this thesis support.

The availability of information through various different channels has made it easier for consumers to compare similar products offered at different retailers (Cochoy et al. 2017; Jonsson et al. 2017). The participants and respondents describe that they during their information search used a big variety of channels and all of them used more than one. This behaviour of using multiple channels during the information gathering process has also been proved by several researchers to be preferable by consumers (Arora & Sahney 2017; Aw 2019; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015). Foremost, almost all participants and respondents of this study prepared by using different websites, especially kitchen resellers websites. This was used together with social media such as Pinterest, Instagram, blogs and Youtube. However, although the wide use of online channels, some still use more traditional media channels such as tv shows, interior magazines and visits to the physical store. In addition, for a few of the participants and respondents, namely P7, P10, P11, P20, R1, R3 and R4, were friends and family an important part of their information search. Moreover, participants and respondents moved between these online and offline sources during their information search. This behaviour agrees with the previous descriptions of multichannel behaviour (Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007). Furthermore, the consumers combining online and offline channels also partly agree with Aw (2019) description of webrooming behaviour. But only partly as it was found that consumers move between the physical and online store more than only once during their preparation.

The behavior of searching information prior to purchase has been described in the literature as the process in which a consumer scan and collect information suitable for making a

reasonable decision (Jepsen 2007; Solomon et al. 2016). Tauber (1972) explained two reasons for why consumers are searching for information in the physical store, namely when consumers have a specific goal or with the purpose to browse products. However, as described above, consumers do not only use the physical store when searching for information before purchase, instead, they use multiple sources. This because in the process of purchasing a kitchen, the consumers had a need to be as prepared and well informed as possible before making a decision. In agreement with research made by Mitchell (1992), the participants and respondents of this study express that the complexity of the purchase, in terms of the time, effort and money spent, makes/making the information search and preparation even more important. Which also reduces consumers' perceived risk involved with the purchase (Arora & Sahney 2017; Mitchell 1992).

By representing the highest mean values, the results in the questionnaires revealed that additional reasons for preparing prior to a complex purchase were that they thought it was important and fun to prepare. Both statements "*I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase*" and "*I think it is fun to search information prior to performing a complex purchase*" represents one of the three factors described by Ajzen (1985) in the theory of Planned Behaviour, namely Attitude towards the behaviour. Which indicates that the participants had a positive attitude towards preparing before a complex purchase. Similar to this result, findings in previous studies on webrooming behaviour (Arora & Sahney 2018) and channel-switching behaviour (Pookulangara, Hawley & Xiao 2011) showed that attitude towards the behaviour influence these behaviours as well. Furthermore, in this study the factor Subjective norm had the lowest mean value, indicating that participants' intention to prepare before a complex purchase is not driven by surrounding people's opinions of whether or not the behaviour should be performed.

5.2 How does the more informed and prepared consumer act in the physical store environment?

Hultén (2011; 2012) states that the use of different senses is important while being in the store, as it helps consumers to evaluate the products and affect how they behave. During the observations all the participants use their senses while evaluating the products. For example, all participants except P14 touched kitchen cabinets and countertops with their hand. P2, P7, P8, P9, P15, P16 and P21 were also knocking on the different materials and P7 and P8 was even pinching it. Furthermore, participant P4, P5 and P8 did also try how it felt to open the kitchen cabinet doors, where participant P5 believed the cabinet to be rickety in reality. P8 even became uncertain of her/his choice of kitchen cabinet doors as he believed them to be of bad quality. Another important behaviour exhibited by the participants was comparing different products in the store. More precisely did P1, P4 and P13 move and compare samples of countertops with kitchen cabinet doors at the end of the kitchen department. This behaviour is supported by previous literature by Krishna and Morrin (2008) and McCabe and Nowlis (2003) who mean that comparing and touching products is an important behaviour done to evaluate products prior to purchase. However, the findings in this study is important as it confirms that consumers today, even if they have lots of information available online, still believe the physical store to be important as it enables them to evaluate and touch and feel the product they are about to purchase.

According to Arora and Sahney (2017) and McCabe and Nowlis (2003) is the possibility to touch and feel the product before purchase are also important as it reduces some of the perceived risks related to the purchase. Especially when the purchase is considered to be

complex (Mitchell 1992) such as a kitchen purchase. Although none of the participants nor respondents answered that they visited the physical store to reduce the risk associated with the purchase, it can be assumed that participants believe the possibility to touch and feel the products to be important but not recognise it as a way to reduce the risk associated with the purchase. Which is supported by research done by Mitchell (1992), who meant that consumers reduce risk related to purchase by gathering more information about the product. Additional behaviours performed by the consumers was that some of the participants also placed themselves outside the kitchen to examine it from a distance (P2, P6, P7, P10, P13 P14, P15, P19 and P21). This behaviour is supported by answers in the questionnaire, as participants wrote that they are there to get the entirety of the kitchens. The possibility to touch and feel the products and to get the picture of the product as a whole is mentioned by several researchers as an important feature of the physical store (Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Mowrey, Parikh & Gue 2018; Rathee & Rajain, 2019). However, although Bitner (1992) wrote that creating a store environment is important to ensure consumers to behave in a preferable manner, she did not mentioned it importance of providing consumers with the possibility to examine the product as a whole. Due to our usage of eye-tracking technology in combination with a questionnaire can we provide more in-depth details about the behaviour and thereby also the importance of providing consumer with the possibility to examine the product as a whole, which is a gap in previous research.

The development of e-commerce and online channels enables consumers to search for information wherever and whenever they want (Edelman & Singer 2015). However, one of the main limitations of online stores is the impossibility to touch and feel the products (Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Mowrey, Parikh & Gue 2018; Rathee & Rajain, 2019). This limitation was evident in the behaviour of P7 and P8, as they changed their mind about products they had previously seen online once they saw and touched it in reality. This behaviour could be explained by previous research showing that consumers perceive a difference between the actual product and the one presented online, as it is hard to appreciate the product in an online context (Rathee & Rajan 2019; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007). Which furthermore is also strengthened by the research made by Mowrey, Parikh and Gue (2018), Rathee and Rajain (2019) and Wolny and Charoensuksai (2014) who stated that one of the primary reasons for customers to visit the physical store is to actually examine the products in reality. In addition, one of the questions in the questionnaire was "*Because you were prepared before your visit to the store today, why did come to the store?*". The overall answer was the great importance and possibility to actually touch and feel the products. This then affects how the consumers behave in-store, as if there was no need to touch and feel the participants would not have done so. Furthermore, did all participants during the observation touch and interact with the store environment and the products in some way. This also indicates the importance of the ability to touch and feel the products as previously described by several researchers (Kim, Libaque-Saenz & Park 2018; Mowrey, Parikh & Gue 2018; Rathee & Rajain 2019).

One way for companies to stand out in the marketplace is to provide customers with a great service. The service provided is important for consumers' in-store experience and satisfaction (Bitner 1992; Fuentes, Bäckström & Svingstedt 2017). However, it was only P5, P17 and P21 who interacted with the employees during the observation and thereby the only ones who took advantage of the service provided by the employees. Due to the fact that the IKEA kitchen department uses queue tickets, the consumers had to wait for their number before interacting with the employees. This resulted in P17 missing her/his turn as he was in the store looking at different products related to the kitchen purchase. This indicates that the environment in the

store might not be most suitable for performing service, something that Bitner (1992) and Fuentes, Bäckström and Svingstedt (2017) mean is crucial for businesses in order to ensure a great service. Additional evidence of the lack of a service-friendly environment is the observation of participant P5, despite the fact that (s)he stayed at the service desk while waiting, (s)he was in the way for other customers within the service area. However, the in-store service should not be ignored as our interviews showing the opposite. Respondents mentioned the service as one of the main reasons for visiting the physical store, as it was the only way for them to get the extensive service and expertise they needed to perform their kitchen purchase.

Today do most consumers have a smartphone, which when they use it in store becomes a part of the servicescape (Grewal et al. 2018). Of the 19 participants was only P5, P8, P10 and P12 using their mobile phone during the observation. P5 and P12 used it to photograph different solutions in the kitchen related to if they will choose cabinets or boxes. P8 used it to compare countertops at IKEA with the one on a photo in the smartphone. P10 took photos of different kitchens and the price of them. P10 also took photos of different ovens and stoves and the price of them. Although Grewal et al. (2018) state in their research that the smartphone can be used to search for information did none of the participants do so. The participants primarily used their phones for camera-related functions. In addition, participants (P5, P7 and P10) who actually were looking for specific product-related information in the store without finding it, did not use their phone, which contradicts the previous statement by Grewal et al. (2018). Research conducted by Grewal et al. (2018) shows that the use of the smartphone can contribute to customers to divert from the customer loop and therefore spending more time in the store. In addition, research made by Fuentes, Bäckström and Svingstedt (2017) resulted in information in how mobile use in store can make consumers miss signs and products. However, none of the participants who used their phones in the IKEA kitchen department diverted from the customer loop due to their phone usage. In line with Grewal et al. (2018) was the average time for the participants using their smartphones longer (25 minutes) than for the one not using their phones (17 minutes).

5.3 What role does the physical store have for a more informed and prepared consumer prior to performing a complex purchase?

This study provides evidence that consumers prepare and search information through multiple channels when planning to purchase a complex product. This can be interpreted as a way for the consumers to reduce perceived risk (Arora & Sahney 2017; Mccabe & Nowlis 2003), get the greatest benefits (Aw 2019; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007) or become more satisfied (Flavián, Gurrea & Orús 2019). However, as this research also indicates, are consumers switching channels during their information search because of dissatisfaction with the current channel they are using (Badampudi, Wohlin & Petersen 2015). The main reason for consumers switching from an online channel to an offline channel such as a physical store is that they experienced too big of a difference between the pictures online and the reality. The consumers in this study also mentioned that when making this sort of complex purchases, the assembled kitchens as an inspirational tool and the personnel knowledge were incredibly important.

With the greater competition between companies as a result of greater use of mobile connectedness (Cochoy et al. 2017; Jonsson et al. 2017), more pressure is put on the physical store to keep develop their concepts along with these changes. Although some researchers and industry experts mean that it is crucial that physical retail change (Conick 2017; Postnord

2019; Pousttchi & Dehnert 2018) does the finding in this study show that some aspects of the physical store are still appreciated by consumers. Participants and respondents in this study still want the ability to see, touch and feel the products of interest in reality. When performing a kitchen purchase is it important for them to have the opportunity to compare and test combinations of cabinet doors and countertops, examine and evaluate the perceived quality of products in a real-world environment. These findings are supported by Krishna and Morrin (2008) and McCabe and Nowlis (2003), who meant that it is important the physical store environment enables consumers to compare available options. In addition to these findings in both previous research and this study, does this research also indicate that it is important for consumers to get the whole picture of the products. Even though every participant, in some way, compared and evaluated the different products in the physical store, were there only three participants that used samples provided by the store in order to compare the countertops and kitchen cabinet doors. This result also indicates that the primary reason for consumers to interact with the physical aspects in the store is to get the whole picture rather than only comparing samples.

6 Discussion and conclusion

This sixth chapter aims to discuss and make conclusions based on the analysis in chapter five. The chapter begins with a discussion about the findings which will continue with a clarification of the answers to each of the research questions. To sum up these questions and fulfil the aim of this paper, which is "to gain a deeper understanding of the changed consumer behaviour and if the physical store might have a different role during consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase" conclusion is presented. The conclusion brings an explanation of the role physical store during complex purchases.

6.1 Discussion

Prior to digitalization, consumers did not have access to multiple channels when preparing prior to a purchase as they do today. However, this is changed due to technological developments, enabling consumers to search, compare and evaluate products through other channels then the physical store (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015; Cochoy et al. 2017). The use of different channels is also seen in the behaviour made by participants in our study. The process of purchasing a kitchen is complex, and consumers use multiple channels when searching for information, which also is a way for them to be better prepared. The results of this study clearly illustrate such a multichannel behaviour and how it might look in reality. However, consumers move back and forth between the physical and online channels. The results also show how the information searching behaviour varies between information channels, when and how information search takes place and gives a clear description of a behaviour that is not chronological and thus cannot be summarised in a common pattern. There seem to be feelings and emotional moods that determine how consumers seek information for a possible kitchen purchase. The study respondents think that it is important and fun to prepare for a kitchen purchase and you are happy to spend time on such preparations. These findings contradict previous research which has stated that consumer preparation and information search primarily is conducted chronological in the physical store (Kotler 1973; Tauber 1972; Titus & Everett 1995; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen 2007; Westbrook & Fornell 1979). It could be assumed that this behaviour occurs because of the complexity of a kitchen purchase, as consumers tend to gather more information when performing a complex purchase (Mitchell 1992). The need and willingness to gather all information possible is also apparent in the data, as consumers took advantage of the fact that they could use their senses when being in the physical store.

According to Hultén (2011; 2012) is the ability to touch and feel products an important reason for visiting the store. However, our results indicate that the ability to touch and feel products is the only reason for consumers visiting the physical store. Due to the fact that it is the only way for them to get the whole picture of the products as most of their preparation occurs online. Online stores do not provide the ability to touch and feel the products and therefore do consumers spend most of their time in store to see, touch and feel the products. By touching products with their hands, knocking on products and interact with the assembled kitchen they demonstrate the important aspects of the physical store as a part of their information search. This could be a result of that consumer's experience that online channels are insufficient in these aspects and are therefore dissatisfied with only using the online channels during preparation prior to a complex purchase (Balasubramanian, Raghunathan & Mahajan 2005). However, although this research indicates that consumers use a mix of online and offline channels, they still do not use them simultaneously. This is evident in the limited use of

mobile phones or other technology available when in the physical store. This contradicts previous research that stated that consumers' use of mobile phone in store has increased (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman 2015).

***RQ1*: How do consumers prepare and which factors affect consumers to prepare prior to performing a complex purchase?**

Buying a kitchen is considered a complex purchase as is require time, effort and money. Therefore, is the information search and preparation important for the consumers as they want to be as prepared as possible when purchasing a kitchen. However, earlier was information mainly gathered in the physical store, but the result of this study indicates that consumers prefer to be prepared when entering the physical store. By using multiple channels such as social media and internet are consumers no longer limited to search, compare and evaluate products in the physical store. Instead, the now shifts between online and offline channels during their preparation. Not to forget is the fact that the physical store still has an important role in the consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase. When the consumers are preparing prior to a complex purchase is the main reason for preparing that they consider it to be important and fun. This means that the attitude towards the behaviour is positive and therefore also the main factor affecting consumers to prepare. On the contrary, the consumers' preparation is not affected by the opinions of their surroundings or opinions regarding the behaviour of preparing.

***RQ2*: How does a more informed and prepared consumer behave in the physical store environment?**

Due to some limitations of the online store, do consumers mainly use their senses while searching for information and evaluating products is the physical store. Because of the impossibility to touch and feel thereby not getting the whole picture or the products, consumers need to gather additional information that is not available online. Which has implications for their behaviour in store. One main finding of this research is that consumers do not look at price and information about specific products. Instead they spend their time by touch and feel the products where participants mainly drawn their hands and knocked on the products. In addition, it was found that the interaction with the kitchen was a very common behaviour. Furthermore, was service not as common as previous research proposed nor was the use of mobile phones to find information during their visit to the physical store.

***RQ3*: What role does the physical store have for a more informed and prepared consumer prior to performing a complex purchase?**

In this thesis was one of the main findings that although consumers combine multiple channels during their information search prior to purchase the physical store still has an important role for the consumers. They want to see, touch and feel products of interests, and due to the many parts of a kitchen, they want to have the possibility to compare different product combinations. This due to dissatisfaction of the unavailability of that type of information in the online store. In addition, the physical store becomes an important part of the information search as consumers experience differences between products online versus products in reality. Therefore, the role of the physical store during information search prior to a complex purchase is to be there as a channel enabling consumers to touch, feel, see and compare products in a way online channel cannot.

6.2 Conclusion

This thesis aims to gain a deeper understanding in the behaviour of an informed and prepared consumer and if the physical store might have a different role during consumer preparation prior to a complex purchase. Through the use multiple methods, we answer the research questions presented in chapter 1.3.1. By answering the research questions in this thesis, we have gained a deeper understanding for consumers preparation prior to a complex purchase. With this understanding about the consumer in combination with their observed behaviour, can we describe the role which the physical store has for consumers as they prepare prior to a complex purchase, the conclusion is as followed.

In this research it is clear that consumers use multiple channels to gather as much information as possible before purchasing a kitchen. Although consumers use online channels extensively during their information search, will the physical store continue to be important to them. However, the store does no longer has the role of providing consumers with all information in one place. Instead the physical store has the role of providing consumers with the information that the online channels can not, namely providing with the entirety of the kitchen and the ability of touch and feel. This because when consumers are planning to perform a complex purchase they still want and value the ability to touch and feel products in different ways, and thereby uses the physical store as a complement to their use of online channels. Although consumers use a wide range of online channels during their preparation before a complex purchase, they still appreciate the physical aspects of products that the physical store still offers.

Our conclusion is therefore that fixed store settings should rethink their purpose when serving typically multichannel customers, and specifically so if these customers are buying products perceived as complex. If consumers have put a lot of effort in their information search prior to the store visit, an important role for the physical store should be the one of realising dreams. Customers are entering the store with heart and mind filled of expectations and dreams based on information gathered prior to their visit. When customers do so, the demands will be high on the actor who says it wants to give the many people a better everyday life. The physical store has a great opportunity in consciously choosing a new role, leaving the idea of being a provider and instead offering the opportunity to touch and feel, explore and as such, contribute to an extraordinary experience. The atmosphere and physical elements in the servicescape are often underestimated within retailing, however results from this study shows that there is a big potential in elaborating more these elements in the physical store. Thereby, is the physical store still important for consumers but the role has changed from mainly providing consumers with all information to instead have the role as a complement to the online channels, providing them with aspects that online stores can not do.

7 Implications and further research

The aim of the seventh chapter is to discuss the theoretical and managerial implications our research has contributed to explain how TBP can be used to understand why consumers behave in a specific manner. In addition, is this chapter also used to explain why AIDA and buying behaviour model might no longer be accurate. It is also explained that the roll of the physical sore has changed. Furthermore, is suggestions of future research and limitations of this study is presented which is followed by how our research can or cannot be used.

7.1 Theoretical implications

This research foremost contributes to the research field concerning consumer behaviour, more specifically how consumers behave using both the physical store and online channels. Previous literature about consumer behaviour lacks the in-depth insights concerning how consumers prepare prior to a complex purchase as this research provide. Several researchers have claimed that the physical store is the main place for consumers to conduct their information search (Brynjolfsson, Hu & Rahman 2013; Löfgren 2005; Titus & Everett 1995). Today, consumers have the possibility to use digital technology and mobile connectedness to search for information (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny 2015). However, this research has found the importance of these combined, as consumers prefer to use both online channels and the physical store while searching for information prior to performing a complex purchase. These results could also be used to reevaluate individual parts of the more traditional models, such as buying behaviour model and AIDA. Based on our findings, we could question the fact that consumers follow the chronological order of stages in the AIDA model (attention, interest, desire and action) and further also the pre-purchase process in buying behaviour model (information search is followed by evaluation). We instead suggest that consumers move between the steps in each model while searching for information through different channels prior to a complex purchase, which could imply that the behaviour the models aims to describe has slightly changed. It is also shown by our use of theory of planned behaviour, that the TPB is valuable when studying why consumers behave in way they do. The theory is traditionally used to statistically test factors influencing the intentions of a behaviour that has not yet been performed. However, we found it to be useful to also understand why a certain behaviour is occurring at the same time as it occurs. Furthermore, our research contributes to theory by indicating that the role of the physical store has changed in the mind of consumers.

7.2 Managerial implications

This research result is of most relevance for retailers as we have found that consumers are finding the physical store to have a different role than before. As consumers most often start their process of information search online, they have a greater need for information earlier in their process of purchasing a complex product. This could mean that businesses need to have the courage enough to re-prioritise resources and change their way of meeting the consumers, due to consumers being more informed and prepared. Thereby, are retailers today not providing consumers with the information they demand. In line with previous research (Jonsson et al. 2017; Pauwels et al. 2011), is there reason to believe that retailers should develop a strategy where offline and online channels are used as a complement to one another. Our research indicates that retailers need to meet the consumer online to prepare them for their visit to the physical store because that is where they begin their information search. Which could have further implications for retailers, needing them to prioritise their

resources by directing them towards meeting the consumer outside the physical store, in those channels their consumers actually use prior to their purchase such as Pinterest, Instagram, Hemnet and Facebook. There is literature meaning that the physical store should provide consumers with more technical solutions (Verhoef, Kannan and Inman 2015). However, our research indicates that consumers desire the physical store to provide basic features such as the ability to touch and feel, rather than technical solutions suggested by Verhoef, Kannan and Inman (2015).

7.3 Further research and Limitations

We suggest in this research that the physical store has a new important role which is similar to a showroom, providing consumers with value and possibility to visualise their dreams. Further research could therefore continue with a more in-depth research about the new role of the physical store as a place that is no longer used to solely provide consumers with information. Furthermore, can this research be used to gain a greater understanding for the role of the physical store when consumers are about to make complex purchases, which could be considered as a limitation. Therefore, we propose that further research should investigate the role of the physical store prior to a non-complex purchase. As this could provide a more generalised and applicable knowledge to retailers who offer products that are considered to be a less complex purchase. In addition, is one main limitation of this research also that it is made on single case, namly IKEA, and to be able to generalise our finding should future research use multiple cases to broaden the findings of this case study.

Further research could also concentrate on developing a more extensive model of how consumers search for information and make purchases, as this research provides only with limited insights. Furthermore, this research can be used as an initial guide of how business strategies can be developed due to the changed consumer behaviour when searching information and preparing. Further research could therefore focus on developing an accurate model of consumer behaviour, containing an in-depth elaboration of more recent phenomenon such as multi-channel and webrooming.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Table presenting observation information

Abbreviation	In-store company	Age	Observation/ questionnaire place	Date	Observation length hours: minutes: seconds
P1	No	52	IKEA Bäckebol	29/2-20	00:02:12
P2	Yes	49	IKEA Bäckebol	29/2-20	00:11:32
P3					
P4	Yes	54	IKEA Bäckebol	29/2-20	00:12:09
P5	Yes	48	IKEA Bäckebol	29/2-20	00:45:21
P6	Yes	50	IKEA Bäckebol	1/3-20	00:04:51
P7	Yes	44	IKEA Bäckebol	1/3-20	00:28:52
P8	Yes	52	IKEA Bäckebol	1/3-20	00:30:08
P9	No	64	IKEA Bäckebol	2/3-20	00:08:59
P10	No	50	IKEA Kållered	5/3-20	00:18:56
P11	Yes	32	IKEA Kållered	5/3-20	00:12:43
P12	Yes	54	IKEA Kållered	7/3-20	00:06:07
P13	Yes	24	IKEA Kållered	7/3-20	00:14:49
P14	Yes	26	IKEA Kållered	7/3-20	00:14:23
P15	Yes	56	IKEA Kållered	7/3-20	00:15:23
P16	Yes	40	IKEA Kållered	7/3-20	00:08:37
P17	Yes	35	IKEA Kållered	8/3-20	00:22:23
P18					
P19	Yes	54	IKEA Jönköping	14/3-20	00:13:13
P20	Yes	20	IKEA Jönköping	15/3-20	00:12:52
P21	Yes	51	IKEA Jönköping	15/3-20	00:27:53

Appendix B

Table presenting interview information

Abbreviation	Age	Meeting place	Date	Length hours: minutes: seconds
R1	26	Face-to-face	03/04 2020	00:31:44
R2	55	Over the phone	02/04 2020	00:14:14
R3	58	Over the phone	06/04 2020	00:14:00
R4	25	Face-to-face	09/04 2020	00:18:40
R5	27	Face-to-face	22/04 2020	00:15:52
R6	72	Over the phone	23/04 2020	00:13:16

Appendix C

Questionnaire

Hi! We are two master students from Borås University who write our master thesis together with IKEA and more precisely their kitchen department. Is this questionnaire constructed in order to provide us with a better understand for how consumers prepare and search information when purchasing a kitchen, and thereby how they behave in the IKEA store.

Some of the questions is made up in statements where you will mark your answer on a seven degree scale. These questions are followed by open ended questions which require you to provide a shorter written answer. It is important for ut that you answer the questions truthful.

The questionnaire will approximately take four to five minutes to complete.
All your answers is anonymous and will not be used for other purposes than this research.

Is this your first kitchen purchase?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I do not want to answer

I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase

I fully agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *I fully disagree*

I think it is fun to search information prior to performing a complex purchase

I fully agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *I fully disagree*

I have learned from friends and family that it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase

I fully agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *I fully disagree*

I think it is easy to search information prior to performing a complex purchase

I fully agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *I fully disagree*

I think I am good in searching information prior to a complex purchase

I fully agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *I fully disagree*

I know how to search information prior to performing a complex purchase

I fully agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *I fully disagree*

In the following question you have to provide written answers where the answers should be as detailed as possible.

Because you were prepared before your visit to the store today, why did come to the store?

In what way have you prepared prior to visiting the store today?

Where do to prefer to search and gather information prior to a complex purchase? (such as a kitchen purchase).

What type of information do you think is most importance when you preparing prior to a complex purchase?

What is your opinion of this stores' layout? And in what way do think it can be better?

If you got to wish freely, how would the optimal kitchen store be designed?

Gender
▢ Women
▢ Man
▢ Other
▢ I do not want to answer

Age

Living situation
▢ House
▢ Apartment
▢ Rental apartment
▢ Other

Number of children living at home?
▢ 0
▢ 1-2
▢ 3-4
▢ 5 or more

Thanks for your participation!

Appendix D

Interview guide

The interviews should be conducted as a discussion (i.e semistructured), without the interviewer controlling the interview by strictly following a predetermined structure of questions. Due to the respondents possibility to then bring new insights, answers and discuss aspects of the subjects which we might not have thought of. Therefore, is it important not to control the respondent as they might have new thought and inputs to the subject. This makes the use of only predetermined question hard and therefore will themes related to the subject primary be used.

The interview will start with an easy question to gain trust and make the respondent feel comfortable before answering the more ingoing questions. Therefore, is the first question "have you ever bought a kitchen?". If the respondent have not bought a kitchen earlier but are in the process of doing so we will ask them to describe their process as far as they have come. However, all respondents must have bought a kitchen in the last two year or being in the process of doing so. Due to the interview being semi-structured will predetermined questions be made but they must not be followed. Themes are therefore used to ensure the respondent and interview not to deviate from the subject or area of interest and to not control the respondent. The first theme is: *preparation prior to purchase* and the second is *the future role of the physical store.* This interview will be semi-structured and be of explanatory nature as it does not aim to detect new phenomena or behaviour, but to bring a deeper understanding for the what the already gathered material has shown. The interview will complement existing explorative material.

By conducting interviews, we hope to gain greater knowledge in how consumers search and prefer to search information, and why, also what consumers expect and desire from the physical store. We hope to gain a greater understanding for the customer need and what they which the physical store will bring them, which is connected to the theories explaining servicescape and multichannel.

Criteria for respondents

They must have bought a kitchen within the last two years or being in the process of buying a kitchen.

Personal background

Name:
Age:

Have you bought a kitchen during the last two years or are you in the process of doing so?

Theme: preparation prior to purchasing a kitchen

For most people is the purchase of a kitchen something that is done relatively rarely, and many people usually spend much time preparing and conducting the purchase. How did or do you prepare prior to your kitchen purchase? Describe how the process look and how you gain inspiration! (social media, friends/ family, magazines, printed material, Google, particular pages, visiting the physical store, ask craftsman)

Why is that the process? Why did you prepare in that manner?

Would you say that the kitchen purchase is different from other types of purchases, such as home decoration?

Theme: the future role of the physical store

Most people purchasing a kitchen do visit the physical store. why would you visit the physical store when purchasing a kitchen? What information in the physical store can you not gain in any other way?
What do you think is important in the physical store?
Is the service important for you in the physical store? Why so?

Appendix E

Table presenting answers to the TPB related questions

	I think it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase	I think it is fun to search information prior to performing a complex purchase	I have learned from friends and family that it is important to search information prior to performing a complex purchase	I think it is easy to search information prior to performing a complex purchase	I think I am good in searching information prior to a complex purchase	I know how to search information prior to performing a complex purchase
P1	6	6	4	3	5	6
P2	7	6	2	5	7	7
P4	7	7	7	7	7	6
P5	6	6	6	5	4	6
P6	5	3	5	3	6	6
P7	7	6	5	4	4	5
P8	7	5	6	2	5	6
P9	7	4	7	6	6	6
P10	7	6	4	3	7	6
P11	6	6	7	4	5	5
P12	6	7	4	4	6	6
P13	7	7	6	4	5	6
P14	7	6	6	3	6	3
P15	7	7	7	7	7	7
P16	7	7	3	4	7	5
P17	2	3	4	4	1	1
P19	7	5	1	4	7	1
P20	7	5	7	5	6	6
P21	6	7	1	7	7	7
Mean	6,37	5,74	4,84	4,42	5,68	5,32
Median	7	6	5	4	6	6

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