Customers’ buying behaviour toward premium dog food brands
A case study of Bozita Robur

Bachelor Thesis within Business Administration
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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to knowledge of customers’ buying behaviour toward premium dog food by examining their brand associations and how these are shaped by using Bozita Robur as a case study.

Background: Market for dog food has increased heavily during the last decades what made knowledge of underlying driving forces of dog food consumption crucial for dog food producers. Quite peculiar is a phenomenon of purchasing behaviour towards a product purchased but not consumed turning it into a more complex and dynamic object of study. Lack of coherent and conclusive research that offer an understanding of primary behavioural drivers and preferences of Swedish dog food customers makes it a good opportunity to continue investigating the dog food industry.

Method: The study is conducted in the form of a single case study. A survey instrument is used to collect data on awareness and to identify behavioural beliefs and subjective norms of consumers, followed by phone interviews that uncover their attitudes towards dog food brands. Lantmännen Doggy’s brand Bozita Robur is used for this purpose. Data collected is further analyzed with the application of consumer behaviour related theories.

Findings: The study has found that Swedish customers have built a positive image associated with premium dog food brands, where superior quality is the primary association. On the brand schema level, each of the premium dog food brands investigated holds specific associations in consumer minds, whereas the strength of these associations depends much on brand recognition levels. Bozita Robur, though less familiar among respondents, was found to have a positive brand schema and is associated with Swedishness and high quality.

Customers of premium dog food brand actively search for information when making a purchasing decision towards a dog feed brand. In a product, they do value high nutrition content. Dog owners are influenced by various social groups, among which breeders and specialty store staff have the strongest influence when it comes to purchasing advice of the dog food brands.
Definitions

**Agility/Utility dog:** In this study, a dog actively trained within a dog sport. The dog sport could be agility, field search or tracking or similar. The importance of this definition is that these dogs are more active than family dogs.

**Breeder:** A person that breed dogs. One can identify themselves as breeders when they had their first litter of puppies.

**Family dog:** A house dog mainly used as a family member.

**Hunting dog:** A dog whose primary purpose is assisting a human in hunting.

**Normative belief:** An individual's perception about particular behaviour, which is influenced by judgment of significant others.

**Premium dog food:** The upper category of dog food, sold in specialty shops. It contains higher-quality ingredients than feed sold in supermarkets. Made of natural ingredients only; do not contain synthetic preservatives (i.e. ethoxyquin), but use Vitamin C or E instead; do not use artificial flavours or colours.

**Premium dog food brand:** A dog food brand of upper category sold at specialty shops. Such brands include Bozita Robur, Hill's, Eukanuba, Purina Pro Plan, Royal Canin and other natural premium dog food brands.

**Brand schema:** A set of associations that hold information regarding key characteristics of a brand and its place within a product group.

**Show dog:** A dog that enters into dog shows, which might take the form of beauty or talent competitions for dogs.

**Specialty store:** A small store specializing in a certain range of merchandise. In this thesis the authors will refer specialty stores to retail pet shops that sell premium dog food. Generally, specialty shops provide a high service level and expertise within a specific area.
# Table of Contents

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** .................................................................................................................. I  
**ABSTRACT** ..................................................................................................................................... II  
**DEFINITIONS** ................................................................................................................................. III  

## 1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................................. 1  
1.1 CASE STUDY OF BOZITA ROBUR, LANTMÄNNEN DOGGY ............................................................... 3  
1.2 PROBLEM DISCUSSION .................................................................................................................. 4  
1.3 PURPOSE ......................................................................................................................................... 4  
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS ................................................................................................................... 4  
1.5 DELIMITATIONS ............................................................................................................................. 4  

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ...................................................................................................... 5  
2.1 BRAND SCHEMAS .......................................................................................................................... 5  
2.1.1 Expectations ............................................................................................................................... 5  
2.1.2 Cognitive heuristics .................................................................................................................... 6  
2.1.3 Constructs ................................................................................................................................... 6  
2.2 CUSTOMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS .................................................................................. 7  
2.2.1 Need recognition ......................................................................................................................... 7  
2.2.2 Information search ...................................................................................................................... 7  
2.2.3 Evaluating alternatives & Purchase ......................................................................................... 8  
2.2.4 Post purchase evaluation .......................................................................................................... 8  
2.3 OPINION LEADERS ....................................................................................................................... 9  
2.3.1 Two-step flow communication ................................................................................................. 9  
2.3.2 Qualities of opinion leaders ...................................................................................................... 9  
2.4 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR .............................................................................................. 10  
2.4.1 Behavioural Belief ..................................................................................................................... 11  
2.4.2 Normative Belief ....................................................................................................................... 11  
2.4.3 Intention ..................................................................................................................................... 11  

## 3 METHOD ......................................................................................................................................... 12  
3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH ................................................................................................................. 12  
3.1.1 Exploratory study ....................................................................................................................... 12  
3.1.2 Pre-understanding ...................................................................................................................... 13  
3.1.3 Pre-study ................................................................................................................................... 13  
3.2 CASE STUDY APPROACH ............................................................................................................. 13  
3.3 SECONDARY DATA ........................................................................................................................ 13  
3.4 PRIMARY DATA ............................................................................................................................. 14  
3.4.1 Survey ......................................................................................................................................... 14  
3.4.1.1 Data Collection ....................................................................................................................... 14  
3.4.1.2 Survey design .......................................................................................................................... 15  
3.4.1.3 Pilot study ............................................................................................................................... 16  
3.4.1.4 Limitations ............................................................................................................................. 16  
3.4.2 Semi-structured interview by phone ....................................................................................... 16  
3.4.2.1 Data Collection ....................................................................................................................... 16  
3.4.2.2 Semi-structured interview questions .................................................................................... 17  
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS ........................................................................................................................... 19  
3.5.1 Analysing Quantitative Data ..................................................................................................... 19  
3.5.2 Analyzing Qualitative Data ........................................................................................................ 20  
3.6 VALIDITY & RELIABILITY ............................................................................................................... 20  
3.6.1 Reliability .................................................................................................................................... 20  
3.6.2 Internal validity .......................................................................................................................... 21  
3.6.3 External validity ......................................................................................................................... 21  
3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS ...................................................................................................................... 21  

## 4 EMPIRICAL DATA ............................................................................................................................ 23  
4.1 SURVEY .......................................................................................................................................... 23
TABLES

Table 3.1 Schedule for conducting the surveys.................................................................15
Table 3.2 List of conducted telephone interviews............................................................17
Table 3.3 Scoring procedure...........................................................................................19
Table 5.1a Awareness of brands.....................................................................................41
Table 5.1b Purchase experience of brands.....................................................................41
1 Introduction

“An idea is a point of departure and no more. As soon as you elaborate it, it becomes transformed by thought.”

Pablo Picasso

This chapter serves as a preface to the thesis that introduces the reader to the premium dog food industry and the company, Lantmännen Doggy. First, the background is presented with a general description of previous research and reports in the research area. Later, the company as well as its brand Bozita Robur is described. The purpose of the thesis is outlined at the end of this chapter.

Dog owners spend more and more money on something they don’t consume themselves, but instead give to their dogs. The authors find this phenomenon fascinating and aim to increase the knowledge in the area of premium dog food and investigate how customers reason when choosing what brand to purchase.

In Sweden pet food and accessory industry has an annual turnover of ca. 3 billion Swedish kronor (Versfeld, 2005). Cat and dog food accounts for 2, 4 billion Swedish kronor, where 65% comes from grocery stores, with the rest purchased from specialty stores, veterinarians, breeders and pet hospitals. There are 729,000 dogs in Sweden, as compared to 1,256,000 cats and 283,000 horses (Manimalisrapporten, 2009). 12.8% of Swedish households own one or more dogs, with an average of 1.32 dogs per household.

![Figure 1.1 Consumption of pet food and pet accessories by pets (Manimalisrapporten, 2009).](image)

The market for dog food has heavily increased over the last decades (Manimalisrapporten, 2003). In Sweden, sales of dog food reach 130 thousand tonnes each year. Grocery stores account for about 1/3 of all dog food sold (Manimalisrapporten, 2003). This suggests that dog owners turn to other sales channels, such as specialty pet stores, breeders, veterinarians and internet stores.

69% of dog owners are 35 years old and over; the majority of dogs live in owners’ houses (Manimalisrapporten, 2005). Further, it is more common to keep such pets in middle-sized...
and small cities (Manimalisrapporten, 2003). Also, dogs are more common in the countryside than in larger towns. There is also no noticeable difference between income among dog owners and non-dog-owners with dog owners having a slightly higher income than owners of other pets, such as cats, for instance.

The trend is moving towards pets and dogs in particular, being treated as family members (Berndt, Dahlin & Wendt, 2003). An average Swedish dog owner spends a lot of time and money on the dog and cares a lot about it. This tendency has resulted in an increased number of TV shows about dogs, showing that the market for dog food, dog accessories, training courses and activities is greater than ever (Manimalisrapporten, 2009). Various pet food segments and product types aimed at different phases of an animal’s life can be found. In addition some trends in society generally reflected in products, for instance a trend towards extra functional and organic products, can be observed for pet food. Besides, super premium pet food is growing in popularity (Manimalisrapporten, 2009).

People increasingly treat their pet as a real person (Versfeld, 2005). Dogs have gone from being backyard dogs to valued family members. As a result, amounts of money spent on both quality dog food and services for today's pets have risen dramatically. In particular, veterinary visits have become more frequent, what, reflects owners' efforts to improve physical and mental well-being of their pets (Versfeld, 2005). 59% of the owners reportedly celebrate the animal's birthday and 83% see themselves as the animal's mom or dad. The industry has responded to this behaviour by marketing their products as higher value added (Versfeld, 2005).

Michael Beelingham, Chief Executive of the Pet Food Manufacturers Association in the UK states: “Health and nutrition is a key trend. Consumers are increasingly focusing on high quality, premium pet foods for their dogs, cats and other small pets. Health conscious consumers are aware that a good balanced diet can have a major impact on well being and this is equally relevant for their pets.” (Pet Food Manufacturers Association, 2008). Moreover, the association has done surveys demonstrating that 90% of pet owners believe their pets are affected by the food they are fed. Additionally, 92% of pet owners prioritize in giving their animal food of the best quality.

Five largest brands in the specialty stores are Royal Canin, Eukanuba, Hill’s, Bozita Robur and Purina Pro Plan (E. Nilsson, personal communication, 2010-02-03). However, it is hard to estimate the brand sales since there are no common industry reports on sales of dog food in specialty stores. Most of the brands are owned by multinational companies. Bozita Robur owned by Lantmännens Doggy, is the only Swedish brand among the top five and has the largest market share of regular dog food sold in convenience stores (Lantmännens website, 2010). As compared to the other brands, Royal Canin is owned by Mars, Hill’s by Colgate Palmolive, Purina by Nestlé, and Eukanuba by Procter & Gamble.
Premium dog food is mainly sold through specialty stores. There are around 700 specialty stores in Sweden, where 230 of them are a part of 4 different pet store chains (Versfeld, 2005). Granngården is the largest chain with over 124 stores. Smaller chains include Djurmagasinet, Djurens Värld and Arken Zoo with around 30-40 stores each (S. Carlander, brand manager, personal communication, 2010-02-03). Yet the market is becoming more consolidated as many independent specialty pet stores are joining national chains (S. Carlander, personal communication, 2010-02-03).

1.1 Case study of Bozita Robur, Lantmännens Doggy

In order to examine brand associations for premium dog food, a case study was conducted using the brand Bozita Robur. This brand is owned by Lantmännens Doggy AB, Sweden’s largest manufacturer of pet food (E. Nilsson, personal communication, 2010-02-03). Apart from the presence on the Swedish market, Lantmännens Doggy products are exported to the UK, Germany, Finland, Norway and Russia (Lantmännens Annual Report & Sustainability Report, 2008). Founded in 1903, the company maintains an established century-old tradition of animal food production. The company has around 160 employees and an annual turnover of 520 million SEK. Lantmännens Doggy AB belongs to Svenska Lantmännens, one of the largest corporations in food, energy and agricultural sector with over 40,000 Swedish farmers as shareholders.

Lantmännens product portfolio includes Doggy, Doggy Professional, Mjau and Katty, which are primarily distributed via grocery stores. Also, it includes Bozita, Bozita Robur and Bozita Feline, sold to specialty stores and for export market.

Bozita Robur is Lantmännens Doggy’s premium food for dogs and is distributed via specialty stores as well as through Lantmännens own stores (S. Carlander, personal communication, 2010-02-03). The brand was introduced to the market in 1996; during the summer of 2009 there was a major relaunch of the brand with new packaging, new logo, new added values and brand extensions introduced to the market.

Bozita Robur dog food is primarily aimed to be positioned as a Swedish quality brand (S. Carlander, personal communication, 2010-02-03). Its focus lies within usage of Swedish supplies and avoidance of unnecessary additives in production. Within Bozita Robur dry food range there are product variations intended specifically for different life stages of a dog.

At present Lantmännens Doggy is experiencing a lack of information on how customers perceive and value the brand Bozita Robur. Nilsson describes the company’s own perceptions of the brand Bozita Robur as mainly based on past knowledge and the company’s beliefs of what their customers think. Sales have increased since the relaunch, but to maintain this growth, achieve wider brand awareness as well as grasp larger market share, Lantmännens Doggy expresses a need to uncover customers’ opinions and perceptions. In particular the company is interested to investigate the customer feedback about the latest developments, determine the brand awareness level and what values a customer associates the brand Bozita Robur with.
1.2 Problem discussion

Profitability is ultimately determined when a consumer is in a purchasing situation, chooses or chooses not to purchase certain options in the market (Dahlen & Lange, 2003), a statement which can be equally applied to many industries, the dog food industry not being an exception. Thus, the underlying driving forces of dog food consumption are crucial for dog food companies, particularly considering the phenomenon of purchasing behaviour towards a product not consumed by a customer. The lack of coherent and conclusive research of primary behavioural drivers and preferences among Swedish dog food customers makes it a good opportunity to continue investigating the dog food industry (S. Carlander, personal communication, 2010-03-04). Several fundamental questions in the area have no definitive answers today, whereas the existing research results do not appear consolidated.

Yet, for the Swedish market, some research of the dog food industry has been conducted. Most studies focus on nutritional aspect of dog food. Research on consumer opinion about quality dog food is somewhat limited. The study performed by Versfeld (2005) outlines the segmentation of dog food brands in Sweden with a minor focus on premium dog food. Versfeld’s study area of research was limited to the Stockholm area. Another research by Bernroth et al. (2003) explains the psychographics segmentation of dog food customers. They consider the premium dog food market as one of a particular interest due to its significant growth over past few years and its capability to introduce new trends, for instance dog owners to spend more and more money on their pets.

In this study, the authors aim to contribute to the knowledge of how the customer reason when purchasing premium dog food. The lack of sufficient research dedicated to perceptions and associations of premium dog food brands provides an opportunity to explore and examine it in further detail by using the case of Bozita Robur.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to knowledge of customers’ buying behaviour toward premium dog food by examining their brand associations and how these are shaped by using Bozita Robur as a case study.

1.4 Research Questions

➢ What do customers associate with premium dog food brands?

➢ How is the information search within the decision making process made?

➢ What social influences affect the customer?

1.5 Delimitations

This thesis studies the five major premium dog food brands, with a primary focus on the brand Bozita Robur, all of which are sold specifically in specialty stores in Sweden. Therefore, only the Swedish market and customers who buy dog food in specialized stores are investigated. Speciality stores were chosen due to the high possibility of attracting target customer groups – pet owners. The interviews were conducted such as to investigate the area of brand associations and customer reasoning when choosing premium dog food, with a primary focus on the brand Bozita Robur.


2 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the reader is provided with relevant theories related to customer buying behaviour, which will be used as a foundation for the analysis of the empirical data. First, the theory of brand schemas is used to answer the research question of brand associations. Secondly, customer decision making process and how it relates to the question of information search, is described. Further, the theory of opinion leaders is presented in relation to the question of social influences. Lastly, theory of planned behaviour is explained.

2.1 Brand Schemas

According to Aaker (1991), customers use brand associations to process, organise and retrieve information in memory as well as help to ease their purchasing decisions. This processing is done through a framework called brand schemas. These schemas are important to find in order to research customers’ brand associations with premium dog food. Further, an ability to map the customers’ brand associations is essential for this study since it helps to understand customers’ purchasing decisions. Bartlett (1932) was the first psychologist of the modern era to demonstrate the importance of schematic thinking. According to Bartlett’s (1932) initial studies schematic representation is constructed through experience. Their function is to help us deal with the immense amount of stimuli made accessible. Simplified schemas are used to categorise information allowing its faster processing.

According to Taylor, Peplau & Sears (2003) a schema is a structured set of cognition. It also includes knowledge about an object, relationships among various cognitions about it and some specific examples (Taylor et al., 2003). Schemas help people process complex bodies of information by simplifying and organising them. Schemas can also help to remember details, speed up processing time, fill in gaps of knowledge and evaluate new information. Schemas can be formed about particular people, social roles, stereotypes of groups, the self or attitudes about particular objects (Eckes, 1995). The schemas about particular objects, such as brands, are of a particular interest for the purpose of this study. Stagliano and O’Malley (2002) state that brands form a complex structure in each person’s mind, while explaining schemas. A believe that brands are part of a structured set of cognition is further clarified by Barnham (2008), who explains that a customer’s perception of a brand is thus entirely determined by his or her experience of it, such as where they found it, how they use it, what advertising and other marketing activity they have encountered from it and the competitive set in which they place the brand. Taylor et al. (2003) claim that schemas are important because they help people process significant amounts of information swiftly and economically. Low and Lamb (2000) propose that customers have higher developed brand association structures for familiar brands than for less familiar ones. Hence, they are more likely to have multi-dimensional brand associations for familiar brands compared to less- or unfamiliar brands.

2.1.1 Expectations

Another important aspect of schematic processing for a particular object, is that a related inference to the schema occurs automatically (Taylor et al., 2003). For instance, meeting a friendly person may automatically attribute other characteristics associated with friendliness, such as kindness and warmth. This automatic effect is more likely to occur if a schema involves an object which a person has strong emotional concerns about. Schemas also contain expectations for what should happen. These expectations can determine how pleasant or unpleasant people find a par-
ticular situation. When experience meets expectations, a result becomes pleasant. In contrast, violations of expectations are often experienced as unpleasant. Under some circumstances, a schema of an object can change the feeling one has towards that object. Simply thinking of an object with a certain schema in mind can intensify the affect one feels for that object (Taylor et al., 2003). All advantages have accompanying disadvantages that can lead to misinformation and bias. Among the disadvantages is that people can be misled by oversimplification due to schemas (Myers, 2009).

2.1.2 Cognitive heuristics

In close connection to schemas is the use of cognitive heuristics. As described, schemas are a way to manage complex flow of information. Still, a gap exists between a correct schema and information. This gap can be solved by knowing which of the structured schemas in a long-term memory is appropriate for understanding the given information. This complex task is solved through the use of heuristics (Taylor et al., 2003). The availability heuristic is a cognitive rule that judges the likelihood of things in terms of their availability in memory (Myers, 2009). For example, when asked of the likelihood of purchase among two brands people might remember the brand that connects to a schema first without further consideration. If an object comes readily to mind, people presume it to be a commonplace (Myers, 2009).

2.1.3 Constructs

Aaker (1991) defines a brand association as anything linked to a brand in a human memory. Three related constructs that are, by definition, linked in a memory to a brand and which have been researched conceptually and measured empirically are brand image, brand attitude and perceived quality. Low and Lamb (2000) selected these constructs as possible dimensions or indicators of brand associations in their study of a conceptual model. Low and Lamb (2000) choose these three constructs because, firstly, they constitute the three most commonly cited customer brand perceptions in empirical marketing literature. Also, they have established reliable and published measures in the literature. Third, these are the three dimensions discussed frequently in prior conceptual research. Low and Lamb (2000) also conceptualise brand image, brand attitude and perceived quality as possible dimensions of brand associations. A brand image is defined as a complex of reasoned or emotional perceptions customers attach to specific brands (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990) and consists of functional and symbolic brand beliefs (Low & Lamb, 2000). A brand attitude reflects customers' overall evaluation of a brand, either positive or negative (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Last, there is the perceived quality – a customer's judgment about a product's overall excellence (Aaker & Jacobson, 1994). Low and Lamb's research from 2000 describes brand associations as multi-dimensional which include brand image, perceived quality and brand attitude. Low and Lamb (2000) suggest that the best way to begin measuring brand associations is to assess a brand's attitude and perceived quality. They claim that factors related to brand image can be developed later and added to the measurement process to enhance understanding of all the three dimensions of brand associations.

This study is aimed at understanding the customers' associations of premium dog food brands. Therefore Low and Lamb's (2000) suggestion to begin measuring brand's attitude is of a high interest. This paper also aims to investigate the decision making process for purchase decisions, in particular how the information search is done. Since brand schemas seem to hold valuable information in the customer's memory about brands these are also highly relevant within this study. Therefore, this research investigates the customers' brand schemas and then measure the brand's attitude and perceived quality for premium dog food brands to be able to commence understanding the brand association which customers hold in this segment.
2.2 Customer decision making process

There is a general model describing the customer decision making process. This model is particularly suitable for purchasing decisions of products that require a high level of engagement from a customer (Kotler & Armstrong, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the information search area of this theory is found most relevant for answering the research question on how information search in the decision making process occurs. Therefore, throughout the study, there is a purposeful focus on information search.

2.2.1 Need recognition

Need recognition is described as a relationship between the following two kinds of problem states in a customer’s mind: an actual state and a desired state (Schiffman, Lazar & Hansen, 2008). The actual state concerns customers who experience a problem when a product doesn’t bring desired satisfaction, while the desired state includes customers who have a desire for something new. Thus, a need is recognized when there is a gap between a customer’s current situation and a desired state (Kotler & Armstrong, 2002). Purchasing behaviour is a result of a customer’s aspiration to minimize the gap. Marketers usually use different methods to generate a large gap between these two states in the minds of customers.

2.2.2 Information search

When their need is recognized, customers start to search for information to meet this need. In cases where customers’ drive is strong, information is searched externally and more extensively (Bruner & Pozmal, 1988). On the other hand, as noted by some authors including Hupfer and Gardner (1971) and Kassarjian (1978), not all purchasing decisions involve equally the same high level of customer interest and engagement. Hence, it may not be possible to apply these theories to a larger number of decision making situations (cited in Hoyer, 1984).
At the same time, buyers also face a number of decisions on a regular basis during a certain period of time which engage constant information processing (Hoyer, 1984; Hogarth, 1981). Where such decisions take place, customers’ attitudes will be shaped by information obtained in the past, and by their own assessment of their level of brand satisfaction in the post-purchase evaluation stage. That corresponds to the actual purchase of a product. Moreover, customer buying decisions can also be affected by the information received from various marketing channels, such as advertising or coupons. This makes it harder to apply conventional theories on buyer choice that examine ways of conducting information search (Hoyer, 1984).

As noted by Hoyer (1984), people exploit a comparatively limited choice strategy while they make recurring decisions of comparatively low importance to them, or when these require little personal engagement. These strategies or ‘tactics’ are imperatively applied by the customers as these suggest a way of easy and effortless decision making. A customer’s strategy, for instance, can be related to price such as the goal to buy the cheapest brand or buy a brand at a discounted price. Another strategy is performance, as an example could be a decision to purchase a brand which delivers the best results. Affect is also a strategy which applies to a customer who buys the most enjoyable brand. Lastly, goes the normative factor which is based on the fact that some people would buy the same brand as their friend doing (Hoyer, 1984: Deshpande, Rohit & Hoyer, 1983).

2.2.3 Evaluating alternatives & Purchase

The evaluation of alternatives differs largely between product categories (Kotler & Armstrong, 2002). For a better understanding in a certain product category, customers should be studied in how they evaluate it. To efficiently influence customers, knowing the evaluation process is rather helpful. Furthermore, an evoked set, alternatives a customer is familiar with and are available at the time of purchase, tends to be quite small, consisting on average between three and five brands (Schiffman et al., 2008).

2.2.4 Post purchase evaluation

Finally, in the post purchase behaviour, a customer evaluates a purchase. Predominantly in a trial or a first time purchase, Schiffman (2008) explains how a customer evaluates the act compared to earlier expectations. An outcome of the evaluation is either the performance that matches expectations, that performance which exceeds expectations or that the performance below expectations. The latter two lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction depending if the product is better than the expectation or not.

According to Hoyer (1984), as an outcome of brand evaluation, a customer may form a preference towards a particular brand. Brand evaluation ensues in the process of purchasing of a product in case a customer is satisfied or not satisfied with the former. Such situation does not require a high level of a customer’s cognitive operation or involvement, since a subjective and straightforward conclusion developed in the long run becomes a basis for decision making (Hoyer, 1984).

Further, Hoyer (1984) complements this model by the following well-known buyer behaviour concepts: habitual purchase and brand loyalty. As such, applicable for habitual purchase would be a continuously applied approach of purchasing exactly the same brand over and over again. What was interestingly noted by other researchers (Hoyer, 1984: Jacoby & Kyner, 1973) is that a satisfactory brand evaluation would not essentially precede a habitual purchase. Another buyer behaviour conception, brand loyalty applies to a situation when a customer favours a particular brand among others. Apparently, such loyalty occurs when a chosen brand delivers a desired or expected level of performance in the best possible way among others. Such findings lead researchers to a conclusion that purchasing decisions of customers that act based on a habit or on their
established brand loyalty have distant incentives which yet lead to a similar behaviour (Hoyer, 1984).

2.3 Opinion leaders

As buying behaviour of customers of premium dog food is investigated throughout the study, an emphasis is put on one form of social influence on buying behaviour, that of an opinion leader. Rogers and Cartano (1962) define opinion leaders as "individuals who exert an unequal amount of influence on the decisions of others" (cited in Flynn, Goldsmith & Eastman, 1996). Consequently, these individuals are important communicators of marketing information and could be considered by companies, such as premium dog food manufacturers, in their efforts to promote a product and deliver a particular marketing message to their target customer group (Chaney, 2001).

Flynn et al. (1996) argue that customers are more likely to rely on others’ judgment, rather than appeal to such established marketing activities as advertising. Also, they appeal to interpersonal contacts in order to minimise a possibility of making a wrong choice as well as to form their brand preferences. For the purpose of answering the third research question, while investigating social influences on customers’ preferences as to purchase of premium dog food, the paper aims to estimate a role of opinion leaders in shaping beliefs and affecting purchasing decisions of customers.

2.3.1 Two-step flow communication

The concept of opinion leadership derives from the two-step flow of communication theory pioneered in 1955 by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955/2005). It shows the way information and influence gained from media is transferred by opinion leaders through interpersonal communication channels to general public. Particularly the theory stresses an importance of interpersonal relations within social networks, or so called “primary groups”, in shaping opinions, attitudes and behaviours of such influencers in the process of mass communication (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955/2005). Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) describe a primary group as a system of interpersonal relations among friends, colleagues, members of the family, neighbours, whose particular feature is consistent communication (cited in Flynn et al., 1996).

According to the two-step flow theory, information in the media is captured by opinion leaders, they in turn deliver it to the supporters – people that respect their opinions, strive for social affirmation and guidance of the influential (Weimann, 1982).

It should be noted that two-step flow of communication theory, although mostly unchanged since 1955, still has a number of limitations. According to Weimann (1982), these are, for instance, overlooking of a direct flow of communication from media to customers, or neglecting some of the stages - like awareness, interest formation and evaluation - in the distribution process of communication.

2.3.2 Qualities of opinion leaders

Opinion leaders tend to have the two qualities. First, they are well-informed about the subject in question and connect to their field of expertise via numerous channels. Next, people view opinion leaders as trustworthy and appreciate their efforts to use their knowledge to help, rather than manipulate others (Patterson, Grenny, Maxfield, McMillan & Switzler, 2007). As such, opinion leaders in their networks can gain predominantly high levels of status or authority with others. These influencers create primary groups, whose names are commonly mentioned and oftentimes become part of their followers’ stories, which is due to a large extent to their achieved legitimacy,
yet not as much because of their actual authority (Smith, 2005; Kleiner, 2003).

It is proper to suggest that such groups of opinion leaders do exist within the dog food industry. The thesis intends to identify these groups and examine the level of influence each of them has, if any.

These influencers obtain superior social status due to their outstanding meta-skills, including cognitive skills, emotional resilience, personal drive and knowledge of the self (Smith, 2005). According to these researchers, when meta-skills are developed to a high extent, a person consequently comes to possess enhanced interpersonal influencing abilities, which in turn makes opinion leaders more perceptive, insightful and acute allowing them to understand and judge different multifaceted issues better.

2.4 Theory of Planned Behaviour

To answer the research questions about associations to brand and social influences, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is used. It gives an opportunity to measure normative as well as behavioural beliefs of a sample with a help of a survey. These normative beliefs aid the analysis on the social influences when a behavioural belief helps in the analysis about brand association.

The theory of planned behaviour can be summarised according Ajzen’s review of attitude studies and their own research as seen in Figure 2.2 below (Ajzen, 2002). The theory indicates how underlying causes affect human intentions and decisions (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) explains how a behaviour is best built upon the intentions to perform the act. This is true in all cases where the behaviour is planned. That is, when the customer have the time to think for a moment and consider the pros and cons against each other. However, it is not completely clear that an intention will lead to an action. Intentions may be hindered by the perceived lack of control. An intention to perform an act is best built upon three factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived control. This study purposefully concentrates on the part of the model measuring behavioural and normative belief since they are the most suitable for answering the research questions of social influences and brand associations. With the TPB model, the strength of customers’ beliefs, whether positive or negative, can be measured.

![Figure 2.2 Theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2002).](image-url)
2.4.1 Behavioural Belief

The attitude toward the behaviour is the positive or negative approach to performing a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Further, to measure attitudes, beliefs of an individual are investigated and the result may be an outcome of the behaviour. Further on, a behaviour can have both positive and negative consequences.

2.4.2 Normative Belief

A subjective norm represents the drive of an individual to please others (Ajzen, 1991). It is also an individual's perception of what other people want him or her to do. Ajzen (1991) goes on describing that it is the individual's perception of what is expected of the individual that affects behavioural outcome. If the behaviour is appreciated by significant others, it is a higher possibility for the individual to perform the behaviour. On the other hand, a behaviour condemned by significant others will decrease the possibility of that behaviour for the individual (Armitage & Con- nor, 2001).

2.4.3 Intention

An intention is an indication of whether a person will express a certain type of behaviour. Further, Ajzen (1991) describes in his research how it captures the motivational factors that influence behaviour and indicates how much effort would be put to perform the behaviour. The stronger the intention, the higher the possibility that the behaviour will be executed. Still, intentions cannot always predict an actual behaviour because of circumstantial limitations. Also, low behavioural control can have an effect on the possibility to perform this behaviour (Armitage & Con- nor, 2001). The attitude toward the behaviour, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms influence the intention in different extents. In some situations the subjective might be a main factor while in other situations, attitudes might be more decisive (Ajzen, 1991).

For the purpose of market research and with the aim of obtaining an understanding of customers’ reasoning and associations, the theory of planned behaviour is used as a tool to measure how strong, positive or negative the associations of premium dog food brands are; as well how strong, positive or negative the social pressure is to consume premium dog food. Further, the theory is used in designing questions in the survey in the following areas: attitude toward the behaviour, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms.
3 Method

In this chapter, an approached study method is presented. Further, practical process of the research process are described and arguments on the applied method are given. At the end of this chapter a discussion of the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the chosen method take place.

3.1 Research Approach

To answer the exploratory nature of the purpose, a mixed method strategy has been chosen to combine the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2008). By using a mixed method, this study uses words and narrative in giving a meaning to the numbers, and vice versa (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Furthermore, it may give an insight that could otherwise have been missed with the use of only one method. Conversely, mixed research method is more time consuming and required the researchers to learn two approaches in one paper.

As a mixed method, a pragmatic approach was taken. Crewell (2008) explains how pragmatists view the world in different dimensions rather than looking at it as a separate unit. The authors see this as an advantage since it increases the relevance of the report from more than one viewpoint. However, a weakness with pragmatic research is that it may promote incremental change instead of a more fundamental change in society (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In addition, Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (1994) explain how some researchers discard pragmatism since it fails logically with an explanation of philosophical disputes. Still, the authors aim to reach a practical solution which is beneficial with a pragmatic approach.

The main difference between the methods is that the qualitative approach uses words to analyse the data while the quantitative approach uses numbers (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). Qualitative method is essential to find the underlying perceptions and associations of the brands. Also, it is designed to uncover the psychology of the customer (Barnham, 2008). It was also of high interest to further ask why the customer is buying a particular brand of premium dog food. As stated by Ruyter and Scholl (1998), qualitative research offers an insight into questions that address the way people think about certain subject and why they think that. Also, by using qualitative research, the study profited from obtaining a description of the respondent’s personal experience and allowed to gain an insider’s viewpoint. The usefulness of qualitative research is determined by what is stated and how it is stated rather than how many that say something (Ruyter & Scholl, 1998). Nevertheless, it doesn’t answer questions like how many people share a certain opinion. Further, knowledge produced might not be generalised and it could lower the credibility (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Quantitative method is necessary in order to provide some generalisation. This study involves a structured survey tested on a sample of 142 respondents. The advantages of a quantitative research is that data can be analysed easier (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Still, with only quantitative data, conclusions could be too abstract or general to be applied in a specific context. By using mixed methods, the risk is mitigated.

3.1.1 Exploratory study

There are three main types of studies, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. An exploratory study aims to explore what’s going on by looking after new insights as well as asking questions to
investigate a phenomenon from a new perspective (Robson, 2002; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). The findings of an exploratory study can often serve as a background for managerial implications (Smith & Albaum, 2005). A descriptive study refers to describe profiles of events, persons or situations. It could be a continuation of exploratory research. Last, explanatory research refers to explaining relationships between different variables. This research can mainly be seen as an exploratory research, since the purpose of this study is to get a deeper insight into the subject of brand associations and buying behavioural patterns of the purchasers of premium dog food, as well as estimate the influences affecting customers’ behaviour.

3.1.2 Pre-understanding

Pre-understanding of the subject may cause some impact on the research and prevent the study from being completely objective. To allow readers to form their own view whether the pre-understanding of the authors influenced the work, the previous experience of the authors in the area is briefly explained. One of the authors has a genuine interest in dogs and everything related to them. This author has had an interest in the latest news in the dog world for a long time, and has previously worked at a dog food company. The two other authors have no direct connection to either dogs or dog food. Nevertheless, neither of the authors has a dog at the moment, nor buys dog food on a regular basis.

3.1.3 Pre-study

In order to develop a research plan that would yield relevant findings, a large body of previous research from different sources was digested. Conversation with the Brand Manager and the Brand & Market Assistant at Lantmännen Doggy took place face-to-face and via e-mail. They provided information about the dog food industry, primary information about retail stores and the brand which is studied in this paper. This has been helpful in filling the knowledge gap about the dog food industry and built the authors’ understanding on where target customers can be found. Journal articles, books as well as previous bachelor and master thesises created a picture of previous research on the subject.

3.2 Case Study approach

Upon defining the context of the premium dog food industry, an interest was in deeper qualitative research of customer buying behaviour. A case study research approach was chosen as it allows for a more detailed study of the customers’ brand associations. Further, it is suitable when a problem ought to be understood (Yin, 2003). This study is formatted in the form of an instrumental case study, where the case serves as a facilitator to obtain an understanding of a larger issue, and provides for an extensive and more focused analysis (Grünbaum, 2007). The study of customers’ buying behaviour toward premium dog food brands in Sweden was based on a case of a Swedish premium dog food brand, Bozita Robur, owned by Lantmännen Doggy AB. The company, Lantmännen Doggy was chosen for being a large and well-established Swedish dog food producer, which would enable us to get direct and better access to the company. Their brand Bozita Robur aims to position itself as a Swedish premium dog food brand sold in the speciality stores in Sweden. According to Patton (2002), a single case study can lead to an in depth understanding from where a great deal can be learnt about the issues central to the purpose. The unit of analysis consists of the customers of premium dog food in Sweden (cited in Grünbaum, 2007).

3.3 Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected as a base for the background, problem discussion and theoretical framework. It was gathered mainly from academic journals and articles as well as text books.
The academic journals and articles were assembled through databases, such as Google Scholar, Diva and Emerald. Textbooks were found in the University Library of Jönköping, University Library of St. Gallen as well as the University Library of Gothenburg. The major advantages of using secondary data are convenience, low cost and accessibility (Smith & Albaum, 2005). In contrast, it might be outdated or used for other purposes.

### 3.4 Primary Data

#### 3.4.1 Survey

The survey was designed to help answer the purpose and research questions of this thesis. Also, it was based on the pre-study conducted with the brand manager of Bozita Robur, Susanna Carlander. Further, the survey contained a total of twenty questions which took approximately two minutes to answer. The questions in the survey were based on the theoretical framework provided in relation to purpose and research questions. The main theory used to construct the survey was the theory of planned behaviour. With the survey, this study aims to address behavioural beliefs, attitudes toward the behaviour, normative beliefs as well as the subjective norms with the help of a framework and guidance made by Ajzen (2002). Also, demographical as well as questions concerning awareness and experience of the estimated five largest premium dog food brands were included. Several theories can be applied to more than one question in the survey, where a query can measure more than one specific aspect.

#### 3.4.1.1 Data Collection

The authors conducted the research in speciality stores. Scholl (2009) argues that it is the job of an interviewer to accommodate for an open, safe atmosphere where people can make themselves vulnerable and where they can share more about themselves than they would normally do in social situations. The authors argue that speciality stores have environments that customers are familiar with. Thus, environment of speciality stores provides a safe atmosphere for respondents.

Customers were assumed to be unaware of the research while they decided to enter the store. Hence, a customer entered a store with a purpose other than to participate in a research. Therefore, it was assumed that the respondent would have a limited time and interest to respond to the survey. Thus, the survey was aimed to be fairly easy and quick to respond to. The survey consisted of questions relevant for quantitative research base of the study.

Focus was on customers purchasing premium dog food brands in speciality stores in Sweden since most of the premium dog food is sold in speciality stores. Although, there are some exceptions as the feed is also sold at veterinary clinics, trade shows, by breeders and over the internet. Still, the vast majority is sold through speciality stores (Nilsson, E. Personal communication, 2010-02-03). Going to dog parks or other popular places of dog owners was considered, but since there is only a minority of dog owner purchasing premium dog food, the authors argue that it is easier and more efficient to meet them in speciality stores.

There are around 700 of speciality stores in Sweden. Of those, 230 of them are part of 4 different pet store chains (Versfeld, 2005). Due to economic and time restraints, feasibility was a criterion for choosing stores. The feasibility in fieldwork have been recognized by Buchanan, Boddy and McCalman (1988) who state that fieldwork is permeated with the conflict between what is theoretically desirable and what is practically possible. Buchanan et al. (1988) concludes by saying that in this conflict between the desirable and the possible, the possible always wins. Stores were chosen on the route between Gothenburg and Stockholm at different chains in different towns on different days. In Table 3.1, date, place and time are shown for every store visited. In total, 142
surveys were conducted.

Table 3.1 Schedule for conducting the surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 6, 2010</td>
<td>Huveröds, Hisings Backa</td>
<td>13.00-17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7, 2010</td>
<td>Zoo Center Bäckebol, Göteborg</td>
<td>12.00-17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10, 2010</td>
<td>Granngården, Jönköping</td>
<td>10.30-13.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10, 2010</td>
<td>Djurmagazinet, Jönköping</td>
<td>10.30-13.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11, 2010</td>
<td>Djurmagazinet, Norrköping</td>
<td>11.00-14.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12, 2010</td>
<td>Djurkompaniet, Nyköping</td>
<td>11.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 13, 2010</td>
<td>Bromma Zoomarknad, Stockholm</td>
<td>12.00-15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 13, 2010</td>
<td>Arken Zoo, Vällingby</td>
<td>11.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To create an environment where a respondent would feel encouraged to be open and honest, as explained by Scholl (2009), the authors used tools to best get the respondent to feel safe. A relaxed and natural environment was built with a nice Table stand at the entrance of the store. The interviewer was dressed casually to reflect the typical customer. Also, the authors aimed to mirror forms of behaviour whereby the respondent could feel accepted as well as used language that the respondent could easily understand.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explains the importance of the interviewer’s presentational self since this can put an impression on the respondents as well as has a great influence on the success or failure of a study. During the survey collection the researchers presented themselves as representatives from an academic study within market research, both to a respondent as well as to a manager and employees at the specialty store. This ensured that the respondents didn’t get the impression that the interviewer would favour a specific brand.

3.4.1.2 Survey design

Since the analysis and conclusions are partly based on a survey, its design is of high significance. With this in mind, the survey was carefully designed in order to obtain a high answer ratio. To reduce the risk of a low number of respondents, its design was made in an easily understandable way with a limited number of questions in order for a respondent to lose attention (Bryman, 2002). Effort was put on the layout to be simple and clear, so that a respondent wouldn’t accidentally skip a question. Bryman (2002) argues not to have too many open questions in the survey when respondents prefer not to formulate long answers; instead a range of pre-determined alternatives is favourable. Therefore, open questions were avoided. To navigate in an easy way, clear instructions on what questions they would answer and how many of the answering alternatives the respondent was allowed to answer were provided. In this way, the study limits the risk of excluding questions due to wrong number of answers selected (Bryman, 2002).

In the initial stage of the survey, questions of an easier kind were asked. The initial questions considered the background variables such as gender and age and pictures of premium dog food brands that the respondents were asked questions about. Age group ranges were based on the age groups used by Manimalisrapporten, a Swedish industry report published every few years. These questions made the survey look easy and fast to fulfil, which is assumed to increase the willingness-to-respond. Later the respondents were led in to more detailed questions about the various
theoretical themes. Further on, as the survey ended with the request to agree on further questions by phone, the researchers assumed that willingness-to-respond with a phone number would increase with a reward. Therefore, it was decided to give all people who completed a phone interview a coupon of premium dog food. A respondent was informed of the reward at the time of the survey, yet not for which brand it is valid, not to affect the result. As Scholl (2009) explains that respondents in any research have a wish to please the interviewer and give misleading answers according to this.

3.4.1.3 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted at a speciality store in Alingsås to ensure that all questions were well-worded and easy to understand (Bryman, 2002). After the pilot study, certain questions were found to be difficultly formulated and that some should be adjusted. In the final sample, the pilot study is not included. Another purpose of the pilot study was to see how many of the respondents that would agree to participate in a more in depth phone interview. The survey was tested on 15 people, of which 9 accepted to be a part of the phone interview and resulting in a ratio of 60%. Still, the authors’ question that all respondents that agree to being called will actually respond to the qualitative interview when the authors actually call them. As Ajzen (1991) explains, a certain intention does not lead to a certain outcome.

3.4.1.4 Limitations

When all questions and answers are determined beforehand, the likelihood for discoveries decreases (Gillham, 2007). In the survey, the authors only had close-ended questions where the respondents were guided in the selection of answers. Still, by combining the survey with the semi-structured interview questions, the study is strengthened and possibilities of new discoveries arise.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interview by phone

There are three main forms of in depth interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Whereas structured interviews contain standardised questions predetermined by the interviewer, they are primarily used in quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2009). Since structured questions are used in the quantitative data, the authors aim for broader and more open questions in the telephone interviews. Unstructured interviews often contain open-ended questions and provide rather a discussion on a selected by and well-researched by an interviewer topic (Saunders et al., 2009). Semi-structured interviews are according to Rubin and Babbie (2009) a blend of structured and unstructured and this interview type corresponds to the chosen exploratory research design of this study. According to Saunders et al., with the semi-structured method open-ended questions can be asked providing for more flexibility and giving a feeling of a conversation. That allows adapting to the interviewee, while researching a topic of interest from a required angle (Saunders et al., 2009). This possibility to speak in detail with more freedom can also allow for more validity of a respondent’s words. Still though, it is hard to identify whether the respondent is not telling the truth, which may question the validity of the answers obtained.

3.4.2.1 Data Collection

The selection of people to call for the semi-structured interview was determined on two criteria. The first criteria were that they in the survey have marked that they recognised or have used the Bozita Robur. Further, they were chosen after the amount of brands they recognised and had experience of. Gender, age, hometown etc. was not in consideration when making the choice, solely the awareness and experience of the brands. 15 respondents were called of where 3 didn’t answer, 1 did not have the time at the moment of calling and 11 answered. In Table 3.2 are the
hometown and gender of interviewee as well as date and length of interview is described.

### Table 3.2 List of conducted telephone interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Surte</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>16 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Järfälla</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>12 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nävekvarn</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>14 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Vaggeryd</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>17 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Huskvarna</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>13 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Norrköping</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jönköping</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nyköping</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Huskvarna</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>16 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hisingskärra</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Jönköping</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>April 14, 2010</td>
<td>16 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4.2.2 Semi-structured interview questions

Questions were to some extent based on the answers obtained from the survey. In the qualitative research the authors emphasised Bozita Robur brand to a larger extent than in the survey.

The value of any market research stands and falls with the willingness of respondents to give clear and honest answers (Scholl, 2009). It is difficult to be sure those respondents are honest about them or indeed have any understanding of their own feelings and thoughts. When conducting the telephone interviews, the theory of five process of response was used to increase the possibility of honest answers, thereby also increasing the trustworthiness. Scholl (2009) places human five processes of distortion on a two-dimensional chart, as seen in Figure 3.1. The horizontal axis specifies the extent to which distortion is mainly oriented towards oneself, the internal versus external view, which means factors in the response that come from the person in itself or the environment around. The vertical axis expresses the extent to which this distort is either cognitive or emotional.
Figure 3.1 Five processes of response (Scholl, 2009).

Forgetting can be seen as a form of a “natural corrosion of knowledge” (Scholl, 2009). People sometimes need quite a lot of time to remember details of experiences which might form the basis of their views, even in cases where those experiences were extremely positive or negative. Therefore, it is sometimes needed for the interviewer to ask the same question several times. Hence, several of the questions in the semi-structured interview can be perceived as very similar. Furthermore, suppression is the act of revising memories (Scholl, 2009). Suppression is seen as something that is done by the conscious mind, not the subconscious. This was taken in consideration when conducting the phone-interviews. Also, Scholl (2009) describes the way justification shows how the “why” questions tend to elicit reasoned statements in which a respondent tries to establish clear and logical links between their attitudes and behaviour.

Verbalisation is a necessary act while asked to put the attitudes into own words (Scholl, 2009). Moreover, retrieval and expression are two important filters to the selection of the relevant aspects and the wording of the reply. Accidental external circumstances can affect the retrieval and formulation processes and thus also the attitude expressed in the interview. The effect of external circumstances also depends on the strength of an attitude itself, time available to answer a question and an extent to which a respondent is able to put their thoughts into words (Scholl, 2009). By letting a respondent choose the time for interview, by choosing the most preferable time in the survey, as well as giving time for thought before giving a response during the interview, the affect of external circumstances was minimized. Open questions were used as well as moments of silence which according to Scholl (2009) give birth of new ideas. Also, answers were sometimes verified to make sure a respondent had been properly interpreted (Scholl, 2009). An example can be: “So if I understand you correctly, you see this brand as…” Also, this technique helped to avoid misunderstandings in telephone interviews.

Questions were built on the survey were the respondent where asked to mark the brand they recognised as well as the brands they had ever purchased. The survey scope is limited to the five main brands of premium dog food but the first question during the interview ask the respondents to retrieve any brand of dog food that they hold in their memory. This first question aids in the analysis of how well the brand schemas of the five premium dog food brands used in the survey were set among the respondents in the interviews. Additional questions were built in the similar way with the goal to guide analysis of the answers with help of the brand schema theory. Additional questions in the interview were structured with the purpose to be analysed according to the
theories presented in the theoretical framework. Hence some of the questions had the same purpose as a previous one but were asked in order to ensure the trustworthiness of a previous answer and avoid bias in communication between the respondents and the interviewer. Questions for the semi-structured telephone interview are found in Appendices 3 and 4.

3.5 Data analysis

3.5.1 Analysing Quantitative Data

When raw data from the survey was collected, the authors began to process the information. The data was summarised in the data program Excel, where tables were created showing different proportions and the results. Tabulation is a common method that is suitable to describe data in quantitative studies (Bradley, 2007). For proportions, pie charts were used, and bar charts were used to show values extracted. The results were sorted by after the survey with a short descriptive text about what it shows. The authors also chose to see how the answers differed among various categories such as gender, age, number of dogs, type of dog and if they were breeders. Then, the authors used the theories presented in theoretical the framework section to analyse the respondents’ answers and to gain a deeper understanding of the subject. For in-depth explanation of behavioural and normative beliefs, qualitative data has been added and analysed.

Analysis of survey was influenced by the guide, “Constructing surveys based on the theory of planned behaviour” (Francis, Eccles, Jonston, Walker, Grimshaw, Foy, Kaner, Smith & Bonetti, 2004). Since the theory of planned behaviour is an extension of the theory of reasoned action, not all measures were investigated and instead the authors chose to put focus on the analysis on the subjective norm as well as behavioural beliefs.

In the survey, the second half was organised to fit the theory of planned behaviour. 14 questions were divided into 4 subgroups to measure behavioural beliefs, outcome evaluation, normative beliefs and motivation to comply separately. The respondents gave an answer between 1 and 7; and the result of these is found in Appendix 4.

The outcome evaluation score and the motivation to comply score were changed to a value from -3 to 3 as suggested by Francis et al. (2004) and presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Scoring procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original score: Unlikely/Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Likely/Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Became</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>Likely/Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To put the results into the theory of planned behaviour format, each of the questions measuring a behavioural belief was multiplied with the new value of the score of the related outcome evaluation question. Thus, a new variable appeared representing a weighted score for each of the behavioural belief questions. Similarly, each normative belief was multiplied with the new value of the score of the related motivation to comply a question. Later, the weighted beliefs were summed up to create a composite score for each the behavioural and normative belief. The multiplication was made separately for every respondent and not on the average. The end result of the behavioural and normative belief is an average of each of the respondents’ individual result. Simplified calculations are shown in Appendix 5.

To confirm the validity of the indirect measures, a series of simple bivariate correlations between
direct and indirect measures of the same construct was calculated, all seen in Appendix 8. Low correlations would likely be a result of indirect measures that were poorly constructed or did not adequately cover the breadth of the measured construct. The correlations in this study were moderate to high, positive, which indicated that the variables should be kept. The correlations in this study are positive.

3.5.2 Analyzing Qualitative Data

When analysing the semi-structured interviews, the authors chose to focus on certain aspects. Frequency and strong emotion was in focal point where greater weight was put on common comments and comments expressed with passion, strong emotions or intensity. An essential remark can be expressed by a single person once (Kreuger & Caset, 2000). Therefore, comments with more information and specifics were given more attention. Also, a statement mentioned once by numerous respondents was prioritised of statements mentioned a lot by the same respondent. An elicitation technique was used to analyse the person’s schemas towards Bozita Robur. Elicitation techniques and analysis techniques are frequently used in combination in techniques such as the mind mapping whereby respondents are asked which associations they have in relation to a brand or product (Ruyter and Scholl, 1998). The elicitation technique were used to analysis how the brand association were constructed in the respondents memory, to be able to answer the research question on with what the customers associate the premium dog food brands. Further, all the theories in the theoretical framework were used in the analysis of the qualitative data.

Emphasis was put into answering the research questions of regarding brand associations, social influences and information search. To analyze the information search, questions were asked and gave a base for the analysis. The authors also look at how answers are related to each other. Concerning social influences, answers of the interviews touched upon potential social groups, therefore categories of what social groups were mentioned and how often were emphasized.

3.6 Validity & Reliability

3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability is referred to whether the same results would be achieved if the investigation were made by other researchers, given the same conditions (Saunders et al., 2003). A high reliability thus implies that the compiled results can be considered general. Since the study uses a mixed method, the qualitative part of the results will inevitably be coloured by subjective values, something that is difficult to avoid with the implementation of qualitative research and usually affect the reliability negatively.

As explained by Saunders et al. (2007), there are four weak points of reliability. The first risk is when a day of a week might affect the result; a person taking the survey on a Monday might answer differently in relation to a person taking the survey on a Saturday. The second risk is observer bias, i.e. the analysis of data can vary among researchers. The third risk is errors made by the observers and refers to the possibility of interviewers’ expressing questions in different ways. Lastly, the fourth risk is that respondents may not give an honest answer on a particular topic; instead they give a respond that will please an interviewer.

Still, the authors assess the survey to be reliable. The results of the survey vary little depending on a geographic area as well as a day of a week. Also, the same interviewer arranged all the semi-structured interviews in a coherent way. Last, the interviewees were not informed of the study’s interest in Bozita Robur brand to let the respondent talk as freely as possible rather than in a pleasing manner. Thus, the reliability of the study can be evaluated as high as the interviews
can be done again if necessary.

Collected from library databases, secondary data consists of academic article and books. The reliability of these sources is high since articles, reports and books are reviewed and cleared for publication.

3.6.2 Internal validity

Quantitative validity refers to whether the variables found are true relationships (Saunders et al., 2003). Further, internal validity looks at to what extent the difference in dependent variables is actually a result of independent variables.

Maturation is a threat to validity and refers to the change of participants (Saunders et al., 2003). Since the interviews were conducted during the same week, the risk is limited.

History is a threat that refers to the possibility of changing circumstances (Saunders et al., 2003). No big news or reports were released during the time of interview collection. Finally, bias is avoided by asking all people entering the store to answer the survey. At some points, when many people entered the specialty store at once, some subconscious selection could have been made. However, rush hours did occur only for short periods.

Results of this study are well released from an instrumentation threat, which would otherwise occur should the observers or measurement instruments change (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2007). Yet, both the interviewers and questions asked were the same throughout the whole data collection process, whilst increasing the study’s validity.

Deferential selection of subjects added to testing groups, another threat to internal validity (Wrenn, 2007), that results from a primary diversity of the former is practically reduced due to a non-biased selection of participants based on their free will to participate in the survey.

3.6.3 External validity

Nachimas (1996) describes the generalizability as an external validity which identifies the level of generalizability of research findings and how it can be applied in further research. Nachimas (1996) further explains that the generalizability of a study can be certain if a probability method is used, as it guarantees the representation of the sample. Therefore, probability method was used for choosing respondents for the survey and the results of the survey can be generalised. Customers in specialty stores in various cities were chosen. The purpose of this research was partly to generalise, even if not the complete population.

Saunders et al. (2003) express some concerns about the generalizability of findings obtained from qualitative research due to non-representativeness and few numbers of interviewees. However, a well-conducted case study might be more useful (Bryman, 1988: Saunders et al., 2003). Thus, the research has an adequate level of generalizability with using a survey in combination with semi-structured interviews.

3.7 Trustworthiness

The criteria for evaluating trustworthiness are credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). Credibility is established when people recognise the truth in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this thesis, methodological triangulation has been applied by combining semi-structured interviews with a survey to strengthen the credibility of the results (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). The methods complement each other by confirming the results from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective. The authors designed the survey care-
fully to avoid bias, sensitive issues or personal information. The interviews were conducted by using the five processes to response model developed by Scholl (2009), who claims that this model would help the respondents to feel comfortable and willing to answer the questions correctly.

Dependability is closely linked to credibility and refers to the reliability as a result of the truthfulness (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). Different methodological approaches of the study were considered and some were changed during the process. The authors reoriented the approach for the empirical part where certain aspects, such as the number of respondents and the length of interviews, were modified along the process. Mainly, the changes had two sources and included discussions with other researchers and systematic combination of empirical data with the theoretical perspective. It was also questioned if the dependability of the research process could have been improved. The authors argue that it is favourable that not every idea and input during the process were considered. To summarize, by explicitly describing the process, the authors has improved their awareness of dependability and provided the reader with a possibility to audit the research process.

Another aspect to evaluate the trustworthiness is conformability. It refers to how well the different parts of the report are related (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, the internal coherence could be a possible measure of conformability. The interpretations in the analysis and discussion are based on the empirical data and have been applied by the specific theories described. When developing the analysis, much effort was put into revealing patterns found within the empirical material to get a better understanding while using the focal resource. The use of theoretical models as well as comments on the text from other researchers, help the reader to verify the findings of this study. It reduces the risk of the study being solely a result of the authors’ subjective opinion. Also, all interviews were recorded by the authors. Two of the authors listened to the recordings separately to avoid subjective perspective or interpretation.

Last, transferability is a criteria used to determine the possibilities of applying this case study in a different context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The authors have provided extensive descriptive data of the methodology of this study which will enable other researchers to perform similar studies in other contexts. Therefore, the study can be seen as transferable.
4 Empirical data

In this chapter, empirical findings from the survey and the semi-structured interview questions are presented. The chapter is divided between quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data is presented according to the theory of planned behaviour, as further described in Appendices 6 & 7. Presentation of qualitative data is presented thematically.

Two data collection methods were used to gather the empirical data, survey and semi-structured telephone interviews. The survey included responses from 142 customers of premium dog food in 8 different speciality stores. Complementary semi-structured telephone questions included 11 respondents chosen by the criteria of how many brands they bought and recognised. The empirical data is organised by first presenting the results of the survey to after be followed by the semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data has been analysed though statistical methods, such as a confidence interval and a correlation analysis.

4.1 Survey

4.1.1 Demographics of respondents

Figures 4.1a, 4.1b Age groups and gender of respondents.

Through one of the first questions put up in the survey, the authors divided respond into six age groups (Appendix 9). With this question the authors aimed to obtain a better image of what age category constitutes the largest customer group of premium dog food in Swedish specialty stores. For obtained results please, refer to Figure 4.1a. The second reason was that the authors considered this knowledge as useful for analysis of the behavioural trends among the customers of premium dog food – by investigating whether a significant difference exists between the age groups of the customers of the studied premium dog food brand, Bozita Robur.

The question on identifying a respondent’s gender was asked in order to investigate who is the customer of dog food in a specialty store in Sweden. Out of 142 respondents asked randomly to answer the survey in the specialty stores, 74.6% were females, as opposed to only 25.4% males (Figure 4.1b).
The majority, almost 70% of the respondents to the survey was owners of a single dog in the household (Figure 4.2a).

In a question asking to classify the type of dog every respondent was offered four options to choose from. These were: a family dog, a show dog, a hunt dog and an agility dog. The results of the survey are presented in Figure 4.2b show that the absolute majority, over 90% of the participants in the survey are owners of a family dog, followed by ca. 15% of the owners of an agility dog, ca. 12% owners of a show dog and 6.4% of the respondents with a dog for hunting.

### 4.1.2 Brands recognized

The survey contained a question aimed to find out level of awareness of Bozita Robur brand, in comparison to other major brands of premium dog food available on the Swedish market. This was done by asking a question which did not provide a respondent with a direct hint which brand the researcher was interested in. The respondents were offered to mark the brands they recognized, which resulted with the following findings among the five brands: Royal Canin got the highest level of awareness among respondents leading with 97.2%. Then, it was followed by ca. 82% customer recognition of Eukanuba brand and ca. 79% for Hill's brand. ProPlan was known by 64.5% of the respondents, while only around 37% of those who participated in the survey recognized Bozita Robur brand (Figure 4.3). Further, the average number of brands recognized is 3.57, with show dogs (4.7) and breeders (4.5) aware of most brands.
4.1.2.1 Awareness of Bozita Robur for different subgroups

As stated in Figure 4.4, awareness of Bozita Robur is the largest among breeders, agility & show dog owners, owners of more than one dogs and female respondents. The lowest recognition is found among elders (over 65), men and owners of one dog.

4.1.3 Please mark the brands you have ever bought

Figure 4.5 Brands ever bought.
Survey participants were then asked to mark brands of premium dog food they had ever purchased. The study is interested in obtaining these results since it allows to identify the customer groups – participants who are familiar with Bozita Robur brand through their personal experience, and those who are not – with more personalized questions to be asked in the follow-up in-depth phone interview. The results presented in Figure 4.5 show that in comparison to the other four brands of premium dog food, Bozita Robur has the least number of customers who had tested it via purchase. The average number of brands bought is 1.86 where the groups of breeders (2.38) and show dogs (2.3) have bought a largest variety of brands.

4.1.3.1 Customers of Bozita Robur by subgroups

![Ever bought Bozita Robur](image)

Figure 4.6 Customers ever bought Bozita Robur by various subgroups.

4.1.4 Behavioural Belief

Further in the survey, questions that aimed to assess the strength of participants’ behavioural beliefs towards premium dog food, followed up by those addressing outcome evaluations, were asked. The responds received allow to measure customer attitudes toward premium dog food.

The questions asked address the following four behavioural subgroups:

- Performance (enhanced dog’s performance appetite when consuming premium dog food);
- Fur quality (enhanced dog’s fur quality after eating premium dog food);
- Appetite (maintenance of dog’s good appetite when eating premium dog food);
Prevention of sickness and injuries (prevention of sickness and injuries thanks to eating premium dog food).

These results are (presented in Figures 4.7 4.13-4.15 and in Appendix 9. These were summed up using the method “Constructing surveys based on the theory of planned behaviour” (Bonetti et al., 2004) and are guided by the following setting. Each of these three graphs has a possible range of total score -21 to +21, where -21 would reflect a very negative attitude, 0 – neutral, and +21 a very positive attitude of a respondent towards a particular characteristic of premium dog food.

For further survey results transformed into the TPB format and related statistical correlations, please, refer to Appendices 7 and 8.

4.1.4.1 Performance

Figure 4.7 Importance of performance for the dog owner in choosing premium dog food.

In favour of measuring performance, the respondents’ attitude score reflects the overall moderate positive attitude (see Figure 4.7). The score varies slightly within the age groups – dropping a little to weak-to-moderate positive attitude for the age group of 15-24 years old, and raising up to moderate-to-very positive attitude for the 25-34 years old group. Owners of more than one dog show moderate-to-positive attitude with regards to measuring performance. Whereas, breeders and participants owning an agility/utility dog or show dog are much happier with their pet’s performance when consuming premium dog food, than the owners of family and hunter dog types.
4.1.4.2 Behavioural Belief

Figure 4.8 Behavioural Beliefs.

Figure 4.8 offers a summary of respondents’ behavioural beliefs and attitudes with regards to buying premium dog food. On the scale where -63 to +63, the highest score +63 reflects a very positive attitude towards buying premium dog because it is good for the dog. On the opposite, the score of -63 means that a respondent does not believe premium will help the dog. The results of the survey show that on the overall, the participants experience a positive attitude towards premium dog food, with scores higher for breeders and owners of show dogs.

4.1.5 Subjective Norm

Further, the survey contained questions that would allow measurement of subjective norms, which, in their turn reflected opinions perceived by the respondents' referents. The subjective norm subgroups chosen as per the highest likelihood to affect opinions of a dog owner were veterinarians, breeder and close friends.

The findings are presented in Figures 4.9 – 4.11. Each sub-measure was weighted equally with a possible range of total score of -21 to +21, where:

- a positive (+) score means that, overall, a participant experiences social pressure to perform the activity;
- a negative (-) score means that, overall, a participant experiences social pressure not to perform the activity.

Looking into results of the analyzed survey data (Figures 4.9-4.11), the authors see that the scores of different groups of respondents reflect various levels of social pressures with regards to advice on serving premium dog food regularly to their pets.
4.1.5.1 Breeders

Figure 4.9 Breeders.

On the average, all of the participants reflect a moderate positive pressure from familiar breeders to feed their dogs with premium food (see Figure 4.9). For respondents up to 34 years, as well as for those between 50 and 64 years this score is lower reflecting the weaker pressure, while for participants aged 35-49 and over 65 the social pressure from the referent breeder is higher. It is an especially interesting finding since the age group 35-49 is the largest interviewed consumer age group. Peer breeders tend to experience the heaviest pressure, as compared to the non-breeder respondents. In their high scores, these are followed by the owners of a show dog for whom breeders can be seen as opinion leaders in decisions concerning dog feeding.

4.1.5.2 Veterinarians

Figure 4.10. Veterinarians.

Looking at the mean in Figure 4.10, the opinion of the respondents’ veterinarians does put a moderate positive social pressure on the dog owners who participated in the survey. This level is
still significant, yet less strong for young people under 24 and those between 50 and 64 years old. There is a slight variation across gender: women tend to be under a higher pressure than men; and depending on the number of dogs kept by the respondent: those who own two or more dogs are under less social pressure, yet still moderately positive to follow the opinion of their veterinarian – the last might be due to their greater experience with dogs. The referent veterinarian is highly likely to be an opinion leader in terms of subjective norms regarding the dog food for the breeder and the owner of a show dog, in contrast to the owners of a hunting dog, for whom such social pressure is weak to moderate.

4.1.5.3 Friends

The survey findings show with reference to feeding their dogs with premium brands, social pressure and opinion of friends is positively weak. This means the dog owners would still listen to the opinion of friends, however would not necessarily follow their advice to purchase premium dog food, if told to do so. This trend is relatively higher for breeders as well as owners of show dogs and agility/utility dog types. Opinion of friends seem to count only a little for male dog owners as well as those with one dog in the household. Yet, it is necessary to remember that the amount of male respondents who participated in the survey is also smaller, which might make affect the representativeness of these findings.
4.1.5.4 Subjective Norm estimation

![Subjective Norm Graph]

Figure 4.12 Subjective norm.

On the overall, analysis of the survey results using the TPB shows that the opinion leaders of the three types – breeders, veterinarians and friends, put a weak to moderate positive level of social pressure on the dog owners when it comes to making a decision on purchasing premium dog food brands (see Figure 4.12). The higher positive levels score the respondents who keep dogs for breeding and those owing a show dog. This may be explained by the importance for these groups of participants of growing a healthy and good looking dog; and they are therefore likely to be under a higher social pressure from the opinion leaders’ views on premium dog feed.

4.2 In depth interviews

4.2.1 Brand-mapping

When asked to name those dog food brands that come to their minds while speaking about dog food the respondents mentioned Royal Canin most often, i.e. 9 out of 11 recalled the brand. It also evoked as the first brand for several respondents and was among the first to mention for those who named many. Other brands frequently brought up were Eukanuba and Hill’s, 8 and 7 times respectively. Other brands mentioned were Pro Plan, Nutra Nuggets, Magnusson, Doggy, Pedigree, Oliver’s, Standard and James Well beloved. Bozita Robur was only mentioned 3 times and among those brands with smaller frequency.

When asked about a brand associated with high quality, most of the respondents replayed that brands sold at retail pet stores held higher quality than those sold in the supermarkets. One respondent also believed that more expensive dog food was of higher quality. Among the brands mentioned were all the brands exposed in the survey recalled, Eukanuba, Royal Canin, Pro Plan, Bozita Robur and Hill’s. There were only two additional brands named, Standard and Carrier. Royal Canin had a high frequent rate together with Pro Plan. In responses to this question all the brands mentioned had similar frequency.

To be able to further map the brands according to the customers’ perceptions the respondents were asked to express what they first thought of when they heard each brand spoken out loud.

Eukanuba was the first brand mentioned to the respondents, and cat or cat food was what the re-
respondents connected this brand with. This was of a small frequency but otherwise various answers were given ranging from such associations as garbage, not that high quality and further to good and quality. One came to think of a colour of their package while another thought about dog competitions where they have seen.

Second was Royal Canin; this brand was oftentimes associated with commercials. Either with ads in magazines or just many commercials. One respondent named the brand as well-known. The majority seem to have a positive impression about Royal Canin and mention such categories as good, very good, high quality, tasty and well available. On the other hand did two respondents with experience of the brand stated that it had been better before, it contained and too much cereal grain and named it a very strange dog food.

Third was the brand Pro Plan. The only similar answer for this brand was given from two respondents who stated dog food first. One of them added that this is the brand one thinks of first in association with dog food. On the other hand, nobody expressed any visibly negative associations with this brand. Categories mentioned were Germany, New Zealand, smaller brand, has been good, colour of package, commercials in magazines, TV commercials, high quality, fish food and pet retail stores.

Bozita Robur was the fourth brand to talk about. This brand appeared to be the least known with the respondents and was therefore hard to associate with something. Most respondents stated they heard the name but never tried it and had no idea what to recognize the brand with. Those few that knew more about the brand stated it was Swedish, two out of those five that associated anything. And one that clearly stated she didn’t know anything about the brand finally stated it felt a bit Swedish. One considered it fairly good and one positively assessed contaminations of stated good lamb and rice products. Another respondent thought the brand was intended for family dogs while some other one mentioned it was for active and high performance dogs. Yet, the majority couldn’t associate it with anything at all.

Hill’s was the last brand to discuss. This brand had a clear association with a veterinarian. The majority stated a veterinarian, veterinary dog food or bought at the pet hospital. Many of the respondents also thought veterinarians were enough and didn’t give more associations than that. But those who stated something else stated, quality, good, expensive or expensive that doesn’t work.

One respondent summarized this question by generalizing about all the brands mentioned in the following way:

“I think the brands are similar. Can’t say that the dog is healthier or less healthy by eating any of them.”

4.2.2 Attitudes and Beliefs

While choosing premium dog food the respondents had several important factors to consider. Most important is the content of the dog food. The content should include as much fresh meat as possible and as little cereal grain as possible. Some of the respondents relate low quality meat or bad content to garbage and give examples of claws and bird beaks. As one of the respondents put it:

“That it is a lot of garbage in the dog food today that doesn’t appear. Garbage such as claws and beaks.”

Dog food should also include as much nutrition as possible or at least as much as a dog needs to stay healthy. That the dog stays healthy seems to be a common evaluation of a well chosen dog food and therefore of importance. Other things that respondents mentioned were good taste for the dogs, good size on the pieces, appealing smell, vitamins and oils, prices, absence of allergic
reactions from eating the feed and that high quality of dog food. One respondent gives her explanation on why the packages are of importance:

"Packages' sizes are interesting since I have smaller dogs. The dogs don't eat when it gets too old, so smaller packages are important."

High quality, according to the respondents, stands for good nutrition content that satisfies a dog's needs and keeps it healthy. Several of them give examples of ingredients that are unwanted in the Table of contents. Examples include meat scraps, wheat, cereal grain, foreign-manufactured meat meals or mysteries scrap products. Some mention the importance of taste in order to get a dog eats it and maintain a dog's stomach in good shape. One of the respondents prefers Swedish-produced dog feed. While another one says that trustworthiness towards a product is important to believe in its high quality. When asked to express their views about a good fat level, this person stated that it depended on the activity level and the size of a dog eating it. While speaking about high quality one of the respondents expressed his view as follows:

"As a hairdresser do I compare it with the shampoo at the hair salon and the one at the supermarket. I know that you get what you pay for. So that's also how I reason while purchasing Eukanuba and Pro Plan and find them better than if I go and buy something at Lantmännen retail store."

Since good nutrition is so important for dog owners is it of high interest to ask what nutrition means to the respondents. Many of them talk about vitamins and some about oils but absolutely most of them added an open end to their answer, such as:

"...and all other things of importance."

One, for instance, requires high level of meat content, while to another the level of fat and protein is important. Some of the respondents admitted to be unaware and those who gave an answer seemed unsure. But one respondent put it this way:

"Nutrition is at first when all that a dog needs is included. But there is one need as a puppy, another as an adult and a third need as a senior dog."

When asked for something specific in dog food that they would like to see as an added value the majority claimed omega oils. Two stated that they wished to see glucosamine due to its positive effects of the dog's joints and preventative qualities as per any future infections or sickness. Some of them look for characteristics enhancing fur and good effects on a dog's stomach, but couldn't give any examples of such added value. No sawdust or rubber pieces. Yet, one respondent didn't want any additament at all since her viewpoint is:

"If there is the right content in the food, no added value should be necessary."

All the respondents are satisfied with the current selection of premium dog food on the Swedish market. Some even say there could be less to choose from, while others lack fine fresh feed offerings for dogs. One states that there is too much poor dog food on the market and asks for better products. At the same time, other respondent reasons that since most dogs are family dogs, they don't need that much special dog food and do well on regular dog food.

Almost all the respondents see the country of origin as very or fairly important. Most can agree it is less important than the feed quality and content. Yet, most of the respondents had doubts or couldn't name any brand produced in Sweden when asked to do so. Still, among those who could give such an example Doggy the most popular answer. After Doggy, Robur was the most common answer, however only one respondent could tell that those brands were from the same producer. Magnusson was also mentioned together with Oliver’s, Standard, Änglamark and some-
thing believed to be called Access and a bone meal with unknown name. Yet, for many respondents this question was hard and as one of them stated:

“None of the brands if you listen to the names. There is no Swedish name, listen to this; Eukanuba, Hill’s, Pro Plan or Royal Canin. And they have all the European languages and maybe some Chinese on the package so I don’t know.”

4.2.3 Information search and sources

During the interviews the question was given asking who in the household decides about purchasing of dog food. In the majority of interviews the respondent was the decision-maker. Most stated this was because they saw the dog as their responsibility. In a few cases this was due to their better expertise in nutrition or greater experience with dogs.

The decision-maker found information about dog food from several different sources. One popular way to find information was to search the brand name on the internet and read the given sources there. Some of the people who used internet did so by read discussions on dog forums and sending out questions about specific brand on such forums. As one respondent answered while asked how the information is found:

“Well, my daughter talks a lot with our breeder and asks him. We read ads and ask a little in pet retail stores. And a little on the internet. My daughter is out on such dog webpages and chat in forums so one could get some tips from there.”

One respondent also stated she read on a couple of good webpages where the link to the producer was given so one could check there as well. Many of the respondents read articles in magazines and referred to different dog magazines such as “Hundsport” and “Härliga Hund”. When asked how the respondents find information did one answer;

“If I think I need information I could search for on the internet. And also from those friends that are well conversant in the topic.”

As seen in the previous answer information can also be searched through other people. Ask for information in the pet retail store seems to be a common way to gain knowledge. In a similar way are the breeders an information provider. When asked how one can figure high quality brands, many of the respondents said they seek advice from people with more expertise then themselves. Workers in pet retail stores are asked for advice together with veterinarians and breeders. Another popular group to ask are those with more experience with a particular brand of interest. Workers in pet retail stores that are known to have own dogs and even dogs of the same breed as the respondent, hold even higher credibility for advice. Several of the respondents also carefully read the table of contents found on the packages of premium dog food. This is illustrated by a quotation from one of the respondents:

“First of all, Internet. I search information myself and read it through the web. Then I also try to read the Table of content.”

Then some estimate it first after tested the product and sees how the dog react to the product.

First when asked whom people talk dog food with in general did friends and family got mentioned. These are friends and family owning dogs or friends with some expertise in the field of dog food or nutrition. Those with specific expertise are, for example, colleagues within the police department of service dogs or friends with an agriculture scientist education. People who are more active with their dogs also spoke about their training friends and dog instructors.
The reason the majority used dog feed they had at the time of the interview was thanks to recommendations. Most of the respondents listed two references for the dog food tried with the two most common being staff at the specialty stores and breeders. On the question about why the respondent uses the dog food brand they have today she replied:

“It was our breeder that used this dog food at the beginning. After a tryout with a different brand that didn’t work and we decided to stay with this brand that we currently use.”

On the same question another respondents answered:

“It was through a recommendation from Djurmagazinet. I trust those people at Djurmagazinet.”

Some respondents only reasoned their choice with their own long-time experience with a particular dog food and satisfaction with how the dog responded to it. One respondent says it is partly because the food is produced in Sweden and also refers to recommendations it bears from a well-known author in Sweden. A few got recommendations from a veterinarian, family or a dog instructor making it a primary reason for purchase of a brand.

Many respondents tell that they themselves have recommended dog food to others. These respondents emphasise that this is thanks to their own satisfactory experiences with the dog food. Especially they advise people that have a similar need with those of the respondent’s and therefore seek specific feed for their pet. An example on such dog food could be specific food for allergic dogs or dogs with stomach problems.

4.2.4 Evaluation and comparison

If the respondents have switched dog food anytime have it been due to specific need or changes from their dog. One’s dog got allergic and changed due to that while another dog got a liver disease and another made a castration on their dog and gave different food due to that. Another respondent said they switched when they bought new dogs and other mentioned that they used different dog food throughout the years with several dogs. Only one respondent told that they change dog food due to the price different and wanted to find out if the quality of food would change.

Some of the respondents have experiences of several dog food brands since they got free samples or won dog food on competitions. Of those with this kind of experience did most of them still purchase their original choice of dog food brand when the sample was finished. Many mentioned that the reason for not continue with a new brand was that the dog did not find it tasteful. This could be concluded since the dog refused to eat.

4.2.5 Bozita Robur

For a deeper understanding of what a respondent thinks about Bozita Robur the interview ended with further questions on their experience from this particular brand. As it was already mentioned, the respondents had a lack of experience with this brand and were therefore unable to discuss it in depth. One of the respondents that didn’t know anything about the brand further added that she preferred to purchase brands that she knew more about. Another respondent that also lacked experience with the brand stated she had only seen it in magazine ads but didn’t want to try various dog feed. In her words:

"Seen it in ads and thought about it. But don’t want to test too many for the sake of the dog. Heard that it is a good brand and have seen it a lot in dog magazines so it should be good.”

Two other respondents that do not have own experiences, spoke out of feedback they got from
friends that purchased the brand. These friends had only spoken well about the brand and knew that it is produced in Sweden. Since these friends had high performance and very active dogs the respondent thought Bozita Robur was good for those types of dogs. On the overall, those who knew of people around them that feed the brand for their own dog, refered to dog training friends, a dog instructor and friends with very active dogs.

From those few respondents that had experiences with this dog food there were a few different stories told. First respondent only bought this dog food when there was nothing left of the original one and she needed something else fast. She thought the dog food is for family dogs with less energy levels and out of her experiences she could tell that it is a good product. Second respondent uses Bozita Robur for her allergic dog and is very satisfied with the result. Especially after she has tried a number of other dog feeds that haven’t functioned. Third was a story about a dog who had grey spots on both eyes and the owner been told by a veterinarian that those where permanent. After switching to Bozita Robur dog food, the dog had much nicer fur and the grey spots on its eyes suddenly disappeared.

In the dog food under Bozita Robur brand there is an added value called MacroGard, which is added together with other ingredients and is called SPC. MacroGard was not recalled by any of the respondents and there were only two respondents that had heard about SPC before. But those two that recalled SPC explained that it was either a dog food that could be bought at the veterinarian or that it was some kind of a test. One respondent said she lacked fresh dog food in their production range but otherwise there was a good variety to choose from.

As said before three respondents could associate the brand Bozita Robur with Sweden and these three people could also state Lantmännen as its producer. Additionally, one respondent guessed that Doggy produced it. Rest of the respondents had no idea about who the producer could be.
5 Analysis

This chapter uses the theoretical framework to draw conclusions and discuss the empirical data. Further, it is thematically structured according to the research questions.

Findings from surveys and telephone interviews bring out the following three main areas of analysis: brand associations, information search and social influences. Brand associations illustrate how consumers relate premium dog food brands to various values that result from brand perceptions. Information search describes ways customers use to collect information about premium dog food. Finally, social influences reveal social groups who influence customers in their choices as well as estimate the level of this influence.

5.1 What do customers associate with premium dog food brands?

This research question is analyzed by applying the brand schema theory as well as the behavioural beliefs within the framework of theory of planned behaviour (TPB). In this study, application of brand associations is done through the brand schemas frame. Concluding from previous research, the brand image, brand attitude and brand quality are included into the concept of brand association. Previous research in the area of brand associations suggests that theories of brand attitude and brand quality are applied prior to exposure of brand image. Hence the analysis builds upon the two elements: brand attitude and brand quality. To achieve sound results, the analysis begins with overall picture of respondents' views about premium dog food brands as a group; and proceeds with in-depth problem investigation per each of the brands they recognized.

According to the empirical data presented earlier, Royal Canin has an awareness rate of 97.2%. This shows that the brand has the highest awareness level among those included in the survey. Remembering Aaker’s (1991) definition of the brand association as anything in memory linked to a brand, the study concludes that nearly everybody asked should have a brand association of at least one premium dog food brand in their memory. The research concludes that on the average respondents recognized 3.6 and have ever purchased on the average 1.8 different brands. Having experienced associations about various premium brands, customers hold an overall concept of premium dog food in their memory.

Investigation of this general concept customer’s embrace begins with a survey. Assessment of behavioral beliefs show that in general the participants experience a positive attitude towards premium dog food brands. Qualitative findings show that respondents repeatedly consider the brands sold at retail pet stores to be of higher quality than those sold in supermarkets. One respondent, for instance, states that more expensive dog food is of higher quality. Since premium dog food brands are brands sold at retail pet stores, which provide a higher level of expertise in pet food, people perceive these brands positively relating to the level of quality. Moreover, all the five brands included in the survey were mentioned with regards to high quality. High quality, according to the respondents interviewed, stands for good nutrition content that satisfies a dog’s need and keeps it healthy. The concept of premium dog food brands has positive associations and bears expectations of high quality. According to the theory of schematic thinking, this positive concept increases chances that new information that could potentially be added to it in future will be perceived positively.
5.1.1 Brand schemas for particular brands

The qualitative data provides information about brand associations that each customer holds about particular brands. This study analyzes the associations among those five brands chosen for this study. Previous research by Low and Lamb (2000) proposes that customers have developed higher brand association structures for familiar brands than for less familiar ones. Customers are also more likely to have multi-dimensional brand associations for familiar brands compared to those which are less- or unfamiliar. Consequently, those brands with the highest awareness and purchasing rates should have better developed brand schemas than those with lower rates of these variables. For this reason the analysis begins with Royal Canin – the brand which is recognized and purchased the most, according to the quantitative data collected.

Royal Canin brand is mostly associated with commercials of different kinds. The majority of participants have a very positive impression of Royal Canin and mention such categories as ‘very good’, ‘tasty’ and ‘good availability’. Royal Canin is also the brand mentioned most often while speaking about high quality. Yet, some respondents think that this brand has way too many commercials. If commercials are perceived as a negative object for customers, excess of commercials will violate the positive schemas these respondents hold. The fact that they have such a high awareness rate speaks for comprehensive results of advertising. Especially since commercials add to what is being recognised with the brand. As a result, the brand may be facing some risk of violating positive brand schemas of customers that perceive excess commercials as a negative factor.

82% of the respondents recognise Eukanuba brand, which is also the second most commonly purchased brand of the five. A surprising discovery are the respondents who associate cats and cat food with this brand, even though the interviews were clearly about dog food. This indicates how strongly such customers have implemented cat and cat food images in their brand schema of Eukanuba. This brand was still mentioned while speaking about high quality allowing the study to assume that the brand's quality is perceived as positive. It is harder to estimate whenever the brand attitude is disclosed since the interviews resulted in a long scale with both positive and negative overall attitudes towards the brand. Brand attitudes might have given a clearer picture if this research has been done on cat food brands.

Pro Plan is given the same purchasing rate as Eukanuba even if the awareness rate is less and places the brand under number four on the list of the most recognised. The only similar answer for this brand was given from two respondents who stated dog food first. One of them added that this is the brand they think of first in association to dog food. Besides, nobody expressed any negative associations with this brand. This proves no signs of negative links in the brand schema as well as suggests the positive brand attitude. To be associated with dog food is absolutely fine when building a dog food brand and therefore is seen as highly positive. However, this could also be a sign of oversimplification in the customers’ schemas. According to research on brand schemas and the finding of Myers (2009), people can be misled by oversimplification which leads to bias. Along with Royal Canin this brand was one of the most frequently mentioned while speaking about high quality, which tells that the quality is perceived as superior.

Hill's is more recognised than Pro Plan, but less purchased; which means that less people had own experiences from trying the brand and less information is available to build well-structured brand schemas of. This brand had a clear association with veterinarians and seems to be perceived as a veterinary dog food brand. This association was very strong and almost every respondent seems to have a brand schema of Hill's and a veterinary together. Since a veterinarian is a person that is perceived to hold expertise about dog food, this brand's quality is also perceived as high. Their brand schema with a veterinary could explain the reason why so many customers recognise the brand but never purchased it. Since veterinarians are most likely associated with a sick
pet or a dog with special needs, it might lead to reasoning where a customer chooses not to purchase the brand, assuming that their healthy dog doesn’t need dog food from a veterinarian. The fact that several respondents also associated the two categories, ‘veterinary’ and ‘expensive’ together provides further arguments for not purchasing Hill’s brand.

Bozita Robur is the brand that least of the respondents in the survey recognised, just as it is the least purchased. Along with research within the brand association and specially Low and Lamb’s (2000) study, do such results assume that the respondents have less developed brand schemas about this brand. This explains why most of the respondents stated they had no idea what to associate this brand with. Those few that knew more about the brand stated it was Swedish. Therefore, Swedishness – attribution to the country of origin – seems to be the most common factor to hold in association to a brand schema of Bozita Robur. None of the respondents expressed any negative reflections about the brand – so the perceived attitude of the brand should be considered as positive. It can be supported by the qualitative data findings, which show that most of the respondents believe in the importance of a product’s manufacturing country. If Sweden as a country of origin is favourable, this association definitely adds to the brand’s advantage. This brand was also mentioned during the discussion of high quality hence allowing the study to estimate this brand’s quality perception as high. Even though the analysis found that brand schemas of Bozita Robur is largely positive, higher customer recognition levels will without doubt add extra value to the brand, since before recognition of the brand, no brand schema can be developed.

5.1.2 The concept of premium dog food brands

In general, the analysis finds that brand quality for all brands investigated is perceived as high among all the respondents. This can be explained by the overall positive perception about premium dog food that all the respondents hold. Hence, the brand attitude differences a lot among the brands and there are some very clear associations with some of the brands that indicated attitude either to the brand’s favour or disadvantage. This means that the brand association with premium dog food brands tells the customer to expect high quality but then leads the customers to build different brand associations with different brands, either positive or negative.

These findings are important since the brand associations affect customers in their purchasing decisions. The fact that brand associations with premium dog food are perceived as being of high quality benefits all the brands. The brand attitude that a customer holds has a definite effect on the brand image, depending on what each customer holds in their brand schema of each particular brand.

5.2 How is the information search within the decision making process made?

Every purchasing decision involves a certain process that occurs in the minds of customers. This analysis applies the findings of consumer decision making theory (Kotler and Armstrong, 2002; Solomon et al., 2002) to the purchasing decision process of the consumers in the premium dog food industry. The first stage of this process, need recognition, would arise when a consumer is unsatisfied with current offerings available on the market. For instance, it can be a situation when a product, such as a certain brand of premium dog food the customer is currently purchasing for his or her dog, does not meet the customer’s expectations leaving him or her unsatisfied. Or, in other case, the customer that is purchasing dog food is looking for a new offering on the market, which pushes him or her into trying new products and brands offered by the premium dog food industry.

When a customer wishes to meet the need recognized, he or she attempts to search for informa-
tion sources that provide some level of expertise or advice on benefits of using this or that dog food brand. Following the existing trends that prove that the dog owners in Sweden are becoming more attached to their pets the decision on choosing the proper nutrition for their peers becomes of high importance and consequently, as Bruner and Pozmal (1988) researched, it makes the information search from external sources more rigorous.

The findings show that customers who are purchasing premium dog food do search for information on dog food brands extensively. The dog owners in Sweden seem concerned about what their pets consume and how it affects their dogs. The customer therefore looks for external information, facts and opinions within the area. First of all by searching on the Internet. Usually, this is done by searching for the brand name and relative information or reading and discussing premium dog food brands on numerous dog forums. Another source of information for the customers of dog food brands are people who have some level of expertise about the brand of interest. Dog owners, according to the results obtained by the authors of this study, tend to consult the staff in retail stores they visit to purchase quality dog food for their pets. The customers also often ask for opinions of dog breeders as well as veterinarians, putting these in category of opinion leaders for many Swedish dog owners. A majority of the respondents carefully reads the list of contents on the package of an interesting brand. This seems to be one of the last information sources to obtain first after the process of searching on Internet and ask for expertise advice. All of these provide the customers with a wider range of information that consequently assists them in a better and more efficient evaluation of alternative products and brands available on the dog food market.

The study shows that the customers tend to discuss dog food which they choose to purchase for their pets with their friends and family that also own a dog. Yet, according to the survey customers do not often act on those advices and might therefore estimate these advices as less reliable. However, it is hard to estimate how important a purchasing decision is concerning buying a specific brand of premium dog food for a particular customer in a specialty store. Because of this, it be shall be noted that when a customer’s involvement is lower and when a decision on buying a dog feed is done repeatedly, such opinions of a friend or a family, could become normative factors as suggested by Hoyer (1984) and Deshpande (1982) that yet can influence purchasing decisions of such customers (Hoyer, 1984; Deshpande et al., 1982).

Since a purchasing decision on a brand of premium dog food is something done on a continual basis, a customer can be assumed to have undergone the process of purchase and consequently was either satisfied or dissatisfied with the dog food brand of choice, depending on how well the product purchased has matched or even exceeded their expectations. The factors that may affect the level of customer satisfaction can be visible improvements in a dog’s performance, visual fur quality, better appetite and higher resistance to injuries. Since customers tend to trust their own judgments, the post-purchase evaluation of a product brand occurs. If the customer that purchases a premium dog food brand is satisfied with the product and effect it has on their dog, according to Hoyer (1984), a purchased brand of dog food can become their brand of choice. The research results show that in forming a certain image with regards to premium brands an important role for Swedish customers play their own experiences with different brands or people around with long experience and satisfaction with a brand.

The survey results have shown that customers believe that premium dog food is good for their pets, which makes them pay a premium for this quality product. However, since those who buy premium brands are often regular customers they are experienced and know what they expect from and look for in a product under a premium dog food label. As found through the interviews customers do search for the best nutrition for their peers, often look at the table of contents and want to find a lot of meat and less cereal grains in the product. For these customers, according to
the results, an additional plus is presence of omega oils in it. The fact that a customer pays attention to the table of contents further indicates how concerned the customers are for their dogs, their nutrition and health – which the study finds somewhat interesting since the implemented approach of looking for quality ingredients in this case is similar to the one customers may undertake when choosing groceries for themselves.

Out of this research, the present study, by aid of the decision making theory, investigated and found valuable information for the industry. The authors also found the decision-making theory well suited for market research of the premium dog food segment. It is important to understand the decision making process and, in particular, the stage of information search, since the results give information as to which channels the companies should use in order to meet the customers’ needs and expectations.

5.3 What social influences affect the customer?

Expert recommended choices are made after a contact with different sources that dog owners feel to be knowledgeable. In addition, the quantitative data confirm that there is a positive social pressure to consume premium dog food. With the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), the study measures the perception of social normative pressures to see how strong, positively or negatively, it is towards premium dog food. For the entire sample, a respondent has a moderate positive social pressure to consume premium dog food. This, however, varies between different groups. When grouped, the quantitative data reveals differences between certain groups.

Breeders and people identifying their dogs as show dogs, experience the highest social pressure to feed the dog with premium dog food, with a score of 37 compared to the average of 24.5, on a scale from -63 to 63, it is a noticeable difference. Still, since there were only 8 breeders interviewed, the results regarding the breeders should be looked upon carefully. An explanation to it is that these groups educate themselves more in the area of dog food. As seen in Table 5.1a, not only do they recognize more brands, they also have tried more brands than the average.

Tables 5.1a, 5.1b Awareness and purchase experience of brands

By combining the TPB with the theory of opinion leaders, groups in the market as well as their strengths are indentified. Affected by various opinion leaders, customers tend to make a conscious choice. Often, it is when you get a new dog or a new breed that people look for advice for the right feed. Also, there is a tendency to ask for information when a dog encounters some kind of sickness, disease or problem.

By applying the TPB tool, pressures of friends, breeders and veterinarians are measured. Among these three, breeders have the highest social influence. This study believes the reason for this is
that the dog owners usually buy their dog; they come in contact with a breeder that usually supplies the dog owner with the first bag of dog food. Many are satisfied with that specific feed and continue to use it, while others are changing it later on.

Veterinarians have a moderate to strong social influence on dog owners. Respondents who had a sick or injured dog are more likely to ask for advice from a veterinarian. Still, they keep looking for advice from specialty store staff and friends with a similar problem. They are more inclined to find the best food for dogs, and care in a larger extent about the feed content, such as contamination of vitamins and minerals as well as whether the food is made up of cereals or rice. This may be a respond to the tendency when people more and more consider their dogs as family members (Manimalisrapporten, 2003). In this way, they aim to provide the best possible care for a pet.

According to the TPB modified results, friends have a slightly positive influence when it comes to dog food. A frequent reaction when filling in the survey to this question was "I do not care at all what my friends think I should do". Still, in the telephone interviews, respondents explained how they are asking for advice from different friends. These are often friends having experiences with premium dog food brands, such as colleagues and dog training course mates. The impression is that dog owners turn to friends to a larger extent when they experience some kind of a problem with their dog and have questions to ask. Thus, it is not a spontaneous conversation topic. Respondents who have ever bought Bozita Robur have a normative belief very similar to the average of the sample.

![Figure 5.1 Social influences on a dog owner (For illustrative purposes).](image)

The quantitative data was limited to the following groups: veterinarians, breeders and friends, with the TPB measured on these three. In process of gathering the qualitative data additional groups for social influences occurred. Rogers and Cartano (1962) define opinion leaders as people who exert information with an unequal influence (Flynn et al, 1996). To this description, the authors could indentify breeders, veterinarians, specialty stores staff, active people writing on various forums online and friends with expertise to be the main groups. These are presented in Figure 5.1. All these groups are important since all of them influence customers in their choice of
dog food brand. Hence, during the qualitative data analysis some of these groups can be estimated to be of higher importance for social influences than other groups. Since most of the respondents from the interviews use dog food that they got due to recommendations, this study values those groups delivering those recommendations with higher social influences than other groups where no recommendation could be measured.

The two main groups given are staff in specialty stores and dog breeders. Respondents tend to trust the staff and since the specialty store is a place they regularly visit, it appears to be a natural source of information. Breeders are of important influence since customers without any experience with dogs are likely to buy their first dog from a dog breeder and then listen to their advice for the pet which includes a choice of feed. Dog breeders are also a reliable source since they fed a dog during the first weeks and, therefore, already hold some expertise as per dog food brand of choice as opposed to a new dog owner who has no such experience with a particular dog.

Breeders and specialty store staff have the two common qualities as opinion leaders as described by Patterson et al (2007). First, they are well informed since they come in connection with dogs and premium dog food regularly. Secondly, the study shows that dog owners tend to trust breeders and specialty store staff and appreciate their efforts to use their knowledge to help, rather than manipulate.

This study shows that social influences are important for building customers’ purchasing choices towards premium dog food brands. The answers to the question of what social influences that affect these customers make up important findings, since these give guidance to the companies in the industry in terms of choosing the right distribution channels for their marketing. As such, for the companies like Lantmännens Doggy that operate in the premium dog food sector, it is highly advantageous to target their marketing efforts on the two largest groups – dog breeders and specialty store staff – in order to raise awareness and establish a stronger brand image within their potential customer groups.

Moreover, the TPB was very applicable in the study analysis since it examines the strengthens in describing behavioural and normative beliefs of purchasing premium dog food. This thesis also shows how the TPB functions when implemented within a market research of this type.


6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the main conclusions of the analysis are presented to give the answers to the research questions. The aim for this conclusion is to answer the purpose of the study. The chapter ends with some suggestions for further research.

The purpose of this thesis was to contribute to knowledge of customers buying behaviour towards premium dog food by examining the brand association of customers and how they are shaped by using Bozita Robur as a case study. With the aim of achieving the purpose, an overview of previous research and theoretical framework was constructed. The theoretical framework was divided into four parts: Brand Schemas, Customer Decision Making Process, Opinion Leaders and the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Previous research has been focused on segmenting the market and has not, to the knowledge of the authors, assessed the buying behaviour toward premium dog food and how it is shaped in Sweden.

Further, the theory of brand schemas and brand associations, in particular brand attitude and brand quality, proved to be highly applicable in market research of brands within the dog food industry. With use of the theory of brand schemas, it became possible for the authors to examine the customers' attitudes are towards premium dog food and ways by which these are shaped.

The research concludes that the respondents associate premium dog food with high quality. Within this concept, brand schemas of various brands assist customers in their purchasing process. The study concludes that all the five brand schemas found for the five brands presented, include perceptions about high quality. Those brands with the highest awareness and purchasing rates, like Royal Canin and Eukanuba, appeared to have better developed brand schemas, and oftentimes more consistent brand associations than those with lower rates. Furthermore, all the brand schemas were found to differ in the perception of brand's attitude. As such, Bozita Robur has a positive brand attitude and holds an association of being Swedish.

Established brand schemas among opinion leaders have an influence on dog owners. Since a familiar brand develops a well-structured brand schema in a customer's memory and help a customer in his or her purchasing decision process, while an opinion leader affects the process through social influences, these two concepts should be viewed in combination. The study shows that when those opinion leaders have established the right associations with the brand, they affect other buyers – i.e. dog owners – by providing them with relevant information and, consequently, allow for favourable buying decisions for the company.

The studied brand Bozita Robur has a low awareness and is tested by few in the Swedish market, compared to the other investigated brands. Among people with purchasing experience of the brand, the associations are positive. Research shows that there are few brand schemas for Bozita Robur due to the low awareness. However, those few that exist have a structure favourable for the company. The conclusion is that the brand schemas for Bozita Robur are very well structured, but are not as well developed.

By utilising the decision making process, the conclusion have been reached that the customers of premium dog food – even though they themselves do not consume the product they are buying—have high concerns towards finding the best feed for their pets and do appeal to external once sources in their search for information. The most important source of information for them are
various groups and opinion leaders. One interesting finding is that the customers read the table of contest while searching for information about brand’ nutrition, once again, even if the product is intended for a pet’s consumption.

Opinion leader theory was applicable for this study of premium dog food even though these are not customers that consume the product. Nevertheless, these customers see their dog as a family member and therefore have a high willingness to provide their pet with the best available feed. In their search for the best brand option, they turn to various groups. The five key groups that affect the customers in the premium sector are identified as: veterinarians, breeders, friends with expertise, specialty store staff and active people on online dog forums. Still, the research shows the main opinion leaders to be the specialty store staff as well as the breeders.

The study has achieved its purpose in investigating the certain aspects of customers’ buying behaviour towards premium dog food brands. It has looked upon the decision making process, in particular information search about the brands; investigated the brand associations customers have towards premium dog food brands, analysed those per each other as well as tried to give an explanation of why certain brand schemas are build towards particular dog food brands. Furthermore, the specific groups were identified as to their level of social pressure (positive or negative) and their effect on the customers’ purchasing decisions.

6.1 Further Research

In the process of study, possibilities for further research have been found. Some have appeared as indications in the empirical data among observations during the data collection process, others – through the lack of certain data during the discussion. Ideas presented below are suggestions for future research in a similar field of study:

- Breeders differ a lot from the average when the quantitative data analysed normative and behavioural beliefs. Yet due to a narrow scope of respondents, a complete picture could not be provided of this phenomenon. This is a great opportunity for further research.

- None of the respondents mentioned the producers as a source of information. Throughout the interviews, and especially the discussion of content, did emotional expressions from the respondents hint distrustfulness towards the producers. There are no questions or measurable data that could speak for such a finding in this study but the role of the producers within the dog food industry would be interesting to investigate additionally.

- Within the survey used in this study, the social groups selected for investigation were: veterinarians, breeders and friends. In the course of in-depth interviews, specialty store employees were mentioned as another influential group. For such, a further research would the authors suggest to investigate the speciality store’s employees influences on the customers of pet food.

- Similar research, as conducted in this study, can be done on specific segments of the customers of premium dog food brands. Suggestions on such segments are breeders, people active in agility or people active with their hunting dog.

- Importance of package design of premium dog food has not been estimated within this study. Hence, observation during this research gives an impression that the packages could be more efficient to use during market research of brand association, rather then a single picture of a certain brand shown to a customer.
Managerial Implications for Bozita Robur

This chapter aims to give clear suggestions for managerial implications, as based on conclusions drawn by the study.

➢ Choose quality and Swedishness as core values

The authors claim that there are several opportunities in the market for Bozita Robur. First of all, since Bozita Robur is the least known brand, few people hold a developed brand schema, which brings along an opportunity to implement new associations to the brand without violating the old one. This is done by choosing an association that a competitive brand doesn’t have at the moment. As presented in the study, association of being “Swedish” is positive and not used by any of the other main brands at the moment. Therefore, it could be further implemented into a developed brand schema of Bozita Robur.

Further opportunities are found by looking at how the other largest brands are perceived. As the most recognizable and purchased brand in the study, Royal Canin is strongly associated with commercials, which could lead to a negative association. Also, the second most recognizable and used brand, Eukanuba, is highly associated with cats and cat food. If the brand schema as a premium dog food doesn’t hold for Eukanuba, it gives more space for Bozita Robur to establish a strong schema and expand its market share.

When choosing core values, careful consideration should be made. The authors recommend Bozita Robur to avoid being associated with veterinarians and medicals since Hill’s is already highly associated with it.

In order to take advantage of the opportunities and to be able to build positive and strong brand schemas in the customer’s mind, Lantmännen Doggy is advised to carefully choose a targeted brand image. A behavioural belief, such as performance, together with a link to a “made in Sweden” can be very advantageous.

➢ Target active and competing dog owners

To better explore the opportunity, the company is suggested to clearly define and select its target group. The target group advised are dog owners actively involved with their dogs. The study shows that dog owners are more active, involved in show dog competitions, agility competitions or other dog sport competitions, have higher believes in the advantages of using premium dog food. Also, they have more experiences of different dog food brands, and therefore might be more willing to change brands. Moreover, these groups already have a higher awareness of Bozita Robur than the average customer. Direct targeting of the largest group of family dog-owners is misadvised since they rarely change feed and will therefore be less willing to try Bozita Robur.

Besides, as presented in the empirical data, owners of many dogs have a higher awareness and used Bozita Robur more often than owners of only one dog. Also, owners of many dogs have a higher belief in the positive effects of premium dog food and have a stronger normative belief than regular dog owners. For Lantmännen Doggy, the advantage of having customers with more dogs is that each person will purchase more. Instead of selling small bags of feed to a large variety of people, they can focus on a smaller group that will conduct more extensive buying. Thus, the target group shall be owners of active or competition dogs – Agility/Utility and Show dogs – that own more than one dog. Lantmännen Doggy is encouraged to further investigate specific needs.
of that specific target group.

- **Reach the target group with aimed marketing and education**

Because of the higher normative beliefs, the proposed target group could be assumed to be influenced by opinion leaders to a larger extent than other dog owners. Therefore, the target group would be easier to approach with a strategy plan built on opinion leaders. Also, Lantmännen Doggy is recommended to differ their marketing between retailers and end customers.

To reach the targeted group, the company’s management is advised to use opinion leaders that are strong among the targeted groups. Strong opinion leaders are identified as staff in specialty stores and breeders. Specialty stores’ staff could be reached through further education about Bozita Robur’s core values. The suggested core values correspond to the brand schemas suggested, which are ‘Quality’—performance— and ‘Swedish’. To further increase the influences of the retail staff, higher profit margin for the retail stores is recommended. Although not included in this analysis, unofficial conversations with retail owners and personnel reviled that they commonly recommend brands that have the highest profitability for the store. An additional strategy to increase influence of specialty store employees is to create a good and strong relation between Bozita Robur and the retail staff. With communication, happenings and increased incentive, the employees would favour Bozita Robur. For marketing towards breeders a focus on relationships is suggested. The breeders could also be motivated through better margins but in the form of a large purchase discount since they also are end customers. A loyalty program specifically for the breeders, the relate the most to the target group, is also a recommended.

In the study, customers highlighted how much they value the content of premium dog food and carefully read the nutrition declaration and the table of contents. Therefore, information of the content is to be communicated clearly. Also, core values are recommended to be presented close to the nutrition declaration. A well-written text about Bozita core values could help the customer to choose the best premium dog food brand.

As for the end customer, educational events are suggested since it would enable Lantmännen Doggy to communicate their core values. In order to arrange a credible event, it’s important to include an honourable presenter, such as an agricultural scientist or the like. Further, the purpose of an educational event would be to build trustworthiness for the ingredients in the Bozita Robur dog food. Besides, an informative event of this kind will help to strengthen the relationship between the customer and the brand.

Moreover, to increase awareness and strengthen the brand image about Bozita Robur, the brand is to be well presented on the web. Since Internet is a main source of secondary information and considering the fact that some customers do Google the brand’s name in search for further information, Lantmännen Doggy is advised to work with its representation on the web. An informative and customer-friendly webpage along with good search engine optimising is essential. Forums for those who are interested in dogs and dog food could also be a tool to be used to spread information about the Bozita brand in Sweden.


Appendix 1: Survey in Swedish

Ett examensarbete vid Jönköpings Internationella Handelshögskola

Ditt namn:

Din ålder: < 20 [ ] 20 - 24 [ ] 25 - 34 [ ] 35 - 49 [ ] 50 - 64 [ ] 65 < [ ]

Man [ ] Kvinna [ ] Är du uppfödare? Ja [ ] Nej [ ]
Du har antal hundar? 1 [ ] 2 < [ ]

Hur identifierar du främst din hund?: Familjehund [ ] Utställning [ ] Jakt [ ] Bruks/Agility [ ]

1. Kryssa för de varumärken du känner igen:

[ ] Eukanuba [ ] Royal Canin [ ] Purina

[ ] Bozita [ ] ROBUR [ ] Hill's [ ]

2. Kryssa för de varumärken du någon gång köpt:

[ ] Eukanuba [ ] Royal Canin [ ] Purina

[ ] Bozita [ ] ROBUR [ ] Hill's [ ]

När ordet kvalitetshundmat används syftar detta på den standard du förknippar med varumärkena ovan. Svara på de följande frågorna genom att ringa in ditt svar.

3. Om min hund regelbundet åter kvalitetshundmat prysterar den bättre
   Håller inte med; [ ] 1 : [ ] 2 : [ ] 3 : [ ] 4 : [ ] 5 : [ ] 6 : [ ] 7 : Håller fullständigt med

4. Om min hund regelbundet åter kvalitetshundmat så minskar risken för skador och sjukdomar
   Håller inte med; [ ] 1 : [ ] 2 : [ ] 3 : [ ] 4 : [ ] 5 : [ ] 6 : [ ] 7 : Håller fullständigt med

5. Om min hund regelbundet åter kvalitetshundmat får den timare påskvalte
   Håller inte med; [ ] 1 : [ ] 2 : [ ] 3 : [ ] 4 : [ ] 5 : [ ] 6 : [ ] 7 : Håller fullständigt med

6. Om min hund regelbundet får kvalitetshundmat åter den med god aptit
   Håller inte med; [ ] 1 : [ ] 2 : [ ] 3 : [ ] 4 : [ ] 5 : [ ] 6 : [ ] 7 : Håller fullständigt med
7. För mig är det viktigt att min hund har bästa möjliga prestationssformåga
Håller inte med: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Håller fullständigt med

8. För mig är det viktigt att förebygga eventuella skador och sjukdomar hos min hund
Håller inte med: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Håller fullständigt med

9. För mig är det viktigt att min hund har bästa möjliga patskvalité
Håller inte med: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Håller fullständigt med

10. För mig är det viktigt att min hund åter med bästa möjliga aptit
Håller inte med: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Håller fullständigt med

11. Min veterinär tycker att man regelbundet ska servera hunden kvalitetshundmat
Joke Troligt: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Valdigt Troligt

12. Min hunduppfödare tycker att man regelbundet ska servera hunden kvalitetshundmat
Joke Troligt: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Valdigt Troligt

13. Mina nära vänner tycker att man regelbundet ska servera hunden kvalitetshundmat
Joke Troligt: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Valdigt Troligt

14. Overlag, hur mycket bryr du dig av vad din veterinär tycker att du ska göra?
Bry mig inte: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Bry mig valdigt mycket

15. Overlag, hur mycket bryr du dig av vad din hunduppfödare tycker att du ska göra?
Bry mig inte: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Bry mig valdigt mycket

16. Overlag, hur mycket bryr du dig av vad dina vänner tycker att du ska göra?
Bry mig inte: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Bry mig valdigt mycket

Tack så mycket för din hjälp! För att få en djupare förståelse kan vi behöva din hjälp igen och under därför om vi tår lov att ringa upp dig? Alla som svarar på frågor per telefon får en värdetupong.
Jag vill hjälpa till att besvara fler frågor per telefon: Ja ☐ Nej ☐

Den tid då jag vill bli kontaktad är: kl. 9-13 ☐ kl. 13-17 ☐ kl. 17-21 ☐

Mitt telefonnummer:
Appendix 2: Survey in English

A study from Jonkoping International Business School

Your name: ___________________________________________

Your age: □ < 20 □ 20 - 24 □ 25 - 34 □ 35 - 49 □ 50 - 64 □ 65 < □

Man □ Female □ Are you a breeder? Yes □ No □ You have number of dogs? 1 □ 2 < □

How do you identify your dog?: Familydog □ Showdog □ Hunting □ Agility □

1. Mark the brands you recognize:

   Eukanuba □ ROYAL CANIN □ PURINA □
   ROBUR □ Hill’s □

2. Mark the brands you have ever purchase:

   Eukanuba □ ROYAL CANIN □ PURINA □
   ROBUR □ Hill’s □

The word super premium dog food are used as the definition of the standard you perceive the brands above with. Answer the following questions by circle you answer.

3. If my dog eats super premium dog food regularly it will perform better
   Disagree: □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □ 7 □ Agree

4. If my dog eats super premium dog food regularly will the risk for diseases shrink
   Disagree: □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □ 7 □ Agree

5. If my dog eats super premium dog food regularly does it get a nice fur quality
   Disagree: □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □ 7 □ Agree

6. If my dog eats super premium dog food regularly it eats with a good appetite
   Disagree: □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □ 7 □ Agree
7. It is important for me that my dog have the best performance capacity
   Disagree: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Agree

8. It is important for me to prevent any disease for my dog
   Disagree: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Agree

9. It is important for me that my dog have the best fur quality
   Disagree: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Agree

10. It is important for me that my dog have the best appetite
    Disagree: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Agree

11. My veterinarian thinks one should regularly serve the dog super premium dog food
    Very unlikely: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Very likely

12. My breeder thinks one should regularly serve the dog super premium dog food
    Very unlikely: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Very likely

13. My friends think one should regularly serve the dog super premium dog food
    Very unlikely: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Very likely

14. Generally, how much do you care about what your veterinary thinks you should do?
    Don’t care: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Care much

15. Generally, how much do you care about what your breeder thinks you should do?
    Don’t care: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Care much

16. Generally, how much do you care about what your friends thinks you should do?
    Don’t care: __1__ __2__ __3__ __4__ __5__ __6__ __7__: Care much

Thank you so much for your help! To get a deeper understanding might we need your help again and wonder if we can call you? Everybody that gives answers by phone gets a coupon.

I would like to answer further questions by phone: Yes☐ No☐

The time I would like to be contacted: 9 am-1 pm ☐ 1 pm-5 pm ☐ 5 pm-9 pm ☐

My phone number:
Appendix 3: Telephone interview questions in Swedish


Går det bra att svara på dessa frågor nu eller vill du att jag ringer senare?

Jag vill börja kontrollera att informationen om dig stämmer.

Du är ”år” gammal? ”Kön”? ”X” antal hundar? ”Familjehund”?

Då börjar vi med första frågan:

Attityd och varumärkeskarta

1) Kan du nämna märken som först dyker upp när man pratar om hundmat?
2) Vad är viktigt när du väljer hundfoder?
   a) Finns det något mer?
      i) Av det du nämnt, är det något som är viktigast?
3) Vilket varumärke sammanknippar du med hög kvalitet?
   a) Vad är hög kvalitet enligt dig?
   b) Hur vill du att de ska testa produkten?
   c) Hur finner du att ett varumärke är av hög kvalitet?
4) Tycker du att det finns tillräcklig variation i hundmatssortimentet?
   a) Vilken typ eller variant av hundmat föredrar du att köpa?
   b) Vad saknar du på marknaden för hundmat?
   c) Är det något du saknar på marknaden för hundmat?
      i) Vad finns det mer du saknar?
5) Vilka hundfoder tror du produceras i Sverige?
   a) Hur viktigt är tillverkningslandet för dig?
6) Vilka märken tycker du är mest näringsrika?
   a) Vad är näringsrik enligt dig?
   b) Vad finns det för tillskott som du vill se i hundfodret för att göra det mer näringsrikt?
   c) Känner du till MacroGard?
      i) Om ja, vad är det?
      ii) Vad för hundfoder märke innehåller MacroGard?
d) Känner du till SPC?
   i) Om ja, vad är det?
   ii) Vad för hund foder märke innehåller SPC?

7) För det varumärken de har kryssat i: Vad förknippas du med ”Märke 1”? ”Märke 2”?

Informationssökning och källa

1) Vem i ert hushåll bestämmer över vilket hund foder som skall köpas?
   a) Hur kommer det sig?

2) Hur får du information om hundfoder?
   a) Har du sökt information om hundfoder?
      i) Vart söker du den informationen?

3) Med vilka har du pratat eller diskuterat hundfoder med?
   a) Vid vilket tillfälle?

4) Vilket hundfoder använder du idag?
   a) Hur kommer det sig att du använder det hundfoder du gör idag?
   b) Har du blivit rekommenderad hundfoder av någon?
      i) Vem?
   c) Finns det någon mer som gett dig rekommendationer?

5) Har du någon gång rekommenderat ett hundfoder till någon?
   a) Till vem?
   b) Vad fick dig att rekommendera fodret?

Varför köper de ett specifikt varumärke?

6) Du markerade ”Märke X” som ett av de märken du har köpt, hur var den erfarenheten?
   a) Varför bestämde du dig för att köpa det?
   b) Var du nöjd?
      i) Om du var nöjd, vad gjorde att du blev nöjd?
   c) Varför bestämde du dig för att köpa det?
   d) Rekommenderade du det varumärket till någon medan du använde det?
   e) Varför?
   f) Köper någon som du känner detta varumärke?

Fråga denna fråga för alla varumärken markerade
Utvärdering och jämförelse

7) Vilket av de varumärken som du köpt föredrar du?

8) Har du bytt hundfoder eller varumärke någon gång?
   a) Varför ändrade du?
   b) Vad fick dig att välja det nya foddret?
   c) Recommenderade någon det nya fodret?
   d) Vem?

Bozita Robur

Du har markerat Bozita Robur som ett utav de varumärken som du känner igen.

9) Spontant, vad tänker du när jag säger Bozita Robur?
   1.1 Varför?
   1.2 Vad förknippar du det med?
   1.3 Beskriv varumärket Bozita Robur för mig?
   1.4 Finns det någonting annat som Bozita Robur får dig att tänka på?
   1.5 Vilka erfarenheter har du av Bozita Robur?
   1.6 Köper någon som du känner detta varumärke?
   1.7 Vilket företag tror du äger varumärket Bozita Robur?

Ja till köpt Bozita Robur

10) Vad gjorde att du köpte Bozita Robur?
    a) Är det något du saknar i Bozita Robur sortimentet?

Nej till köpt Bozita Robur

11) Varför har du inte köpt Bozita Robur?

12) Finns det något mer spontant som du vill tillägga när man har pratat om kvalitetshundföder?

Då får jag tacka så mycket för din merverkan! Som tack för hjälpen vill vi skicka er en värdekupong. Vad har ni för adress?
Appendix 4: Telephone interviews in English

Interviews were conducted in Swedish, a rough translation is presented here:

Hi this is 'NAME'? and I'm calling from Jönköping International Business School. We met in the animal shop X, date Y. You filled in a survey and gave us this phone number and now I have decided to call you for some further questions. Of course, we'll send you a voucher when you have answered these questions. Are you able to attend the interview now or would you like us to call later?

I would like to verify information about your variables.
Age? Gender? 'X' number of dogs? Kind of dog?

Brand associations
1) Can you name the brands first thought of when talking about dog food?
2) What is important when choosing dog food?
   a) Is there something else?
   b) Of what you mentioned, is it something that is most important?
3) Which premium dog food brand do you relate with high quality?
   a) What is high quality according to you?
   b) How do you want them to test the product?
   c) How do you find that a brand is high quality?
4) Do you think there is enough variation in the range of dog food?
   a) What type dog food flavour do you prefer to buy?
   b) What do you miss in the market for dog food?
   c) Is there anything else you miss in the market for dog food?
   i) What are the more you miss?
5) Do you know of brands produced in Sweden?
   a) How important is the country of origin for you?
6) What brands do you think is most nutritious?
   a) What is nutritious to you?
   b) What are the supplements that you want to see the dog in the feed to make it more nutritious?
   c) Do you know of MacroGard?
   i) If yes, what is it?
   ii) Do you know of any brands containing MacroGard?
d) Have you heard about SPC?
   i) If yes, what is it?
   ii) Do you know of any brands containing SPC?

7) For the brands they recognize: What do you associate with "Brand 1"? "Brand 2" etc.? 

**Information search and Opinion leaders**

8) Who in your household decides on which dog food to be purchased?
   a) Why is it like this?

9) How do you get information about dog food?
   a) Have you looked for information about dog food?
   i) Where are you looking for that information?

10) With whom have you talked or discussed with dog food?
    a) At what point?

11) Which dog food you use today?
    a) How come you use the dog food used today?
    b) Have anyone recommended you any specific brands?
       i) Who?
    c) Is there anyone else that have giving you advice?

7) Have you ever recommended a dog food to someone?
   a) To whom?

b) What prompted you to recommend to the feed?

**Why buy a specific brand?**

7) You selected "Brand X" as one of the brands you've purchased, how was the experience-ten?
   a) Why did you decide to buy it?
   b) Were you satisfied?
      i) If you were happy, what did that you were happy?
   c) Why did you decide to buy it?
   d) Do you recommend the brand to someone while you used it?
      e) Why?
      f) Purchase any of you know this brand?

**Evaluation and comparison**

7) Which of the brands that you prefer have you bought?
8) Have you changed dog food brand at some point?
   a) Why did you change it?
   b) What made you chose the new food?
   c) Did anyone recommend you the new feed?
   d) Whom?

**Bozita Robur**

You have selected Bozita Robur as one out of the brands you recognise.

17) Spontaneous, what do you think of when I say Bozita Robur?
   a) Why?
   b) What do you associate with it?
   c) Describe the brand Bozita Robur for me?
   c) Is there anything else that Bozita Robur makes you think of?
   e) What experience do you have Bozita Robur?
   f) Purchase any of you know this brand?
   g) Which company do you think produces the brand Bozita Robur?

Yes to buying Bozita Robur;

7) Why did you bought Bozita Robur?
   a) Is there anything you miss in Bozita Robur range?

No to buying Bozita Robur;

11) Why have you not bought Bozita Robur?

12) Is there anything else you would like to add when talking about quality dog food?

Thank you very much for your responses! As thanks for your help, the authors want to send you a voucher. What is your address?
# Appendix 5: Result of survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
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<th>Q12</th>
<th>Q13</th>
<th>Q14</th>
<th>Q15</th>
<th>Q16</th>
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<tr>
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<td>5.38</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.70</td>
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<td>6.73</td>
<td>6.18</td>
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<td>5.77</td>
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<td>Median</td>
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<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>6.50</td>
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<td>7.00</td>
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<td>5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence interval</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.61</td>
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Appendix 6: How empirical results were transferred into theory of planned behaviour

New Values was given as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WAS:</th>
<th>Unlikely/Disagree – 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - Likely/Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BECAME:</td>
<td>Unlikely/Disagree -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 Likely/Agree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

[“Q” refer to the questions in the survey]

The calculations to determine the variables was done as follows:

Performance = Q3 * New value of Q7
Injuries = Q4 * New value of Q8
Fur Quality = Q5 * New value of Q9
Appetite = Q4 * New value of Q10
Behavioural Belief = All above equally weighted with a maximum of 63

Veterinary’s = Q14 * New value of Q11
Breeders = Q15 * New value of Q12
Friends = Q16 * New value of Q13
Subjective Norm = All above equally weighted with a maximum of 63.
## Appendix 7: Results transformed into theory of planned behaviour format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
<th>Fur Quality</th>
<th>Appetite</th>
<th>Behavioural Belief</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td>14.97</td>
<td>12.85</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>12.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence interval 90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Veterinary’s Breeders Friends Subjective Norm</th>
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<td>Median</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence interval 90%</td>
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<td>Standard deviation</td>
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Appendix 8: Correlations

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<th>Fur Quality</th>
<th>Appetite</th>
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<td>Fur Quality</td>
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<td>Appetite</td>
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<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>Vets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breeders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
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Appendix 9: Additional graphs

Figure 4.13 Importance of enhanced fur quality for the dog owner in choosing premium dog food.

Figure 4.14 Importance of enhanced appetite for the dog owner in choosing premium dog food.
Figure 4.15 Importance of prevention of sickness and injuries for the dog owner in choosing premium dog food.

Figure 4.16 Demographics depending on the age of respondents.
Figure 4.17 Number of dogs and the age of respondents.

Figure 4.18 Demographics depending on the type of dog and age of respondents.
Brand recognition

Figure 4.19 Brand recognition for Eukanuba according to demographics of respondents.

Figure 4.20 Brand recognition for Hill’s according to demographics of respondents.
Figure 4.21 Brand recognition for Pro Plan according to demographics of respondents.

Figure 4.22 Brand recognition for Bozita Robur according to demographics of respondents.
Figure 4.23 Brand recognition for Royal Canin according to demographics of respondents.

Ever bought the brands

Figure 4.24 Respondents who has ever bought brand Eukanuba according to demographics of respondents.
Figure 4.25 Respondents who has ever bought brand Royal Canin according to demographics of respondents.

Figure 4.26 Respondents who has ever bought brand Pro Plan according to demographics of respondents.

Figure 4.27 Respondents who has ever bought brand Bozita Robur according to demographics of respondents.