Ambience

Is Ambience in Swedish Clothing Retail Stores a Missed Opportunity?

Master thesis within Business Administration

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Title: Ambience - Is ambience in Swedish clothing retail stores a missed opportunity?

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Abstract

Background: Nowadays, customers tend to take product quality and positive brand image for granted, which makes the formation of a new marketing strategy even more vital. In an age characterized by information overload and lack of time, factors such as emotional, cognitive or symbolic values become increasingly valuable in marketing. In contrast to American retail clothing stores such as Abercrombie & Fitch, who to a large extent use ambience as a strategic approach, the authors have not experienced as strong ambience strategies among Swedish retail stores. Therefore, the authors want to investigate if Swedish retailers make use of ambience as a strategic marketing approach and how the ambience is perceived by the consumers.

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to explore if and how ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) is used as a strategic marketing approach by retailers in Sweden and how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. In addition the authors will examine if the consumers’ perception of the current ambience is reflected in their in-store behaviour (willingness to browse and willingness to buy).

Method: In order to fulfil the purpose, a mixed method of explanatory and descriptive design was chosen, by collecting quantitative data in the form of a survey and qualitative data through interviews. The questionnaire consisted of 91 respondents from JC, Carlings and Dressmann. Interviews with store-managers from JC, Carlings and Dressmann were also conducted in order to reflect if and how the current ambience is used as a marketing approach.

Conclusion: Swedish retail stores use the ambience merely as a means for creating a pleasant store environment. The perceived atmosphere varies for different customers. The three ambient factors, lighting, music and fragrance, differed in level of importance for the three chosen stores. One conclusion drawn from this is that the age-group plays an important role in how the ambience is perceived. The results show that there is a positive relationship between the consumers’ perception of the ambience, their feelings and in-store behaviour, within all three stores. This indicates that if the positive feelings increase in intensity, so will the consumers’ willingness to browse and their willingness to buy from the store. As a conclusion, Swedish retailers should consciously use ambience as a strategic marketing approach to intentionally affect the consumers’ willingness to browse and buy.
Magisteruppsats i företagsekonomi

Titel: Ambience - År atmosfären inom svenska klädessbutiker en förbisedd möjlighet?

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Sammanfattning

Bakgrund: Nu förändras, tenderar kunder att ta produktkvalitet samt en positiv butiks image för givet, vilket gör att en ny typ av marknadsföringsstrategi blir alltmer betydelsefull. I en tid som kännetecknas av alltfler stort informationsflöde och brist på tid, har faktorer som emotionella, kognitiva eller symboliska värden blivit alltmer värdefulla inom marknadsföring. I motsats till amerikanska detaljhandeln för klädessbutiker, såsom Abercrombie & Fitch, som i stor utsträckning använder sig av atmosfären som ett strategiskt marknadsföringsverktyg; uppfattar författarna inte att användandet av atmosfären som marknadsföringsstrategi är lika starkt bland svenska butiker. Författarna vill därför undersöka om svenska återförsäljare använder sig av atmosfär som ett strategiskt marknadsföringsverktyg, samt hur atmosfären uppfattas av konsumenterna.

Syfte: Syftet med denna uppsats är att undersöka om och hur atmosfären (ljus, doft och musik) används som ett strategiskt marknadsföringsverktyg inom svenska klädessbutiker samt hur stämningen uppfattas av konsumenterna. Därutöver kommer författarna att undersöka om konsumenternas uppfattning om den rådande atmosfären återspeglas i deras butiksbeteende (villighet att gå runt i butiken samt villighet att köpa).

Metod: För att uppfylla syftet, valdes en blandad metod med en förklarande och beskrivande design, genom att samla in kvantitativ data i form av en enkät och kvalitativ data från intervjuer. Enkätundersökningsbotten bestod av 91 svarande från JC, Carlings och Dressmann. Intervjuer med butikschefer från JC, Carlings och Dressmann har också genomförts för att undersöka om och hur atmosfären används som ett marknadsföringsverktyg.

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I Introduction

This chapter will provide the reader with a background description of the study, which in turn will lead to the discussion about the problem the authors have distinguished. Followed by this, a formulation of the purpose and the research questions will be presented.

1.1 Background

According to Gobé (2001), the world is moving from an industrially-oriented economy, with products in focus, to a people-driven economy, with the consumers in focus. Gobé (2001) points out that as the competition in the marketplace is becoming rougher, goods and services alone are no longer enough to attract a new market or keep the existing clients.

Experiential marketing provides a new way of creating value for both companies and customers (Schmitt, 1999). Keller, Alpéría and Georgson (2008) state that experiential marketing promotes a product by not only communicating its features, but also connecting it with unique and interesting experiences, where the idea is to demonstrate how a brand can enrich a customer’s life. Traditional marketing views consumers as rational decision-makers who pay interest to functional features and benefits, but experiential marketing views consumers as irrational and emotional beings who focus on achieving pleasurable experiences (Schmitt, 1999).

Consumers today take good product quality and positive brand image as a given (Schmitt, 1999). Consequently, it is not surprising that companies today create their brand image by wrapping experience around their existing goods and services (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), to appeal to our emotions. Our emotions in turn get our attention through our senses, affecting our decision making processes (Lindstrom, 2005). As the future of emotional and sensory branding depends on a holistic view of the consumer, the goal for each brand is to take strategic decisions to transform the brand into a multi-sensory experience that creates a synergy across the senses (Gobé, 2001). Companies therefore need to provide the customers with memorable experiences in order to achieve competitive advantage and customer satisfaction.

Experiential marketing and the involvement of the five senses in marketing strategies, has been taken one step further by Hultén, Broweus & Van Dijk (2009), who define sensory marketing as “a way to clarify a firm’s identity and values with the long-term goal of creating brand awareness and establishing a suitable brand image” (Hultén et al., 2009, p. 2). The concept of sensory marking is not new. The well-known marketing textbook author, Philip Kotler, wrote about the utilization of atmospherics in the early 70s. In his article, “Atmospherics as a marketing tool” from 1973, Kotler argues that atmospherics have been overlooked as a marketing tool due to the fact that many businessmen tend to be overly practical. Kotler (1973) attests the importance of atmospherics within marketing by stating that “one of the most significant features of the total product is the place where it is bought or consumed. In some cases, the place, more specifically the atmosphere of the place, is more influential than the product itself in the purchase decision. In some cases, the atmosphere is the primary product.” (Kotler, 1973, p. 48). He further underlines the importance of the atmosphere at the point of purchase by explaining that it is not only the product itself that we as customers are purchasing, but rather the whole experience – the environment around the product and the mood of the customer. Although many articles within the field of atmospheric effects on consumer behaviour refer to Kotler (1973) as the initiator of the literature stream,
in reality work within this area started almost ten years before the formation of his article. Kotler was the first to use and define the term ‘atmospherics’ as the deliberate control and structuring of environmental cues, but other researchers had in their studies manipulated elements in the environment prior to Kotler’s article (Cox, 1970; Frank & Massey, 1970; Curhan, 1974).

Almost 40 years since Kotler’s statements about the usage of atmospherics as a tool for marketing, researchers still claim that all focus on studying consumers purchasing patterns have traditionally been explained by psychological models. These models are conventionally explained by referring to the ‘economic man’ principle, which implies that the consumers will act rationally and purchase the product they are most in need of, such as food. A common model, originating from psychology, which is often used within marketing, is Maslow’s ‘pyramid of needs’ (Bengtsson & Östberg, 2006). In summary, even though Kotler attempted to introduce the concept of atmospherics some four decades ago, retailers and businessmen still tend not to make use of ambience as a strategic marketing approach.

1.2 Problem Discussion

Nowadays, customers are inclined to take functional features, benefits, product quality and positive brand image for granted, which makes the formation of a new marketing strategy even more vital (Schmitt, 1999). In an age characterized by information overload and lack of time, factors such as emotional, cognitive or symbolic values become increasingly valuable in marketing (Hultén, et al., 2009). Companies and retailers try to influence the consumers’ shopping patterns in numerous ways; through commercials, advertisements, sponsoring and so forth, to convey a message of what one should and needs to buy (Kaijser & Östberg, 2010).

New products are failing at a rapid rate and most advertising campaigns do not register anything distinctive or memorable in the customer’s mind, making most products seem as interchangeable commodities rather than prevailing brands (Lindstrom, 2005). In fact, if products and advertising wish to survive another century, they need to change strategy and direction by delivering full emotional and sensory experiences (Lindstrom, 2005). Consumers demand satisfaction and something extra in addition to the core product and service, forcing companies to find new ways to communicate with them.

It is no longer meaningful for customers to carefully evaluate different products when most of them seem identical at a first comparison. Due to competitors copying each others’ product ideas, the comparison becomes even more difficult. Many retail chains in particular struggle with differentiating themselves from their competitors, when price and quality is the only competitive weapon. As a result the possibilities for differentiation among brands become smaller, affecting the individual’s options when making a choice. The human brain, in the human cognitive system, acts consequently as a filter to remove all the irrelevant information (Hultén et al., 2009).

Hultén et al., (2009) explain that it is through the five senses that data are gathered from the environment and are compared with previous experiences for the sake of categorization. By understanding the experience logic, companies are able to use sensory marketing as an approach to communicate with their consumers through the five senses, thereby bypassing the white noise of information overload.
Shopping has for consumers, become both consumption and entertainment; also defined as *retailtainment* (Solomon, 2004). Consumers feel that they during the consumption process live through an experience and a sense of pleasure, besides the actual acquisition of products (Wright, Newman & Dennis, 2006). By strategically designing the environment with the aim of bringing comfort and entertainment, consumers will stay longer in the store and buy more (Wright et al., 2006). Marketing researchers have in time realized that if consumers are influenced by physical stimuli experienced at the point of purchase, then the active creation of significant atmospheres should be an important marketing strategy. Such atmospheric planning can be the difference between the success and failure of a business (Bitner, 1990). The retail atmosphere is usually defined as the physical and non-physical elements of the retail environment, which is controlled by the retailer to influence the customer (Nordfält, 2007). The service environment, also depicted as the store/retail environment, can be divided in several dimensions, e.g. atmospherics, space/functionality and signs/symbols/artefacts (Bitner, 1992), ambient, social and design factors (Baker, Levy & Grewal, 1992). These dimensions affect consumers who then react cognitively, emotionally or physiologically to these factors. Studies of retail environment have manipulated a large number of atmospheric stimuli, such as music, fragrance, lighting, colour, temperature and crowding, in order to measure their influence on behavioural responses, such as time spent in the environment, sales, willingness to buy and impulse buying.

The initial idea behind the authors’ choice to investigate the subject of ambience was inspired by Abercrombie & Fitch, who to a large extent use ambience as a strategic approach. They play loud music, use a musky fragrance and a dimmed lighting. Needless to say, they know how to extend the brand experience. In contrast, the authors have not experienced as strong ambience strategies among Swedish retail stores.

Accordingly, the authors believe that it would be interesting to investigate if Swedish retailers make use of ambience as a strategic marketing approach and how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. Do the Swedish retailers have a specific strategy for the utilization of the in-store ambience, or is this a lost opportunity? How do the three ambient factors lighting, fragrance and music affect the consumers’ behaviour?

With regard to this field of interest, this thesis will research the current literature on experiential and sensory marketing, emotional and sensory branding, and retail atmospherics to form an opinion on ambience as a strategic marketing approach and describe how it is perceived by Swedish consumers.
1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to explore if and how ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) is used as a strategic marketing approach by retailers in Sweden and how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. In addition the authors will examine if the consumers’ perception of the current ambience is reflected in their in-store behaviour (willingness to browse and willingness to buy).

1.3.1 Research Questions

In order to fulfil the purpose, the following research questions will be addressed:

- **Research question 1**: How is ambience used by Swedish retail stores, and is it a planned strategic approach?
- **Research question 2**: How is the ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) perceived by the consumers?
- **Research question 3**: Is there a relation between the consumers’ perception of the ambience and their in-store behaviour (willingness to browse and willingness to buy)?

1.3.1.1 Perspective

Ambience can be used by retail store managers as a strategic marketing approach in order to design a retail environment that produces specific emotional effects in the consumer (Kotler, 1973). Atmospheric aspects, such as lighting, fragrance and music become tools for providing the image and the impression, the company or brand wants to convey to its consumers (Reimer & Kuehn, 2005).

The result from the influence of these atmospheric stimuli can lead to a wide range of responses, such as spending more time in the retail environment, impulse buying, sales etc. (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

As a consequence, the authors will consider both a company and consumer perspective in order to answer the purpose of this thesis.
2 Frame of Reference

This chapter presents the reader with an overview of the theories and studies made within the
fields of ambience. This frame of reference will later support the analysis of the empirical findings
through the use of SPSS and conducted interviews.

“We live in a world overflowing with sensations. Wherever we turn. We are bombarded by a
symphony of colours, sounds and odors” (Solomon, 2009, p. 78).

The following chapter will present theories within the field of consumer behaviour, experi-
ential and sensory marketing, emotional and sensory branding, retail atmospherics, providing
a basis for how ambient factors affect consumers’ behaviour. Initially, the authors will
explain the influence of economic psychology and attitude on the consumers’ perception
formation and decision making processes. Furthermore, experiential and sensory marketing
will provide the basis for this research, and will be further described in relation to emo-
tional and sensory branding. Lastly, the authors have chosen to research retail atmospherics,
their importance and how ambient factors affect consumers’ in-store behaviour. The em-
phasis will be on understanding why marketers use ambience within the field of marketing.
In order to understand the subject of choice, it is important to clarify why, when and how
marketers use ambience as a marketing approach.

2.1 Consumer Behaviour

“Consumer behaviour is the activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming and dispo-
sing of products and services.” (Blackwell, cited in Blythe, 2008, p. 6).

Many times we buy things that we have not planned to buy. So why do we buy these
things? Why do we choose one product over another? In order to answer these questions we
need to understand consumer behaviour. According to Blythe (2008) we choose things that
we believe we need on a day-to-day basis.

Blythe (2008) points out that we, as marketers, cannot ignore customers’ decision making
process. Furthermore, Blythe (2008) says that the fundamental basis for marketing thinking
is that the customer should be at the centre of everything the firm does.

The field of consumer behaviour covers a lot of ground: “It is the study of the processes in-
volved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or
experiences to satisfy needs and desires” (Solomon, 2009, p. 33).

2.1.1 Psychology

We are all influenced by commercials and advertisement but how strong the unconscious
psychology affects us is difficult to comprehend. Wanger (2002) starts his book “Kund psykologi” (Customers’ psychology) by telling the story of an experiment that was made back
in the 1950’s. The experiment was carried out in a cinema in New Jersey and was made
during, at that time, a very popular movie. The cinema viewers did not know that they
were part of an experiment. During the movie two messages were shown, faster than what
people consciously could register. The messages were first to “Eat Popcorn” and secondly
“Drink Coke”. This led to, even though no movie visitors could remember seeing such a
message, an increased sales of popcorn and soda, with 58% respectively 18% compared to
an average movie night (Wanger, 2002).
Although psychology is known to be a contributing factor when making purchases, arguments have been made by researchers that attitudes and preferences as well as motivation have rarely been recognized in the past as purchasing incentives within that field. These factors must be taken into consideration when calculating the degree of buying incentive behind a purchase (Van Raaij, Van Veldhoven & Wärneryd, 1988).

Van Raaij et al. (1988) argue that it is essential in economic psychology that work is done to develop consumer behaviour theory in such a way that it is considered to be independent of the immediate interests of application (Van Raaij et al., 1988).

Jansson-Boyd (2010) states that in most societies today, we are bombarded with advertising messages through television, radio, direct mail, the internet, billboards, newspapers, magazines, buses, via telephone etc. Moreover Jansson-Boyd (2010) argues that it was not long ago when TV commercials were used as the main recourse for advertisement and further claims that advertisers and marketers have to be more creative today by making use of advertising psychology (Jansson-Boyd, 2010).

2.1.2 The ABC Model of Attitudes

Attitude is an abstraction that has no one absolute meaning or definition, and yet, one of the most widely used definitions is formed by Allport (1954) who describes attitude as:

“A mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related” (cited in Williams, 1992, p 98)

An attitude consists of three components: Affect, behaviour and cognition (the ABC model of attitudes). Affect refers to the way a consumer feels about an attitude object, behaviour involves the person’s intention to do something in regards to the attitude object, and cognition refers to the different beliefs a consumer has about an attitude object. The interrelationship between knowing, feeling and doing is depicted in this model, meaning that a consumer’s attitude towards a product cannot be determined by merely looking at their belief about the product. Solomon (2002) explains that researchers believed that attitudes were formed in a fixed sequence of cognition, followed by affect and behaviour. Even though this might have been the traditional view, it has also been proven that depending on the consumer’s level of involvement and circumstances, attitudes can be formed from other hierarchies of effects as well (Solomon, 2002).

2.1.2.1 Hierarchies of Effects

The importance of the above mentioned components will vary depending on a consumer’s level of motivation with regards to the attitude object. The researchers in the field of attitude have developed the concept of the hierarchy of effects, in order to explain the comparative impact of these three components (Solomon, 2002), illustrated in figure 1 below.
The first component, the standard learning hierarchy, is explained as the manner in which a consumer approaches a product decision as a problem-solving process, where he/she first forms beliefs about a product by gathering knowledge (beliefs) regarding relevant attributes (Solomon, 2002). The beliefs are then evaluated by the consumer to form a feeling about the product (affect) (Erickson, Johansson & Chao, 1984). After this evaluation, the consumer is ready to engage in behaviour, i.e. buying the product or supporting the brand. This hierarchy postulates that a consumer is highly involved in making a purchase decision (Ray, 1973).

The second component, the low-involvement hierarchy, depicts a consumer who does not have a strong preference for one brand over another, but still acts on the basis of limited knowledge. Later the consumer forms an assessment only after the product has been purchased or used (Krugman, 1965). In this case, the attitude is formed through behavioural learning, where the consumer’s choice is reinforced by good or bad experiences of the product after purchasing it. According to Solomon (2002), this hierarchy reveals that not all purchase decisions are carefully considered through gathered sets of product beliefs, it is consequently not always beneficial to carefully communicate information about product attributes as a marketer. Solomon (2002) further points out that consumers in general, are not willing to gather and process complex brand-related information. They prefer instead to be swayed by principal behaviour-learning, such as responses caused by conditioned brand names, point-of-purchase displays, packages and other marketing stimuli.

The third component, the experimental hierarchy, describes consumers who act on the basis of their emotional reactions. This view highlights the fact that attitudes can be strongly influenced by intangible product attributes such as package design along with consumer’s reaction to accompanying stimuli, e.g. brand name, advertising, and the setting in which the experience takes place (Solomon, 2002). In addition, the mood a person is in when being exposed to a marketing message, influences how the message is processed, to what extent it will be remembered, and how the person will feel about the item and related products in the future (Aylesworth & MacKenzie, 1998; Lee & Sternthal, 1999; Barone, Miniard & Romeo, 2000; Aaker & Williams, 1998).
2.2 Experiential Marketing

A recurring term in marketing literature is experiential marketing, which refers to the process of appealing to the consumers’ senses by using smell, vision, taste, hearing and touch. Experiential marketing differs and is more efficient than traditional marketing, as it groups people according to their values, interests, personality, and social attachment, in order to effectively create an emotional bond between the consumers and the companies (McCle, 2004).

Successful companies use goods as props and services as the stage to create experiences that engage customers in an intrinsically personal way, shifting the focus from the traditional business model to a new strategy of differentiation by experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Today’s consumers demand and expect more than high quality goods and great services. This has resulted in the creation of experience as the forth economic offering next after commodity, goods and services. Experiences are as distinct from services, as services are from goods, but they have nevertheless gone unrecognized. While commodities are fungible, goods are tangible and services are intangible, experiences are memorable (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

Pine and Gilmore (1999) explain that when customers buy a service, they purchase a set of intangible activities that are carried out on their behalf. When customers on the other hand buy an experience, they pay to enjoy a set of memorable events that the company stages in order to engage them on a personal level. As the Service Economy is peaking, more companies have to redefine themselves as experience stagers and adapt to the Experience Economy. Implying that, companies will no longer offer goods and services alone, but also the resulting experience, rich with sensations, that is created within the customer. Although the experience itself lacks tangibility and is durable under a short period, the value of the experience lingers in the memory of the individual who was engaged by the event. Companies that use this strategy will not only earn a place in the heart of the consumers, but they will also be able to coax the money from their hands (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

It is therefore not surprising that companies today create a brand image by wrapping experience around their existing goods and services to differentiate and experientialize their offerings. Automakers, for instance, do this when they focus on enhancing the driving experience. While some goods, such as toys and cotton candy, richly engage the senses by nature. Other goods are made more experiential by adding elements that enhance the customer’s sensory interaction, i.e. bringing out the sensation created from its use. Automakers can spend up to millions of dollars on each of their models to ensure that the car doors sound in a specific way when they close (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

Schmitt (1999) is of the same opinion as Pine and Gilmore (1999) when he explains that although traditional marketing has provided valuable sets of strategies for the industrial age, it is now necessary for marketers to move from the features-and-benefits marketing toward creating experience for the customers. Schmitt (1999) states that managers need to consider new concepts and approaches to capitalize the new opportunities offered by experiential marketing and thereby differentiate themselves from other companies. While traditional marketing sees consumers as rational decision-makers who pay interest to functional features and benefits; experiential marketers see consumers as irrational and emotional human beings who focus on achieving pleasurable experiences.
Brand equity consists of assets that are linked to a brand, its name and symbol (Aaker, 1991), however, most brand theorists have treated brands as identifiers, missing the very essence of a brand as a source of sensory, affective and cognitive associations that lead to memorable and rewarding brand experiences (Schmitt, 1999).

Nowadays, customers view functional features, benefits, product quality and a positive brand image as a given. In addition, they expect products, communications and marketing campaigns that amaze their senses, touch their hearts and stimulate their minds. They want to experience products, communications and campaigns that they can incorporate into their lifestyles. This way, experiences provide sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and relational values that replace functional values. As a result, the extent to which a company is able to deliver a desirable customer experience will determine its success in the global marketplace in the future (Schmitt, 1999). This approach provides us with a holistic view of consumption which can be managerially implemented by using the following five types of customer experiences as strategic experiential modules (SEMs):

**SENSE** marketing – Appeals to the senses with the aim of creating sensory experiences through sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.

**FEEL** marketing – Pleads to the customer’s inner feelings and emotions with the intention of creating affective experiences that range from positive moods related to a brand, to strong emotions of joy and pride.

**THINK** marketing – Appeals to the intellect with the goal of creating cognitive, problem-solving experiences that engage customers creatively.

**ACT** marketing – Intends to affect physical experiences, by providing alternative ways of doing things, alternative lifestyles and interactions.

**RELATE** marketing – Is a combination of SENSE, FEEL, THINK and ACT marketing and appeals to the individual’s desire for self-improvement. It aims at relating the person to a broader social system, outside of his/her private state, to connect the individual to other people (Schmitt, 1999).

### 2.3 Sensory Marketing

As previously mentioned, experiential marketing provides a new way of creating value for both companies and customers (Schmitt, 1999) and it aims at appealing to the consumers’ senses by using smell, vision, taste, hearing and touch (McCle, 2004). Krishna (2010, p. 2) defines sensory marketing as “marketing that engages the consumers’ senses and affects their behaviour”. When going into a store, consumers usually have a predetermined expectation based on previous shopping experiences. For example in some southern European countries it is common with shelf-stable milk, while it is very uncommon in the US and the northern European countries. The Shelf-stable milk is pasteurized milk that has been heated until the bacteria has been destroyed, and can therefore last for up to six months without having to be refrigerated. Due to the fact that a consumer in the US has learned to equate the cold temperature of refrigerated milk with freshness, he will experience a negative physical reaction when confronted with a product that contradicts his expectations (Solomon, 2009).
Solomon (2009) argues that due to the fact that Americans have a different cultural background than Europeans, the expectations between the two are different. Europeans do not necessarily have the same perception of milk as the Americans.

With this in mind we can see how marketers can take advantage of past experiences to stimulate our senses. We may see a billboard, hear a jingle, feel the softness of a cashmere sweater, taste a special flavour, or smell a new leather jacket. For example, sensory data emanating from the external environment can generate internal sensory experiences when the song triggers a young man’s memory of his first dance and brings to mind the smell of his date’s perfume or the feel of her hair on his cheek (Solomon, 2009).

![Diagram of perceptual process]

Figure 2 – An overview of the perceptual process (Solomon, 2009, p. 79)

### 2.3.1 The Meaning of Perception

Statt (1997) illustrates an example of how we as consumers see the world and that there is no such thing as objective reality, by using the old joke about the optimist and the pessimist sitting side by side in a bar and contemplating their drinks.

![Optimist's and Pessimist's glasses]

Figure 3 – The optimist and the pessimist

Objectively there is exactly the same amount in each glass – about half. But whereas the optimist’s glass is half full, the pessimist’s glass is half empty (Statt, 1997). Our experiences and individual perceptions are vital for how we perceive a product as consumers.
Lindstrom (2005) says that by using sensory branding, four important dimensions will be
divided to a brand. The first dimension is to create a very loyal relationship built over a long
period of time. In order to establish this bond, your brand has to be unique and become
habitual. Secondly, optimize the match between perception and reality, the goal is for the
reality to match, if not exceed, the consumers perception. Thirdly, create a brand platform
for product extensions, such as Marlboro-Masculinity-Cowboy. Lastly it is important to
trademark your brand, to be able to differentiate it from the competitors. A good explana-
tion of the importance of the use of senses is presented by St. Thomas Aquinas

“The senses are a kind of reason. Taste, touch and smell, hearing and seeing, are not merely a
means to sensation, enjoyable or otherwise, but they are also a means to knowledge—and are,
indeed, your only actual means to knowledge.”

(St. Thomas Aquinas)

Hearing and vision are the two senses we rely most on. In both seeing and hearing our or-
gans react to waves of energy, our eyes to light waves and our ears to sound waves. Just as
light waves activate the optic nerve, sound waves activate the eardrum sending messages to
the auditory and then finally to the brain. In terms of consumer behaviour both senses have
to be used by marketers: Vision in terms of lightning and colouring, and hearing in terms
of volume and tempo of background music (Statt, 1997). The third sense the authors are
interested in is fragrance or smell. Statt (1997) says that it might be that we rely so heavily
on vision and hearing for sensory information (sight to navigate ourselves through our daily
life and hearing provides us with information about our environment) that we tend to over-
look the importance of fragrances and odours.

An experiment with 250 women was made in a small American town asking them to judge
the quality of four pairs of stockings and to select the best pair, but it had nothing to do
with quality because the stockings were identical. What was different was the smell; three
different scents had been added to three of the pairs. The most popular pair was scented
with a typical female scent, floral scent, while the unscented pair only attracted eight per-
cent of the subjects. Yet the women justified their choice in terms of quality values such as
fineness of knit and texture (Statt, 1997).

Odours can stir emotions or create calming feelings. They can evoke memories or relive
stress. Some of our responses to scents result from early associations that evoke good or bad
feelings. This explains why businesses are exploring connections among smell, memory and
mood (Solomon, 2009).

2.3.2 Emotional and Sensory Branding

Gobé (2001) argues that it has become clear over the past decade that the world is moving
from an industrially oriented economy, where machines and production were in focus, to a
people-driven economy with a focus on consumers. In order for brands to be relevant and
survive, it is important that companies acknowledge the major changes ahead and compete
accordingly. Speed is replacing stability and intangible assets have become more valuable
than tangible assets (Gobé, 2001). As the competition in the marketplace becomes rougher,
goods or services alone are no longer enough to attract a new market or even keep existing
markets or clients (Gobé, 2001; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999). If products and
advertising want to survive another century, they will need to change direction entirely by
enabling brands to deliver full sensory and emotional experience (Lindstrom, 2005).
Gobé (2001) believes that it is the emotional aspects of products and their distribution systems that will constitute the key difference between the consumers’ final choice and the price they are willing to pay. The key to success is to understand people’s emotional needs and desires, which requires companies to build stronger connections and relationships with the consumers by treating them as partners.

Emotional branding is a dynamic mix of anthropology, imagination, sensory experiences and visionary advances, and it presents the means for connecting products to the consumers in a subconscious and emotionally insightful manner. In a sense, it focuses on people’s desire to transcend material satisfaction and experience emotional fulfilment. Lindstrom (2005) is of the same opinion as Gobé, when he explains that emotions get our attention through our senses, which in turn influence our decision making processes (Lindstrom, 2005). Consumers nowadays think more with their gut instincts than with their heads when choosing products. How the consumers feel about retailers is becoming an important part of the buying routine at a time when most products offer the same quality and are in danger of becoming commodities in an overloaded marketplace. Brands that are able to create emotional connection to consumers are much stronger than the ones that have not shaped their distinct identity (Lindstrom, 2005).

Gobé (2001) defines emotional branding as a way of creating personal dialogue with consumers, who expect their brands to know them intimately, individually, and have a solid understanding of their needs and cultural orientation. People today feel empowered as they are more connected to each other and global events. They feel capable of influencing the world with their beliefs and take part in shaping their future. Quality of life in the form of stress-free shopping, time management, connectivity and heightened pleasure affect the consumer’s level of receptiveness to new product or marketing ideas. Marketers have to consider all these aspects by serving the whole person, by bringing pleasurable, life-enhancing solutions to their world. The future of branding is in other words dependent on this holistic view of the consumer.

The goal of each brand is to take strategic steps to transform the brand into a multi-sensory experience to create a synergy across the senses. A total sensory experience produces a domino effect. Impressions are stored in the brain and if one sense is triggered, it will lead to another and another, until a spectrum of memories and emotions unfold (Lindstrom, 2005). Schmitt and Simonson (1997), similar to Lindstrom (2005), call this synesthesia as they emphasize that sensory branding is about creating synergies between the senses that leads to a chain reaction where the involvement of one sense activates the use of another. Marketing efforts to create the desired brand image is made possible as the use of senses evokes strong memories in the receiver of the emotional experience.

The modes of distribution have already begun to change. The retail environments of the future will be less about purchasing products and more about experiencing a brand in a physical setting; becoming places to build brand images, rather than only being places to sell products. This strategy will encourage stores to emotionally bond with consumers through retail design and merchandising strategies that provide imaginative features, entertainment, and sensory appeal that cannot be found online, although Internet is becoming the ultimate one-to-one distribution channel (Gobé, 2001).

A brand will in turn have to be more than a logo, by using images, sounds, the tactile feelings that collaborate to build and maintain the image of the brand. Sensory branding allows
the consumer to see different dimensions of a single brand and the main objective is to create a strong, positive and long-lasting bond between the brand and the consumer. The bond will assure that the customer turns repeatedly to the brand, barely noticing the competing products and thus, optimize impulse purchasing behaviour (Lindstrom, 2005).

As previously explained regarding sensory marketing, Lindstrom (2005) explains that in order to establish this bond the emotional engagement between the brand and the customer must be habitual and unique to the brand. The goal is for the reality to match and even exceed consumer’s perceptions, to establish a brand platform for future product extensions. The marketers have to make sure that all the links and associations connected to the brand are supported, or else they risk losing some of the strongest competitive advantages of the brand.

2.4 Retail Atmospherics

One of the most important evolutions in business thinking was made during the early 1970’s, when it was recognized that people react to more than the offered tangible product or service when they are making their purchase decision (Kotler, 1973). Buyers tend to respond to the total product, where one of the most noteworthy features of the total product is the place where the product is bought or consumed. In particular the atmosphere of the place is according to Kotler (1973) more influential than the product itself on the purchasing decision. Despite this fact, companies tend to overlook the effectiveness of atmosphere/ambience as a marketing tool.

Atmospherics is described by Kotler (1973, p. 50) as: “The effort to design buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer that enhances his purchase probability”. It is the conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buyers. The atmosphere is always present as a quality of the surrounding space and is registered through the senses.

Kotler (1973) points out that the most important sensory channels for atmosphere are sight, sound, scent and touch. All four sensory channels are mentioned below, but the authors will mainly focus on studying sight, sound and scent.

- The significant visual dimensions of an atmosphere are: Colour, brightness, size and shapes.

- The vital aural dimensions of an atmosphere are: Volume and pitch.

- The main olfactory dimensions of an atmosphere are: Scent and freshness.

- The essential tactile dimensions of an atmosphere are: Softness, smoothness and temperature (Kotler, 1973).

Since an atmosphere is seen, heard, smelled and felt, the fifth sense, taste, is excluded. There is an important distinction between the intended atmosphere and the perceived atmosphere. The intended atmosphere is the group of sensory qualities that the designer of the artificial environment deliberately instils in the space. The perceived atmosphere on the other hand, varies for different customers due to the fact that people’s reactions to colours,
sounds, noises and temperatures are partially learned or culturally influenced (Kotler, 1973).

Previous research indicates that companies should not only focus on the obvious aspects of the environment, but also consider the surrounding aspects when shaping the store environment. The surrounding aspects, such as fragrance, music, lighting, colours and design are tools for providing the image and the impression the company wants to convey to its consumers (Reimer & Kuehn, 2005; Lindstrom, 2005).

The result from the influence of these stimuli can lead to a wide range of behavioural responses, such as spending more time in the environment, impulse buying and sales. The environment interacts with the characteristics of individuals to determine their response, which leads to the noteworthy conclusion that an atmosphere that produces a certain response in one individual or group at a specific time might produce an entirely different response in another individual or group. In short, an atmosphere that yields a positive reaction in teenagers may produce a negative reaction in older shoppers, e.g. loud rock music (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

2.4.1 The Importance of Atmospherics

Firstly, as explained by Kotler (1973), atmospherics is a significant marketing tool in situations where the product is purchased or consumed and where the seller has design options. Consequently, the utilization of atmospherics becomes relevant for retailers and less relevant for wholesaler and manufacturers. Retailers are more prone to give the most thought to atmospherics since customers tend to have a large choice in where they buy and because atmosphere is part of the total product. It is important to point out that even within retailing atmospherics vary in importance depending on the line of business and selling approach.

Secondly, atmospherics becomes a more important marketing tool as the number of competitive outlets increase. When only one outlet exists where a certain type of good is sold, the merchant is not under pressure to invest in atmospherics and can thereby display the merchandise as he/she pleases, trusting that the demand will keep the customers coming. There is of course an exception to this fact, as the monopolistic merchant should recognize that atmospherics could be of help in increasing the buyers’ rate of consumption. As the amount of outlets for a given product increase, the more likely it is for the competitors to increase their use of atmospherics, as a tool to attract and hold a certain segment of the market (Kotler, 1973).

Thirdly, atmospherics is a more significant marketing tool in industries where product and/or price differences are small. As a rule, buyers tend to make use of product and price differences as key factors when choosing retail outlets. When these differences are minimal, buyers will look for further discriminative criteria, which might be provided by location convenience, parking facilities, owner personality or atmosphere (Kotler, 1973).

The process of designing the in-store environment should be adapted to the market segment the company is aiming to address, as the environment has to reflect the consumer expectations. The atmospherics must be selected with the target group in mind, by considering what they are supposed to feel and experience (Countryman & Jang, 2006).
2.4.2 The Influence of Atmospherics on Behaviour

Although being an older model, the influence of atmospherics on behaviour is according to the authors well depicted by Kotler (1973, see figure 4 below), where the purchase object is placed in a space characterized by specific sensory qualities. These may be intrinsic to the space or they might be designed by the seller into the space. Each buyer perceives only certain qualities of this space and his/her perception is influenced by selective attention, distortion, and retention. The perceived qualities of the atmosphere can affect the person’s information and affective state. In turn, the buyer’s modified information and affective state may increase her purchase probability (Kotler, 1973). Kotler (1973) states that the atmosphere can have an effect on purchase in at least three ways:

1. The atmosphere may function as an attention-creating medium, where the retailer might use colours, noises, and motion to make his/her establishment stand out.

2. The atmosphere may act as a message-creating medium through which the retailer can express various things about his/her establishment to potential and actual customers. The atmosphere basically delivers discriminative stimuli to buyers, which enables them to recognize retailer differences as a basis for choice of retailer.

3. The atmosphere may serve as an affect-creating medium, where the colours, sounds and textures of the shop may directly stimulate instinctive reactions that positively contribute to the purchase probability. In this instance, atmosphere plays the role of a very explicit situational factor that helps to convert behavioural intentions into actual buying behaviour. As Kotler (1973) explains, people walk around with many needs, wants and buying intentions that do not actualize until situational factors, such as encouraging atmospheres, turn the want into actual purchase.

**The Causal Chain Connecting Atmosphere and Purchase Probability**

![Causal Chain Diagram](Image)

Figure 4 – Kotler’s causal chain model (Kotler, 1973, p. 54)

Many marketing researchers studying retail atmospherics have made use of environmental psychology, mainly the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) theoretical model, for studying the effects of store atmosphere on shopping behaviour. Environmental psychology draws from a stimulus-organism-response paradigm, where the atmosphere is the stimulus (S) that causes the consumer to evaluate (O), which in turn cause a behaviour response. The model
is based on pleasure/arousal research, where moods act as a mediating factor between environmental cues and behaviour. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) simply suggest that all responses to an environment can be considered as approach or avoidance behaviours. Shoppers respond to the atmosphere in two contrasting ways, through approach or avoidance behaviour.

These behaviours are considered to have four aspects:

- A desire to *physically* stay in (approach) or to leave (avoidance) the environment.
- A desire or willingness to *explore* the environment by looking around (approach) or to avoid moving through or interacting with the environment; remaining unresponsive in the environment (avoidance).
- A desire or willingness to *communicate* with others in the environment (approach) or preferably avoid interaction and ignore communication attempts from others (avoidance).
- Enhancement (approach) or hindrance (avoidance) degree of performance and satisfaction with task performance (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982).

The four aspects can be used to describe behaviours in retail environment. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) explain that the behaviours are a result of the emotional states the individual experiences in the environment, where the emotional states can be divided in two major dimensions: Pleasure and arousal. These dimensions interact in such a way that arousal intensifies approach behaviour in pleasant environments and avoidance behaviour in unpleasant environments.

*Physical* approach and avoidance can be related to store patronage intensions, while *exploratory* approach and avoidance can be related to in-store search and exposure to retail offerings. *Communication* approach and avoidance can be related to interaction with the sales personnel and floor staff, while performance and satisfaction approach and avoidance can be related to repeat-shopping frequency, in addition to the support of time and money spending in the store (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982).

The reaction to the environment is reflected in the consumers’ approach or avoidance behaviour. Experiencing enjoyment and pleasure creates a sense of loyalty in the consumers which leads to repeat visits (Bitner, 1992; Underhill, 1999). The store environment also affects the amount of time the consumers spend in the store (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996), and if the in-store time increases, so does the amount of purchases (Underhill, 1999).

### 2.4.3 The Effect of Lighting, Fragrance and Music on Behaviour

As mentioned above, studies of retail environment have manipulated a large number of atmospheric stimuli and noted their influence on behavioural responses. According to Bitner (1992), the service environment, also depicted as the store/retail environment, can be divided into atmospherics, space/functionality and signs/symbols/artefacts that affect people, who then react cognitively, emotionally or physiologically to these factors. Donovan and Rossiter (1982) agree that consumer behaviour in the service environment is basically an emo-
tional response to the attributes of the environment and point out that retailers should consider the emotional feelings of the shoppers.

Baker et al., (1992), suggest that the main dimensions of the store environment are ambient, social and design factors. The ambient factors are background conditions in the environment such as temperature, scent, music and lighting. They explain that customers may notice the ambient factors only when the lighting becomes too bright or the music too loud. The social factors represent the people component of the environment, where both the customer and the store employees are included in the research. It is the number, type and behaviour of people that is expected to affect the consumers’ perception of the store.Lastly, the design factors include the functional and the aesthetic essentials, such as architecture, layout and style.

Based on the above mentioned categorization of the retail environment, the purpose of this research focuses on the atmospheric and the ambient factors, more specifically lighting, music and fragrance.

According to Lindstrom (2005), sight is the most important of the senses, followed by smell, sound, taste and touch. Lighting, fragrance and music fit into the three most important senses.

2.4.3.1 Lighting

Sight has traditionally been the most applied sensory stimulus in marketing, since it has a way of overruling the other human senses (Lindstrom, 2005). Gobé (2001) explains that the lighting in a store should be designed to strengthen the brand identity and the values held by the brand. The lighting and thereby the atmosphere at a point of purchase can easily be transformed and adapted to seasons (Gobé, 2001). The impact of lighting has been examined by several researchers, suggesting that lighting factors can influence the handling and examination of merchandise, and the store image (Baker et al., 1992; Baker, Grewal & Parasuraman, 1994). When it comes to perceived image, soft incandescent lighting is associated with higher quality environment, while bright fluorescent lighting is associated with discount image (Baker et al., 1994; Sharma & Stafford, 2000). Lighting is expected to place the consumers in different emotional stages, according to Countryman and Jang (2006). The preferences for lighting levels has been shown to vary for various behaviours and situations (Butler & Biner, 1987), but soft lighting tends to create a more relaxing and pleasant mood, than when bright lighting is used (Meer, 1985).

2.4.3.2 Fragrance

Lindstrom (2005) says that test results have shown a 40 percent improvement in people’s mood when being exposed to a pleasant fragrance, especially if the fragrance evokes happy memories. Natural and chemical substances are nowadays being released in ambient environments to improve feelings of well being. These conditioning systems are being used in homes, resorts, hotels and also retail stores (Chebat & Michon, 2003). Aromas such as lavender, cinnamon and citrus are said to stimulate relaxation; peppermint, thyme and rosemary are scents that invigorate, while ginger and chocolate create a sense of romance (Amodio, 1998). Although the research on fragrance and its impact on consumers is limited (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007), different types of odours do, according to Hirsch (1995), significantly influence behaviour. Spangenberg, Crowley and Henderson (1996) on the other hand found that the nature of the odour was not the determining factor influencing
behaviour. The presence or absence of the odour had a more significant affect on behaviour, leading to an enhanced subjective experience for the shoppers as the time they spent in line, examining merchandise or waiting for help seemed to be shorter than it actually was due to the impact of fragrance (Spangenberg et al., 1996). In addition, ambient scent has been proven to contribute to a favourable perception of the store environment and indirectly of the product quality (Chebat & Michon, 2003).

### 2.4.3.3 Music

Sound can according to Lindstrom, (2005) be the deciding factor in a consumer’s choice, hence its importance in branding should not be underestimated. Within sensory branding, the distinctive sound of a brand is considered to be an important factor, apart from the use of sound as an ambient factor. The car industry is an excellent example of an industry where sound is used as a sensory stimulator, developing a specific sound for the engine or even a door closing. This differentiates the brand from its competitors (Lindstrom, 2005).

Music is a powerful tool for evoking emotions and can be used as a trigger for creating desired reactions to a brand. When listening to music, endorphins are released which generate sensations of pleasure, that can be used to communicate to the unconscious desire of consumers (Gobé, 2001). One commonly studied ambient factor is the impact of music on consumer behaviour, demonstrating that music has an effect on sales, perceptions of the environment and actual time spent in the environment. The study by Yalcin and Spangenberg (1990) indicates however, that music can induce different responses based on the age of the shoppers. Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) explain that music can, through tempo and volume, affect consumers. Slow music has a tendency to encourage consumers to remain in the store and buy more (Peter & Olson, 1994). Consumers are more likely to stay slightly longer if they are familiar with the music and if slow music is played at low volume, in comparison with unfamiliar music with high tempo and sound level (Garlin & Owen, 2006). A further study (Gulas & Schewe, 1994) specifies that music can influence behaviour even in the event that the shopper is not consciously aware of it. Music has the ability of evoking affective and behavioural responses in consumers (Bruner, 1990), since background music has a tendency of being soothing and creates a pleasurable atmosphere (Milliman, 1982).

### 2.5 The Conceptual Model

The authors have created a conceptual model in an attempt to summarize the chosen theories and connect them to an approach of exploring the relationship between specifically chosen variables. Experiential marketing and sensory marketing should, in the authors’ opinion, be viewed as a review of the theories that previously have dominated the basis of the theory formation. These theories have in addition been described by the authors, in connection to emotional and sensory branding. In addition, retail atmospheres, their importance and specifically how atmospherics influence consumers’ behaviour have been studied.

The model is based on the purpose of this thesis, which is to explore if and how ambience is used as a strategic marketing approach by retailers in Sweden and how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. The ambient factors that the authors have chosen to focus on are: Lighting, fragrance and music. In addition, the authors intend to examine if the consumers’ perception of the current ambience is reflected in their in-store behaviour, i.e. willingness to browse and willingness to buy. The ambience with the ambient factors lighting,
fragrance and music, are essential parts of the model structure. These variables have been compared to the emotions the consumers experienced during their visit in the store, mainly focusing on the consumers’ positive feelings that generate pleasurable emotional states. This model has been applied to the current ambience in the three chosen retail stores: JC, Dressmann and Carlings.

The authors have based part of their model on the Donovan and Rossiter (1982) study which introduced the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) environmental psychology model into the store atmosphere literature. As previously mentioned, the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) model is based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm, which suggests that the effects of store environment factors on approach/avoidance behaviour is mediated by their affective responses (i.e. pleasure and arousal). Different from the Donovan and Rossiter (1982) study, the authors chose to replace the Mehrabian and Russell PAD (Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance) model for measuring affective responses, with Izard’s (1977) model for measuring moods and emotions. Izard’s model is considered to be one of the more reliable scales for measuring emotions during a shopping experience (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000). As did Donovan and Rossiter (1982), the authors chose to measure the intentions to behave, rather than actual behaviour, depicted as their willingness to browse and willingness to buy (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991). These two in-store behaviours are considered to be approach behaviours. The variables, ambience and positive feelings, have therefore not been compared to avoidance behaviours. The authors aim to explore the strength as well as the direction (positive or negative) of the relationship between the ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) and the consumers’ feelings while visiting the store. In addition, the relationship between the feelings and the consumers’ behaviour will be explored by comparing the feelings with their willingness to buy and their willingness to browse.
3 Method

This chapter describes the procedure the authors have adopted when finding information and collecting the data. This process is described in detail and is followed by a discussion about the study’s reliability and validity. A specific subchapter is devoted to in detail describe how the authors have proceeded to retrieve the empirical findings through the use of SPSS.

The retail store environment can be divided into ambient, social and design factors. The main focus of this research is on the ambient factors of the retail environment. Although there are several ambient factors that can affect the consumers’ perception and in-store behaviour, this research is only focusing on the effects of the following ambient factors: Lighting, fragrance and music. For this reason the effects of the other remaining ambient factors on consumer behaviour will be disregarded. The reason behind the choice of these three ambient factors is based on the authors’ opinion that retailers should strongly consider using them as marketing tools. They are probably among the least expensive techniques to improve shoppers’ perceptions and can easily be enhanced to reach their fullest strategic potential. In comparison to extensive and expensive remodelling of the retail environment and interior design, changes in these ambient factors can be done rapidly and inexpensively.

Other delimitations have been made concerning the choice of data gathering for describing the consumers’ perception of the ambience, as well as the effect of the current ambience on their behaviour. The sample has been delimited to three Swedish retail stores (i.e. clothing stores) in Jönköping: JC, Dressmann and Carlings. The sample is intended to represent a population of JC, Dressmann and Carlings consumers in Sweden. One of the main reasons behind the choice of clothing stores is due to the phenomenon of ‘retailtainment’, where shopping has for consumers become both consumption and entertainment. Consumers feel that they go through an experience and a sense of pleasure, during the consumption process (Solomon, 2004). Shopping is in a sense more than the actual acquisition of products; it is a form of entertainment. In addition, shopping for clothes is not the same as, for instance, buying a car. A customer, who wants to buy a car, has probably chosen a specific brand and model before visiting the car dealer. In contrast, shopping for clothes does involve a degree of impulse buying, which in the authors’ opinion, could be a result of the impact of ambience on consumers’ behaviour.

3.1 The Research Philosophy

Depending on what research philosophy you adopt and how you as a researcher view the world, these assumptions will underpin your research strategy and will affect the way the research is conducted (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Collins & Hussey (2003) have a similar view where they argue that a research philosophy is the assumption about the world along with the character of knowledge. When putting this into the context of research, a research philosophy tells the researchers how they should carry out their study. Furthermore, by choosing and being aware of the research philosophy, this will help the authors when they are choosing strategies and techniques, such as conducting the survey and collecting the primary data.

The authors of this study have an interpretive research philosophy which implies that it is necessary for the researcher to understand the differences between humans in their role as social actors. This view is based upon the intellectual tradition phenomenology. Phenome-
nology refers to the way humans make sense of the world around them (Saunders et al., 2009).

The purpose of this study is to empirically explore and describe how and if ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) is used as a strategic marketing approach by retailers in Sweden. The additional perspective is to investigate how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. Therefore the collection of primary data has been based on interviews with three chosen store-managers and questionnaires for exploring the respondents’ perception and behaviour. This research is based on existing theories, aiming at further examining how they match the environment.

3.2 Explanatory and Descriptive Research

This thesis is based upon existing theories; as well as getting a clearer view of the relationship between the selected variables, based on the empirical data. Due to this the authors have chosen an explanatory and descriptive method.

The explanatory approach to this study has been chosen with the aim of studying interrelations and causal relationships between variables, in order to explain the relationship between these variables (Saunders et al., 2009). The dependent variables that the authors will use within this thesis are willingness to browse and willingness to buy. The independent variable is the ambience, with the ambient factors lighting, fragrance and music. This thesis will be developed from an explanatory to a descriptive approach. It starts by collecting data to investigate the relationships between variables. In addition the authors will use descriptive statistics and correlation when presenting and analyzing their conclusion.

3.3 Quantitative and Qualitative Research Approach

Since the research is aimed to explore the consumers’ experience, a quantitative approach has been chosen. The quantitative data collection was made with the help of questionnaires, where the authors could make use of numerical data. However since the authors’ purpose is to explore if Swedish retailers have a strategy that corresponds with the consumers’ perception, a qualitative approach had to be applied as well, in the form of interviews. In this case, non-numerical data is used and the interviewees’ subjective understandings of different occurrences will affect the outcome of the result (Saunders et al., 2009). The interviews as well as the survey make up the authors’ primary data. The authors started with collecting secondary data, which is data already collected by other researchers (Saunders et al., 2009). This was done in order to get a good base for the empirical research since it is much faster and cheaper to collect than primary data (Saunders et al., 2009).

The interviews as well as the survey make up the authors’ primary data. Primary data is more reliable than secondary data, since it is data collected empirically by the researcher themselves which consequently means that it is data collected for the specific purpose at hand, making it very distinctive and reliable (Saunders et al., 2009).

In order to answer the three research questions the secondary data is mainly used as a base for knowledge; however the main focus will be on the primary data consisting of the survey as well as the interviews.

3.4 Case Study

The purpose of this thesis is to empirically explore and describe how and if ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) is used as a strategic marketing approach by retailers in Sweden
and how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. In order to investigate the use and effects of ambience, the authors based the thesis on three different retail stores: JC, Dressmann and Carlings. The case study method, which is characterized by an intensive study of selected examples, was applied (Ghauri, Gronhaug & Kristianslund, 1995). The case study method is very useful for providing insight when exploring relatively less-known areas, where little experience and limited theory are available to serve as a guide. The main focus is on seeking insight through the features and characteristics of the object being studies, rather than testing existing hypothesis. The authors use this method to collect sufficient information to characterize and explain the unique features of the case, and point out the characteristics that might be common in several cases (Ghauri et al., 1995). This method was chosen, since it is a suitable method when “how” and “why” questions are to be answered, especially when the authors have little control over events and when the focus is mainly on a current phenomenon in a real-life context (Yin, 1989). In addition, case studies are often of an explanatory, exploratory, descriptive nature (Ghauri et al., 1995), which corresponds with the authors’ choice of explanatory and descriptive research.

3.5 Population and Sampling

The population chosen for this thesis was set to Sweden since it consists of the authors’ area of interest, as explained in the background, but the sample was chosen to be JC, Dressmann and Carlings in Jönköping City due to the differences in their ambience. The decision to choose these three stores situated in Jönköping was made both for economical and physical reasons since the thesis writing took place in Jönköping. Both authors are in addition, familiar with the ambience in these stores.

The information regarding the consumers’ perception of the store ambience was measured through convenience sampling which is a type of non-probability sampling. In this sampling technique, the researchers are expected to find respondents who happen to be conveniently accessible (Kent, 2007). The utilization of convenience sampling is not an uncommon method among students, due to its accessibility, low cost and convenience (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2006); which is partially the reason behind the authors’ choice of sample collection method. In order to ensure that the sample depicting the population is good, there is a requirement for the sample to be large enough (Coolidge, 2000), ideally size > 30 is a good rule of thumb (Salkind, 2000). As this research is based on three clothing retail stores, a total sample size of 90 participants would be required. These requirements were met as the sample size was 91 respondents, (N=30 for JC, N=30 for Dressmann and N=31 for Carlings). The sample size correlates with the central limit theorem, which makes the results from the study somewhat generalizable (Saunders et al., 2009). The studies were conducted on JC, Dressmann and Carlings consumers and the participants were asked to answer the questionnaire questions outside each of these stores in Jönköping City. The respondents’ responses were collected on weekdays, during 3-7 pm, between 18 of April to 28 of April. It was of great importance to limit the potential factors that could cause differences between the three store groups. For this reason the authors made sure to collect the respondents’ answers during the same hours of the weekdays, under the premises that these particular consumers have similar preferences to browse or shop in the stores during these hours. Furthermore the authors made sure that one participant at a time answered the questionnaire, in order to rule out that two or more respondents would affect each other’s answers. In order to aid and quicken the data collection process, the authors offered the re-
respondents an incentive: The respondents would automatically take part in a raffle to win two movie tickets if they participated in the market research.

3.6 The Interviews

The three clothing retail stores were chosen due to the authors’ perception that they differ from each other in their ambience, and because they are well known clothing retail stores within the Swedish market. Furthermore the three stores were chosen based on the fact that they target three different consumer age-groups.

JC is a clothing retail store that opened its first store in the early 60’s and has mainly a consumer target group focused on younger teenagers (JC originally stood for junior clothing). The authors’ perception of JC’s ambience is that it is bright lighting, modern music with a suitable sound level, and without any particular fragrance.

Carlings is a clothing retail store that opened its first store in Norway in 1908, and has mainly a consumer target group of older youths. The authors’ perception of Carlings is that it is dark, playing Rock music with a high sound level, and with a fragrance reminding of a warehouse.

Dressmann is a clothing retail store that opened its first store in the early 60’s and has mainly a consumer target group between 30 years or older. The authors’ perception of Dressmann is that it has subdued lighting, older music with a low sound level, and without a particular fragrance.

Since the authors’ research is aimed to explore the consumers’ perception, it was important to find out how the different ambient factors were used by the three retail stores. Therefore structured interviews were carried out with the store managers from these chosen retailers.

The chosen structure of the interviews was based on the concepts from Saunders et al. (2009). The authors chose to use a standardized form with an identical set of questions, an interviewer-administrated questionnaire, for all three interviews. When using structured interviews the questions are predetermined as well as standardized. Furthermore, in order to avoid any sort of bias the interviewer read the questions out loud exactly as they were written and tried to use the same tone of voice while asking the questions.

The interviews were conducted in Swedish as this was the mother tongue of the three interviewees and the information was summarized first in Swedish and then later translated into English due to the premise provided by Marschan-Piekkari & Welch (2004). They claim that it is more appropriate to conduct the interviews in their mother tongue and then at a later stage translate it into the language of the research; this is done in order to minimize any kind of language misunderstandings (Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004).

All three interviews were conducted at the managers’ own offices and took between 25-30 minutes to complete. By doing the interviews in each manager’s office, the authors had a personal meeting with the interviewees. By conducting the interviews face-to-face the authors can increase their validity, due to the fact that a personal meeting allows the interviewer to read body language as well as clarify any questions the interviewees might have. The interviews with the three store managers were divided into three parts with five different sections: Opening questions, music, fragrance, and lightning, as well as concluding questions.
The first part consisted of some preliminary questions to establish to what degree the store manager can influence the layout and atmosphere within their own store. These were followed by questions of the three areas that the authors are interested in, lighting, fragrance and music, in order to establish to what degree the store manager can influence these areas. The last and final part consisted of some concluding questions to see if the managers are aware of ambience within marketing as well as to find out if the stores have used senses within marketing in the past.

### 3.7 The Pilot Study

A smaller pilot study was conducted with 14 students as respondents. The pilot study was conducted in order to see that the authors’ selected questions were easy to understand to avoid any potential problems while answering the questions and to make sure that there would not be any problems when recording the data. Furthermore, the authors timed the participants in the pilot study in order to make sure that the questionnaire did not take too long to complete, or else the respondents would get frustrated. The authors checked for additional comments or questions regarding the survey that the respondents might have had. The authors also consulted their supervisor Helén Anderson, Professor within marketing research, about the representativeness and suitability of the questions.

#### 3.7.1 Results of the Pilot Study

It took the respondents about 5-6 minutes to answer the questions in the survey. The respondents’ general comments were that the survey was good in its entirety, with the exception of one question, where the respondents felt that the alternatives were too similar or close to each other. The respondents felt that it was difficult to distinguish between the alternatives and this made them confused.

In the pilot study the authors noticed that questions eight and nine took the longest to answer. Some items were difficult to understand, such as ‘power’. After careful thought, the authors realized that some of these options (power, disgust and shyness) are targeted to the customer experience and reaction to the store clerk. Since this was not a factor the authors considered to research in this study, those options were eliminated. ‘Anger’ was replaced with ‘irritation’. Moreover, the options were cut down to eight instead of twelve, in order to save time for the respondents when completing the questionnaire. Other options such as ‘pleasure’ and ‘delight’ were considered equivalent in their design and were therefore replaced with ‘satisfaction’.

The same procedure was repeated in question nine where certain options were removed due to the fact that they were considered to be too much alike. Options that ultimately were considered to be difficult to place in the category of atmosphere were the alternatives such as ‘Negative-Positive’ as well as ‘Awful-Nice’ and were therefore removed. The alternative ‘Dirty-Clean’ was replaced with ‘Unfresh-Fresh’ to create better counter pole options. Furthermore, the alternative ‘Old-fashioned-Modern’ was removed, when it emerged from the pilot study that the respondents primarily related this to the store’s layout, which is not included in the factors the authors are interested in measuring.

Additionally, the authors changed places in the ‘Not at all important’–‘Very important’ so 7 would correspond with the alternative ‘Very important’ and 1 would correspond with the alternative ‘Not at all important’. This would make it easier for the authors when coding
the data into SPSS. These measures were taken in questions eight and nine as well. To get more out of the respondents’ perceptions, of their visit in the shop, the authors chose to measure their ‘Willingness to buy’ and behavioural intention ‘Willingness to browse’. In order to clarify customers’ shopping intentions the authors chose to change question 4 since this option was considered to be more explicit and clear to answer as well as analyze at a later stage. When asked if they can guess the purpose of the study, all of the respondents answered that they could not.

3.8 The Questionnaire Design

The design of a questionnaire differs depending on how it is administered and how much contact the researcher has with the respondents. While self-administered questionnaires are completed by the respondents, the responses to interviewer-based questionnaires are recorded by the interviewer (Saunders et al., 2009), which was a large reason behind why the authors chose the latter option. For the second aspect of the primary data collection, an interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to make sure that the respondents would not leave any questions unanswered. The reliability of the data is improved when one avoids bias caused by refusals or incomplete answers. If not avoided, the unknown bias would have made the analysis less credible. If any questions or difficulties would arise, the respondents were thereby able to turn to the authors for answers. This reassured the authors about the right data being collected, as uniformed responses due to lack of knowledge would have contaminated the data, making it less reliable (Saunders et al., 2009). The questionnaires were given to the respondents to be completed immediately after their visit in the store. The authors did intentionally not want to disturb the customers while they were in the store. This way, the information that was gathered was retrieved from their recent memory and they could recall the details of their impression and perception of the ambience.

The questionnaire was constructed to provide answers to the following questions:

_What is the consumers’ perception and attitude towards JC’s, Dressmann’s and Carlings’ current ambience?_

_How does the ambience affect the consumers’ feelings, which in turn results in an approach or avoidance behaviour?_

The questionnaire was opened with the categorical nominal-scaled questions regarding gender and age, to collect general demographics data regarding the sample.

Questions 3-6 were nominal and ordinal scaled questions stated to collect descriptive data. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they made a purchase, their shopping intention (to browse, to buy a specific product, or both), the approximate number of times they visit the store, and how many minutes they spent in the store during their visit.

Questions 7 intended to ask which factors are in general perceived as being the most important when visiting the store (i.e. store clerk, sound level, music, store environment, lighting, scent and accessibility). These interval-scaled questions were labelled from 1 being ‘Not at all important’ to 7 being ‘Very important’. Question 10 is a continuation of question 7 as it asks the respondents to describe their perception of the music, the lighting and the fragrance in the store. These questions were answered on a seven-point differential scale with the alternatives of ‘Low /High’ for music, ‘Weak/Strong’ (implying Dark/Bright) for
lighting and ‘Unfresh/Fresh’ for fragrance. Ranging from 1 being Low, Weak and Unfresh; to 7 being High, Strong and Fresh.

To truly complement the above mentioned questions regarding the consumers’ perception and attention to music, lighting and fragrance while visiting a store, the nominal-scaled questions 11-13 were asked to find out if the respondents do in general pay attention to the music, react to the lighting and if they are aware of fragrance. ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ were provided as optional answers. Question 15 was asked regarding the consumers’ attitude and perception of the store environment, by stating: “I like the ambience of this store”. The answer was indicated on a seven-point modified Likert scale; 1 being ‘Strongly disagree’ and 7 being ‘Strongly agree’.

In order to answer the second question “How does the ambience affect the consumers’ feelings, which in turn results in an approach or avoidance behaviour?” questions 8, 9, 15 and 16 were designed.

A study made by Izard (1977) was utilized as a framework when determining the questions for measuring the respondents’ levels of feelings, which has within previous research (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000) proven to be the most reliable for measuring emotions during a shopping experience and is also useful for doing correlations. Izard’s (1977) scale of emotions includes both positive and negative emotions. Many of the negative emotions in Izard’s scale are more appropriate for studies that focus on the unpleasant, rather than the pleasant aspects of shopping, and might be relevant in studies of salesperson interactions with shoppers (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000). Based on this, the authors chose to modify and adapt Izard’s scale to the research at hand, by adding the positive emotion ‘Contentment’ and replacing some of the negative emotions with ‘Irritation’ and ‘Stress’. The spectrum of emotions were measured on a seven-point modified Likert scale, measuring the level of intensity for each feeling; 1 being ‘Very low’ and 7 being ‘Very high’ intensity. The perception and attitude towards the ambience was measured in question 9 with the statement “The ambience in store X is” which was answered on a seven-point semantic differential scale anchored by ‘Unattractive/Attractive’, ‘Dark/Bright’, ‘Unsatisfactory music/Satisfactory music’, ‘Unappealing/Appealing’, ‘Malodorous/Aromatic’ etc. The scale is bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives or phrases, for the various properties of the object under study. The focus of the semantic differential scale is on the measurement of the meaning of an object or concept, and works very well when attempting to determine a brand and store image (Burns & Bush, 1999). The appropriate scale is according to Aaker, Kumar & Day (2003) a seven point scale.

The study of Dodds, Monroe and Grewal (1999) was used as framework for a question suitable for measuring the consumers’ willingness to buy by stating: “I would be willing to buy gifts at this store”. The final question was based on Donovan and Rossiter’s (1982) research to measure the consumers’ behavioural intention (in this case browsing in the store) by stating: “I would like to spend time browsing in this store”.

### 3.9 Empirical findings derived through SPSS

In order to obtain empirical findings from the survey, the authors made use of a statistical software system called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The questionnaire was prepared with carefully varied question types and well-written items with clear response formats. Once the required number of questionnaires was collected, it was time to prepare a
codebook, by giving each questionnaire an identification number, ranging from 1-91. The information, which was converted into a format that SPSS can register, was entered in SPSS. Each question or item received a unique variable name and each response was assigned with a numerical code before being entered into SPSS. The three questionnaires were divided into three groups: Group 1 = JC, Group 2 = Dressmann and Group 3 = Carlings. Other questions such as “Gender”, “Have you purchased anything in the store?” or “Do you pay attention to the music in the store?” were provided with dummy variables, Female=0 and Male=1, respectively No=0 and Yes=1. The questions with several options such as “What was the purpose of your visit?”, “How often do you visit store X?” and “How many minutes did you spend in the store?” were also provided with dummy variables, e.g. 0-5 min=1, 6-10 min=2, 11-15 min=3 etc. The following questions with seven point modified Likert scale and semantic differential scale response format, were also given specific variable names and the answers were entered on a scale of 1-7. After this procedure was completed, the data from each participant were entered in the program. Before starting the analysis process, it is important to check the data for errors, which otherwise can ruin the outcome of the analysis. According to Pallant (2001), one needs to check for errors, then find and correct them in the data file. Each variable was therefore checked for scores that were out of range and did not fit within the scope of possible scores, e.g. detecting number 8 although the semantic response scale was numbered 1-7, or entering 3 for gender although 0 or 1 are the only alternatives. Some errors were found and corrected.

The next step was to manipulate the raw data by instructing SPSS to add the scores from all the items that make up the scale, to create a new variable for emotions and another for ambience. In the case of the items for feelings, the authors noticed that all the emotions with a negative implication had very low means and low observed variance (see table 15, appendix 8). Since atmospheric factors are specifically designed to create positive feelings, it is probably not surprising that the consumers did not experience negative emotions at the point of purchase. Due to this, the authors decided to exclude the negative emotions in further analysis. The new variable ‘Positive feelings’ was calculated for all the items measuring positively intended feelings (Joy, Interest, Surprise and Contentment), in addition a new variable ‘Scale Ambience’ was calculated for all ten ambience items (Unattractive/Attractive, Dark/Bright, Unappealing/Appealing etc.).

According to Pallant (2001), parametric tests are constrained by certain assumptions that need to be met, such as normal distribution. As the authors are interested in the strength of the relationship between the ‘Positive feelings’ and ‘Scale Ambience’ in comparison to the variables for ‘Willingness to browse’ and ‘Willingness to buy’, the Pearson correlation is used to measure the strength between the continuous variables. This provides the authors with information regarding the direction (positive or negative) and the strength of the relationship (Pallant, 2001). A positive correlation indicates that as one variable increases, so does the other; while a negative correlation indicates that as one of the variables increases, the other decreases (Pallant, 2001).

Before carrying out the analyses of correlation between the variables, the following assumptions had to be checked:

1. Normal distribution: The population from which the samples are taken are assumed to be normally distributed in parametric techniques. In most research, the scores on the dependent variable are not normally distributed, but with large enough sample sizes (N<30), the violation of the assumption should not cause large problems.
Normal distribution is described as a symmetrical, belly-shaped curve, with the greatest frequency of scores in the middle and the smaller frequencies towards the extremes (Pallant, 2001). Graphs were used to explore and describe the symmetry of the normality, see figure 5 and 6 below. The graphs reveal that the scores are fairly normally distributed and no specific outliers can be detected. The assumption was thereby not violated.

![Histogram of positive feelings with normality curve](image)

Figure 5 – Histogram of positive feelings with normality curve

![Histogram of ambience with normality curve](image)

Figure 6 – Histogram of ambience with normality curve

2. **Reliability of the variables:** The reliability of the ‘Positive Feelings’ scale and the ‘Scale Ambience’ were checked, by testing the internal consistency of the scales to find out to which degree the items are measuring the underlying construct. One of the most common indicators of internal consistency is Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, which ideally should lie above 0.6-0.7 (Pallant, 2001; Peter, 1979). It is worth mentioning that the Cronbach alpha values are sensitive to the number of items used in the scale, as short scales (scales with less than ten items) often demonstrate low Cronbach values (e.g. 0.5). As seen in table 1 and 2, the reliability test resulted in a Cronbach alpha value of 0.619 for four positive emotion items and 0.826 for the ten ambience
items, indicating a pretty good internal consistency for both scales. The assumption was therefore not violated.

Table 1 – Reliability statistics for Positive Feelings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.619</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – Reliability statistics for Scale Ambience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.826</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.10 Validity

Firstly, it is important to take into consideration if the results from the research really refer to the authors’ purpose. Also when collecting data the authors have to make sure that the data collected really is about what it appears to be regarding (Saunders et al., 2009). To keep as high validity as possible the authors have used the principle of multiple sources, which implies the use of multiple data that are independent of each other, and are used within the same study to ensure that the relationship between two variables is a strong or casual relationship. This method is called multiple source of evidence (Yin, 2003).

Potential factors that could have serious effects on the validity of a research could be: A poor sampling method, questionable research approach or incorrect numbers and measurements (Collins & Hussey, 2003). As this research study has a partially statistical approach and deals with numerical data, the probability of retrieving low validity is not a considerable issue. The risk of getting incorrect numbers was reduced by the authors, when they re-checked the entered values and cleaned the collected data. This increased the validity of the data collection. Due to the bias of social desirability, which refers to the respondents’ tendency to answer in a manner that will be viewed favourably by others (Saunders et al., 2009), it was essential to make sure that the respondents could not guess the real purpose of the study. To overcome this issue, the authors asked the direct questions (which potentially could reveal the purpose) regarding their awareness of lighting, fragrance and music at the end of the questionnaire (i.e. questions 10-13). Similarly their perception of these ambient factors was collected indirectly, as the questions regarding these factors were mixed with other alternative answers (i.e. question 7 and 9). The pilot study also confirmed this, as none of the respondents were able to guess the purpose of the authors’ research. In order to enhance the content validity of the study, data was collected through numerous sources and the primary data was partially collected by using a questionnaire whose questions were carefully based on previous reliable research within the field of ambience.

3.11 Reliability

Reliability refers to what degree techniques for collecting data will yield reliable findings as well as how the conclusion from the raw data is completed (Saunders et al., 2009). In order to maintain reliability when conducting the thesis the authors chose to follow three questions stated by Saunders et al. (2009) on what to keep in mind when conducting your research; Will others reach similar observations? Is there clearness in how sense was made
from the raw data collected? Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions? In other words the research will be reliable if the findings will be the same when repeated.

Yin (2003) mentions two different bias threats to reliability: Participant bias and observer bias. The authors have taken into consideration that the interviewees might be participant biased due to the fact that they are managers of the different stores. Therefore, it was important to have general questions about the layout of the store so the manager would not know our immediate purpose before the end of the interview. Furthermore the authors used structured interviews where the interviewer read the question just as it was stated, in the same tone, to all three managers. The interviewer avoided to ask leading questions and avoided to show emotions or personal beliefs in regard to the subject in order not to affect the respondent’s answers. This was to delimitate observer bias to the extent it was possible by letting both authors state questions that would later be asked. Since reliability determines how accurate and consistent a measurement or instrument is (Saunders et al., 2009) the authors made sure to base their questionnaire design on reliable research for exploring the relationship between the variables: Ambience, feelings, willingness to browse and willingness to buy. The questions were based on research by: Izard (2000), Dodds et al. (1999) and Donovan and Rossiter (1982). Since part of the primary data was derived from interviewer-administered questionnaires, the authors had to be aware of subject or participant error. Participant error implies that a person that completed the questionnaire on a Monday could have answered in a different way had the person completed the questionnaire on a Friday (Saunders et al., 2009). In order to avoid this, the authors chose to collect the data on all weekdays (Monday-Friday), at a certain time (3-7 pm) in order to avoid large fluctuations in the respondents’ moods and expectations on that specific weekday. The explicit time was set since the authors believe that there is a difference between customers who choose to shop, for instance during lunch hours, and the ones who choose to shop during the afternoons/evenings. This way, possible factors that could have created large differences between the three stores were to some extent limited. Lastly, the observer error was minimized by using a standardized questionnaire in the survey, which helped both researchers to pose their questions in the same manner. In addition, the respondents were addressed separately, in order to avoid the influence of other respondents, while answering the questions.

3.12 Generalizability

Generalizability depends on how a research is conducted and what results are acquired. This is particularly true for case studies that are conducted in one or a handful of organizations. The aim of case studies, like this one, is not to develop a theory that can be applicable to the entire population. This research is therefore limited to the specific organizations that are being investigated (Saunders et al., 2009). The customers of JC, Dressmann and Carlings were chosen to be investigated by the researchers of this thesis. Although the authors do not intend to generalize the findings from this study to the entire population, they still believe that the results can be generalized and applied to other JC, Dressmann and Carlings stores. The generalization can to some extent be applied on companies that are similar to the above mentioned clothing retail stores. Due to the sample method used for this study, the ability to completely generalize the results to the whole population is decreased. But, when using case studies, an assumption can be made that if something happens in this particular organization, there is a chance that it will happen anywhere; or that it at least can be applied to similar Swedish clothing retail stores.
4 Empirical Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to present the empirical findings of the collected data.

All material presented in the empirical findings is based on the information retrieved from the interviews with the store managers of JC, Carlings and Dressmann as well as the results from the survey that was conducted to gather information regarding the consumers’ perception of the store ambience. The interviews took place on March 7th at each store’s office, and lasted for 25-35 minutes respectively. The respondents’ questionnaire answers were collected on weekdays, during 3-7 pm, between 18 of April to 28 of April, outside the three chosen stores.

All of the graphs and tables are for practical reasons not included in this chapter, as they would take up too much space. They are however are available in the appendix 8.

4.1 Empirical Findings of Interviews

4.1.1 Interview 1 JC

(Translated into English, but the original form can be found in appendix 3)

Date: 2011-03-07
Store: JC
Professional title: Store Manager
Name: Robert Abrahamson

4.1.1.1 Preliminary Questions

According to Abrahamson, the store manager, JC works with a template that is created by the JC headquarters which shows how the store layout should be in terms of colour and shape.

Moreover, Abrahamson points out that JC manages the design of the shop itself and does not hire a company to decorate for them. Abrahamson further points out that he, as a store manager, can influence the design of the shop to a large extent. JC has, according to Abrahamson, a unifying theme of identity – this is to say that all of the stores should be recognizable as being JC stores.

Another thing that is used by all JC stores is that all of the products that they wish to advertise the most will always appear in the ‘A-surface’ or the most easily accessible area of the store.

4.1.1.2 Music

Abrahamson states that JC has a standard when it comes to music in the stores, which is that all stores should play modern music, such as new pop. Either Abrahamson himself or his stall can change songs in the store, but Abrahamson adds that it is important not to play blues music as JC wishes to promote their brand as being modern and contemporary.

JC has not thought about increasing the sales of a particular commodity by playing a certain type of music, such as playing Rolling Stones music to boost the sales of T-shirts with
the Rolling Stones logo. In contrast, JC collaborates with local bands that come and play in
the store to attract customers and create a good atmosphere.

When asked if JC plays Christmas music in December and if so, why? Abrahamson says
almost instinctively – Yes, in order to create the feeling of Christmas spirit. When he is
asked to elaborate, he states that customers want to hear Christmas music in December.

4.1.1.3 Fragrance

According to Abrahamson, JC does not use scents at all, and concludes that it is only a
cleaning company that ensures that their stores are clean and smell fresh. Abrahamson does
not believe that the importance of fragrance is that great as long as it does not smell badly
in the store.

4.1.1.4 Lighting

About five years ago JC began a new concept concerning the lighting within the store, and
JC now uses a fainter light than the kind they have used in the past. A dimmer lighting has
been implemented in order to create a pleasant atmosphere says Abrahamson. As a store
manager Abrahamson cannot redirect the light or highlight a place in particular, as the
lighting in the store is fixed.

Abrahamson might not affect the brightness in the store or switch to coloured lights such
as yellow lights at Easter due to the fact that JC is only using this new low-light concept
when it comes to lightning.

4.1.1.5 Concluding Questions

That the store’s ambience reflects the brand is something Abrahamson partially agrees with.
Although Abrahamson believes that every little thing within ambience contributes to sales,
he does not hesitate to point out that the staff is the biggest contributing factor when it
comes to reflecting the brands image.

Abrahamson claims that JC has not thought about using senses to enhance the customer
experience in the store. Furthermore, Abrahamson believes that customers do not care to a
great deal about which songs are played, due to the fact that the customers are in so many
different stores every day, and adds that neither he nor the staff have ever been asked about
the music in the store.

The most important thing for Abrahamson is still the staff as they give customers a feeling
of well-being and make them feel welcomed in a friendly environment. Abrahamson sees
another problem with trying to play certain songs in order to increase sales of a particular
product and points out that a nice summer song for one customer could conjure up sad
memories for another.
4.1.2 Interview 2 Dressmann

(Translated into English, but the original form can be found in appendix 4)

Date: 2011-03-07
Retail: Dressmann
Professional title: Store Manager
Name: Nina Johansson

4.1.2.1 Preliminary Questions

According to Johansson, a Dressmann store manager is provided with a clearly defined model of how a store should look like, and it is the central office that is responsible for this vision. As a store manager, Johansson is allowed to rearrange clothes to different places within the store but is not allowed to change the interior design of the store itself.

Dressmann has no guidelines as to where their various products, such as sale items, should be placed. All stores are planned after the central office’s model which thereby creates common attributes throughout all Dressmann stores and gives them the feeling of a solid unit, Johansson attests.

4.1.2.2 Music

Johansson explains that it is not more than three months ago that all Dressmann stores started using their own internet-based radio stations, which play music from all of the stores. Johansson says that before the stores got their web radio stations, her staff was allowed to bring their own music to play in the store. This, according to Johansson, sometimes led to different genres of music being played from day to day. She states that it is now impossible to change the music within her store as it is currently controlled from Dressmann’s central office.

When asked whether Dressmann plays Christmas music in December and if so, why; Johansson answers affirmatively and says that it is played so that the customers will be inspired to purchase Christmas gifts. Furthermore, Johansson claims that most customers who shop in December are out to buy Christmas gifts and because of this, Johansson feel it is important that customers are in a happy Christmas mood.

Dressmann has run a commercial for their T-shirts with prints of the rock-n-roll group the Rolling Stones on them. Dressmann has played hit songs from the Rolling Stones in the stores during the same period as when the commercials were advertised. They even played the same songs from the commercials in Dressmann stores at this time. Johansson says that Dressmann witnessed an increase in sales on the Rolling Stones T-shirts by playing Rolling Stones music. The increase in sales was, according to her, partly due to advertising but also due to the fact that customers were reminded of the advertisements when they heard that specific music in the store.

Johansson believes that music is an important tool to convey the store’s image and believes that the new concept of internet radio is a good idea because it creates a sense of unity among all Dressmann stores.
4.1.2.3 Fragrance

Although Johansson believes it is important to create a good ambience in the store around the holidays; Dressmann has never worked with scents in their stores, such as using Christmas scents like cinnamon over the holidays. Johansson says that she has not asked the management at the central office if she can work with fragrances in her store, as she would be hesitant to work with fragrances due to the fact that some people are sensitive or allergic.

4.1.2.4 Lighting

As a store manager of Dressmann, Johansson has permission to plan the lighting in the store to the degree of what goods should be spot-lighted. However, she cannot control the extent of how light or dark it can be in her store as that would be impossible for her to do without the permission of Dressmann’s central office.

Johansson says that Dressmann has an area of the store where different coloured lamps are displayed, but affirms that she has no say in either changes in colour or the frequency of those changes.

4.1.2.5 Concluding Questions

Johansson believes that the ambience reflects a brand and therefore believes it is a good idea to work with concepts for retail chains, such as Dressmann, so that different stores reflect a similar mode.

Dressmann has not thought about using the senses in order to strengthen the brand and Johansson believes that it is mostly due to lack of time. There is no time for many detailed small changes, says Johansson. Johansson points out, however, that the use of sense-controlling techniques is becoming more and more common within marketing, and mentions the use of bird songs as relaxing atmosphere as well as the smell of fresh bread in a bakery as two examples.

4.1.3 Interview 3 Carlings

(Translated into English, but the original form can be found in appendix 5)

Date: 2011-03-07
Retail: Carlings
Professional title: Store Manager
Name: Henric Hiljanen

4.1.3.1 Preliminary Questions

Hiljanen says that Carlings does not have a finished template to work with when designing their layouts. In this respect Hiljanen has a lot of decision-making freedom as store manager. However, Hiljanen says there are certain guidelines that have to be followed when organizing a Carlings store. Its ambience should be dark, Rock inspired and a bit shabby, Hiljanen says, a bit like a cave. He also adds that it is important that none of the stores should be exactly the same; all Carlings stores should be unique in some way.
4.1.3.2 Music

In regards to the music Hiljanen refers back to the fact that the store has to be unique. Hiljanen says that if he has two employees who like pop music while working in the store they will play pop and if there are two employees who prefer Rock then they will play Rock music instead.

Carlings has its own radio station where a DJ chooses the music. Although music from this web radio can always be played, according to Hiljanen, he and his employees do not choose to use it very often. This is due to the fact that Hiljanen and the other staff members are not fond of the genre of music played on the web radio, which is a bit more pop-influenced than their preferred rock music. There are no rules stating that staff members are not allowed to change the music in the store due to Hiljanen’s idea that it is important that all stores are somewhat individualistic.

When asked about Carlings playing Christmas music in December and if so, why, Hiljanen answers yes, but underlines the fact that Carlings does not play classical Christmas music, such as music played by an orchestra, but instead chooses to play modern Christmas hits.

Carlings has had some collaboration with various bands, such as Danko Jones and Mustache, and have sold products with prints of those groups. According to Hiljanen, Carlings has on those occasions, seen an increase in sales. However, this increase of sales was not limited to the products with the guest bands prints, but also other heavy-metal related products.
Hiljanen is convinced that music is the most important element in reflecting the store’s image. He explains that Carlings has tried to play music that did not fit the ‘Carlings rock style’ such as the Backstreet Boy's hit song "I Want It That Way." On such occasions customers clearly showed signs of dissatisfaction.

4.1.3.3 Fragrance

According to Hiljanen, Carlings has never worked with scents in its store, such as scented candles, or tried to adapt to scents of the seasons. Hiljanen says that there are no guidelines in terms of scents but mentions that the idea is interesting.
When asked if he would be allowed by Carlings’ central office to spray his favourite perfume in his store if he wished, Hiljanen says that there would be no problem as long as it was not sprayed on the clothes.

4.1.3.4 Lighting

As store manager of Carlings, Hiljanen is allowed to control the strength of the lights and says that Carlings works a lot with spotlighting. The fact that the store is mostly dark makes the colourful clothes pop-out more when a spot light is put on them. However, he admits that he would like to have more lighting in his shop because he feels it is too dark in the store today.
4.1.3.5 Concluding Questions

Hiljanen believes that the store’s ambience reflects the brand and believes this is particularly evident with Carlings as each store is a bit unique but still maintains an image of Rock-N-Roll.

Hiljanen thinks it is very common to use senses in marketing, especially the use of music. As for fragrance, Hiljanen does not think it affects sales considerably, as long as the store does not smell badly.

According to Hiljanen, Carlings has not tried using sense enhancing techniques for all five senses to strengthen customer experience or perception in their shops

4.2 Empirical Findings of Survey

4.2.1 Demographic Data

The questionnaire was answered by 91 respondents, which are presented as three predetermined groups, one for each store. The respondents in each group were divided as follows: JC had 30 constituting 32,97 % of the respondents, Dressmann had 30 respondents, 34,07 % and Carlings had 31, 32,97 % of the respondents. Furthermore, it was a total of approximately 64 % female and 36 % male that completed the survey (see figure 21 in appendix 8). With 60 % male and 40 % female for Dressmann, 86,6 % female and 13,33 % male for JC and 64,52 % female and 35,48 % male for Carlings.

Dividing the respondents into three groups was made due to the differences in the stores current ambiances, in order to be able to analyze the consumers in different ambience settings. Dividing the respondents in female and male was simply made to investigate the gender distribution of the sample (see figure 22 in appendix 8).

Furthermore, the respondents were divided into age groups, with a ten year range in each alternative, in order to investigate if there was a significant difference in their in-store behaviour. In figure 23 (see appendix 8) we can see that in the entire sample 41,8 % were between the ages 10-19 years old, 31,9 % between 20-29, 11 % between 30-39, 4,4 % between 40-49, 6,6 % between 50-59 % and 14,3 % were between 60 years old and above. Moreover as seen in table 6 (in appendix 8) there were more young customers in JC (between 10-19, 56,7 %; between 20-29, 26,7 %; between 50-59, 10 %; and 60 and above was equal to 6,7 %) as well as Carlings (between 10-19, 61,3 %; between 20-29, 35,5 %; between 30-39, 3,2 %) and more frequently older customers in Dressmann (between 10-19, 6,7 %; between 20-29, 33,3 %; between 40-49, 13,3 % and 60 and above was equal to 36,6 %).
4.2.2  Descriptive Data on the Stores

4.2.2.1  Purchase Distribution
Question three reveals that for the entire sample, 75,82% of the respondents did not buy anything while only 24,18% did purchase something at the stores. The statistics for each of the three stores show that the consumers buy more at Dressmann 33,33%, while the purchase frequency of JC, 16,7%, and Carlings, 22,6%, are pretty similar (see table 7 in appendix 8). This question was stated in order to later compare the customers who purchased something at the store (shoppers) and customers who did not purchase anything (non-shoppers), with the purpose of their visit and the amount of time they spent in the store.

4.2.2.2  Purpose of Visit
Respondents were subsequently asked what the purpose of the visit was and were given three alternatives: To buy a specific product, to browse in the store, or both. This was done in order to investigate the consumers purchase intention. As can be seen in figure 7 below, 50% of JC’s customers answered ‘To browse in the store’, compared to 54,8% of Carling’s customers and 36,7% of Dressmann’s customers. This question was stated in order to allow further analysis by comparing shoppers and non-shoppers with the customers who mainly intended to browse in the store.

Figure 7 – Purpose of the visit for all three stores
4.2.2.3 Number of Visits in the Store

Question 5 describes the number of times the customers visit each of the three stores. As depicted in figure 8 below, 23,33 % of JC’s customers generally visit the store ‘More than 2-3 times per month’ and 23,33 % ‘Once a month’, followed by 20,0 % visiting the store ‘Once a week’. The frequencies of visits to the store are evenly distributed. In contrast, 50 % of Dressmann’s customers only visit the store ‘A few times per year’ followed by 33,3 % visiting the store ‘Once a month’. In addition, 45,2 % of Carlings’ customers visit the store ‘Once a month’ followed by 16,1 % of customers who visit the store ‘A few times per year’. The frequencies for the three stores with all six answers are available in table 8 (in appendix 8).
4.2.2.4 Number of Minutes Spent in the Store

The ordinal question six, regarding the number of minutes spent in the store explains that the customers in Dressmann stayed longer in the store than did the customers of JC and Carlings. By dividing table 9 (see appendix 8) into two groups, the ones who spent 0-10 minutes and the ones who spent 11-30+ minutes in the stores; the distribution of the customers who spent 11-30+ minutes becomes: JC=26,6 %, Dressmann=33,3 % and Carlings=19,4 %.

The distribution of customers who spent 0-5 minutes in the store are pretty equal (JC=12, Dressmann=11 and Carlings=10. This descriptive question was stated in order to later be compared to the consumers’ (shoppers/non-shoppers) purchase intention.

4.2.2.5 Important When Visiting a Store

Question seven in the questionnaire aimed to determine what customers generally feel is important when visiting a retail clothing store. The authors therefore asked 7 questions including importance of the store clerk, sound level, music, store environment, lighting, fragrance, and ease of access. The answers were given on a 7 point modified Likert scale where 1 was ‘Not at all important’, and 7 was ‘Very important’. By comparing the means in figure 9, 10, and 11 below, between the three stores, it becomes clear that JC’s customers think that music, lighting and fragrance are important. JC is followed by Carlings that has slightly lower mean values on music, lighting and fragrance, and lastly Dressmann’s customers had the lowest mean values.
Figure 9 – JC’s mean value of important factors when visiting a store

Figure 10 – Dressmann’s mean value of important factors when visiting a store

Figure 11 – Carlings’ mean value of important factors when visiting a store

4.2.2.6 Perception of the Ambient Factors

Question 10 was asked for the purpose of comparing the authors’ perception of the differences in store ambience (as described in chapter 3.6), to see if it corresponds with the consumers’ perception of the ambient factors. The question was designed according to a seven point semantic differential scale. In the case of the music, 1 indicates ‘Low’ and 7 indicates ‘High’. For the lighting, 1 indicates ‘Weak’ and 7 indicates ‘Strong’. Lastly the fragrance is indicated as 1 being ‘Unfresh’ and 7 being ‘Fresh’. As can be seen in the figures 12, 13 and 14 (below) there is a clear difference in the consumers’ perception of the ambient factors between the different stores. The sound level for Carlings is above average, with a mean of 5.4, closer to a ‘High’ sound level. Both JC and Dressmann have mean values below 4, which in this case imply that the sound level is perceived as ‘Low’ (see figure 12 below). The lighting in JC was a bit above average, somewhat closer to ‘Strong’. Dressmann’s customers were somewhat neutral towards this question, while Carlings’ customers indicated that the lighting was slightly towards ‘Weak’ (see figure 13). The fragrance in the store were
perceived to be above average for both JC and Carlings; indicating a ‘Fresh’ fragrance. Dressmann’s customers were neutral towards this question (see figure 14).

Figure 12 – Perception of music sound level

Figure 13 – Perception of lighting

Figure 14 – Perception of fragrance

4.2.3 Descriptive Data on the Ambient Factors

4.2.3.1 Attention to the Music

Question 11 was stated to find out if the respondents paid attention to the music in the store. The nominal question offered ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ as alternative answers. Table 11 (in appendix 8) indicates that 83,3 % of JC’s customers answered ‘Yes’ and 16,7 % answered ‘No’, while 60 % of Dressmann’s customers answered ‘Yes’ and 40% answered ‘No’. In contrast, the majority of Carlings’ customers, 96,8 %, answered ‘Yes’ and only 3,2 % answered ‘No’.
4.2.3.2 Reaction to the Lighting

Similar to the previous question, question 12 provided the authors with an answer to whether the respondents reacted to the lighting in the store (see table 12, in appendix 8). A little more than half of JC’s customers, 56.7%, answered ‘No’ and 43.3% answered ‘Yes’. Dressmann’s customers gave the opposite result, since 53.2% answered ‘Yes’ while 46.7% answered ‘No’. In addition, 41.9% of Carlings’ customers answered ‘Yes’ and 58.1% answered ‘No’.

4.2.3.3 Awareness of the Fragrance

Question 13 was stated to see if the respondents are aware of the fragrance in the store. The overall impression of the results for all three stores reveals that the customers are not aware of the fragrance in the stores. While 36.7% of JC’s customers answered ‘Yes’, 63.3% answered ‘No’. These results are very similar to Dressmann’s, as 40% answered ‘Yes’ and 60% answered ‘No’. In contrast, only 25.8% of Carlings’ customers answered ‘Yes’ and 74.2% answered ‘No’ see table 13 (in appendix 8).

4.2.3.4 Mean and Frequency for Enjoyment of the Store Ambience

With questions 11-13 the authors’ intention was to investigate if the respondents reacted to the ambient factors, lighting, fragrance and music; and to measure their attitude and perception of the stores’ current ambiances. This provides the authors with an opportunity to further analyze and identify if there is a connection between the ambient factors and the consumers’ perception of the ambience (measured in question 14). The customers’ general perception and attitude towards each store’s ambience was measured based on the statement: “I like the ambience of this store”, which was indicated on a seven-point modified Likert scale –1 being ‘Strongly disagree’ and 7 being ‘Strongly agree’. As can be seen in table 3 below, all three stores have a mean value above 4 indicating that they like the store ambiances. Furthermore, as can be seen in table 11, 12 and 13 (in appendix 8) most customers paid attention to the music while not so many reacted to the lighting and even fewer reacted to the fragrance in the store.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>Mean and standard deviation for enjoyment of the store ambience</th>
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<tr>
<td>JC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
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<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>Mean</td>
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<td>Std. Deviation</td>
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<td>Carlings</td>
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<td>Mean</td>
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5 Analysis

The analysis will be performed based on the information compiled in the frame of reference as well as the empirical findings. It is divided based on the study’s three research questions, which will be answered in the next chapter. The analysis is separated with respect to the three chosen clothing retail stores: JC, Dressmann and Carlings.

5.1 Research Question 1

How is the ambience (i.e. lighting, fragrance and music) used by Swedish retail stores, and is it a planned strategic approach?

It is important to understand that even though a separate strategy may exist for the ambient factors, it does not necessarily mean that there is an overall strategy in order to create a relationship between the variables: Ambience, feelings, willingness to browse and willingness to buy.

5.1.1 JC – Strategy

JC works with a template created by the JC headquarters, which details how all of their stores should be in their layout, mostly in terms of colour and shape.

JC’s musical approach consists of pop and modern music; genres which promote a modern and contemporary image. The staff in the store is permitted to change the music as they wish. This indicates that they do not have a specific strategy to influence the two variables. JC does adjust their music to the Christmas season; however, this method could be expanded further and be used for other seasons as well. Furthermore, their use of Christmas music does not seem to be a strategic move to affect the ambient factors. JC has not thought about increasing the sales of a particular commodity by playing a certain type of music. In contrast, JC has worked with local bands that come and play in their stores to attract customers and create a good atmosphere. Here one can see a clear difference from, as mentioned by Pine & Gilmore (1999), the automobile industry that can invest up to millions of dollars in creating the right sound.

For the past five years JC has had a concept concerning store lighting where they use a fainter light than the kind they have used in the past. A dimmer set of lighting has been implemented in order to create a pleasant atmosphere.

Furthermore, Abrahamson also made it understandable that according to JC the staff is a much more relevant factor. Hence ambience is not used strategically by JC. Most theorists and managers have treated brands as identifiers, often missing the very essence of a brand as a source of sensory, affective and cognitive associations that lead to memorable and rewarding brand experiences (Schmitt, 1999).
5.1.2 Dressmann – Strategy

As in the case of JC, all Dressmann stores are planned after a model created by the Dressmann headquarters. This is done to make all Dressmann stores similar and thus make them feel like one solid unit.

An interesting aspect is that Dressmann has changed their music strategy three months before the interview took place, from letting the staff choose freely what music should be played, to now using their own web radio so the music played in all of Dressmann’s stores are the same. This implies that Dressmann has considered the impact as well as the importance of music. In difference from JC, who played music in order to create a good overall ambience, Dressmann plays certain music in order to increase sales such as playing Rolling Stones music, in order to increase the sales of a particular commodity. Dressmann’s new music strategy is implemented because they believe music is an important tool to convey the store’s image. These beliefs are similar to Lindstrom (2005) who argues that by using sounds you will maintain the image of a brand. When most products offer the same quality and are in danger of becoming commodities in an overloaded marketplace, brands that are able to create emotional connections to consumers are much stronger than the ones that have not shaped their distinctive identity (Lindstrom, 2005).

Dressmann does not have a strategic plan for fragrance, mostly due to the beliefs that customers might be sensitive and allergic to scents. For lighting on the other hand, Dressmann has an interesting strategy where they have ‘scenes’ in the stores, which is an area with coloured lighting. However, they do not have a lighting strategy for the store as a whole. Dressmann believes that ambience reflects the brand and they have shown that they are trying to implement new strategic plans for the ambient factors, music and lighting, but not for fragrance. The manager of the store is aware of sensory marketing but reflects that a specific strategy for the ambient factors is lacking mostly due to the lack of time.

5.1.3 Carlings – Strategy

Carlings clearly show that they are conscious of their ambience as they do have an overall strategy implying that all Carlings stores should convey a Rock-feeling. In order to convey this feeling, as well as create a brand image, Rock-N-Roll and pop music is played within the Carlings stores. This corresponds well to Lindstrom’s (2005) arguments on how to establish a loyal relationship to your customers by making a store’s brand image unique.

The uniqueness is important to Carlings, and it is a clear part of their strategy. Similar to Dressmann, Carlings has its own web radio; however the staff can still chose freely if the web radio should be used or not. This is allowed for the reason that Carlings believes that the uniqueness of the store is an important factor of its brand image. Carlings has, in similarity with JC, used music in order to convey a good ambience that their customers would find enjoyable. However they do lack a strategy for the ambient factors, with the aim of using them in order to affect the two different variables ‘willingness to browse’ and ‘willingness to buy’. Moreover, Carlings has never worked with scents as a strategic approach in order to affect the two above mentioned variables, although research has indicated that ambient scent contributes to a favourable perception of the store environment and indirectly of the product quality (Chebat & Michon, 2003).

When it comes to lighting Carlings has a strategy of using spot-lighting in order to make the clothes pop. This effect is enhanced by the fact that Carlings uses dark colours in their
stores, in addition to having a rather dark lighting in general, the colourful clothes become even more distinct when spot-lighted. Carlings do feel that sensory marketing is important for music and lighting but not for fragrance, therefore they do not have a strategy connected to fragrance. Carlings also believe that ambience reflects the brand image, corresponding with Lindstrom’s (2005) argument regarding the use of ambient factors to maintain the image of a brand.

5.2 Research Question 2

How is the ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) perceived by the consumers?

5.2.1 JC – Perception of the Ambient Factors

In figure 9 (above), where the customers of the clothing retail store are asked to rank variables on a scale of 1-7 in order of importance (1 meaning ‘Not at all important’ and 7 indicating ‘Very important’) it becomes evident that the three ambient factors of music, fragrance and lighting all have a mean value of 5 or above. This indicates that although the three ambient factors are not the most important factors, they are still considered to be influential since they all received mean values above 4. In figure 9 we can see that the three ambient factors of music, fragrance and lighting, seem to be equally important to the JC customers. However, fragrance, with the mean of 5,2 is considered the most important.

Comparing this with figure 14 (above) ‘Perception of fragrance’, JC’s customers gave a mean of 5,2 on a seven point scale where 7 corresponded with ‘Fresh’. This could indicate that the customers in general perceive a fresh fragrance in stores. Comparing this result with the results of Dressmann and Carlings, JC’s customers exhibit the highest mean value regarding fragrance. An interesting aspect here is that JC does not have a strategy for fragrance today even though their customers felt it was an important aspect. Since fragrance is an important factor for JC’s customers, perhaps they should consider implementing a fragrance strategy and not rely solely upon the fragrance of the all-purpose cleaner selected by the cleaning company. Different types of odours have been proven to significantly influence behaviour (Hirsh, 1995). It is not uncommon for natural and chemical substances to be released in ambient environments in order to create feelings of wellbeing (Lindstrom, 2005).

Nevertheless, in the question where customers were asked whether they pay attention to fragrance when visiting a store, only 36,7 % answered affirmative – which means that 63,3 % do not (see table 13, in appendix 8). The authors believe this is due to the fact that people did not smell a bad odour and therefore, simply assumed that the ambience was fresh. Customers usually do not pay attention to fragrance unless it is bad smelling or unusual. However, since the customers believe the fragrance is important, JC should perhaps think of implementing fragrance in a strategic way, similar to their music strategy.

JC’s customer age-group consists to a large extent of a younger demographic. Table 6 (in appendix 8) shows that 56,7 % of customers are between the age of 10-19, 26,7 % are 20-29 years old, and only 6,7 % of customers are 60 years or older. The younger customers could be the reason why as many as 83,3 % of JC’s customers answered that they in fact do pay attention to music when they visit the store (table 11, in appendix 8). Since the majority of JC’s customers pay attention to the music, and because music received an approximate mean value of 5,03 in figure 9, JC should perhaps consider using this factor in their
strategy to encourage customers to buy products. Lindstrom (2005) says that sound can be the deciding factor in a consumer’s choice. Gobé (2001) also argues that music can be used as a trigger for creating desired reactions to a brand.

Almost half, 43.3% of JC’s customers reacted to lighting, indicating that this is an important factor to consider (see table 12, in appendix 8). This also corresponds well with figure 9, where lighting got a mean value of 5. Since lighting is noticed by almost half of JC’s customers, their stores might want to consider implementing a more direct strategy to capitalize on their consumers’ moods. Perhaps they can use lighting in order to put their customers in a feeling of well being. Countryman & Jang (2006) argue that lighting can be used to place consumers in different emotional stages.

The customers’ general perception and attitude towards each store’s ambience was measured based on the statement: “I like the ambience of this store”, which was indicated on a seven point scale –1 being ‘Strongly disagree’ and 7 meaning ‘Strongly agree’. JC’s ambience received a mean value of 4.67 (see table 3, above), with a standard deviation of 1.64. This indicates that although JC received a mean value above 4, it is still rather low and could be improved. The ambience might be enhanced to provide a holistic view of consumption (Schmitt, 1999), if all three elements are used strategically to fulfil their maximum potential. The degree to which a company is able to deliver a desirable customer experience will determine its success in the future (Schmitt, 1999). Considering the experiential hierarchy, the customers’ attitude can be strongly influenced by intangible product attributes and consumers’ reaction to accompanying stimuli, such as the ambience and the environment where the experience takes place (Solomon, 2002).

5.2.2 Dressmann – Perception of the Ambient Factors

Figure 10 (above) shows how the customers rank certain variables between 1-7 (1 being ‘Not at all important’; 7 being ‘Very important’) when visiting a store. Fragrance and music have a mean value below 4, while lighting is slightly above 4. Lighting was perceived as being the most important out of these three variables, with a mean of 4.47. This is not surprising as sight is the most important of the senses, followed by smell and sound (Lindstrom, 2005). Compared to Figure 13 (above) Dressmann has a mean value of 3.68 on a 7 point scale (1 being ‘Weak’; 7 being ‘Strong’), which means that they perceive the lighting to be slightly dark. Since lighting is important to Dressmann’s customers, it would be a smart move to use the lighting in a strategic manner. Unfortunately, Dressmann’s store manager has no permission to control the extent of how dark or bright it should be in the store. This is decided by the central office. This brings the next question into mind: Should the central office consider changing their way of lighting Dressmann stores? Since more than half, 53.3% (see table 12 in appendix 8), of Dressmann’s customers reacted to the lighting, it should be an even bigger incentive for them to change their way of lighting, perhaps by complementing their spot-lighting with an additional dimension. Lighting can be used to place the consumer in different emotional stages (Countryman & Jang, 2006). The additional dimension could be to add a natural soft lighting that has proven to create a more relaxing and pleasant mood, than when bright lighting is used (Meer, 1985).

One explanation to this preference could be due to Dressmann’s customer age-group. It consists of an older range of customers, and the authors believe that older customers prefer a more bright light. As shown in table 6 (see appendix 8), 46.7% are older than 50 years
and only 6.7% are between the ages of 10-19, which is a large contrast to JC’s range of customers.

When asked if the customers pay attention to the store’s music, 60% replied ‘Yes’ (see table 11, in appendix 8). Although the mean value of importance of music was merely 3.1 (see figure 10 above), Dressmann should take advantage of the fact that the majority of the customers do pay attention to the music. This could also be strategically developed to have a larger impact on the customers’ perception of ambience and in turn their behaviour. Music is a powerful tool for evoking emotions and can be used to trigger desired reactions to a brand (Gobé, 2001). Music can stimulate different responses based on the age of the shoppers (Yalch & Spangenberg, 1990), but it can through tempo and volume affect the consumers (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007) to remain in the store and purchase more (Peter & Olson, 1994). Music has an effect on sales, perception of the environment and actual time spent in the store (Gobé, 2001). Dressmann has recently started using an Internet based radio, which plays the exact same music in all their stores. In order for this to have a larger impact, they could be cautious about their choice of music genre, the level of volume and adapt the atmosphere to their range of customers. This could lead to a different outcome on the customers’ perception. The central office could consider making an explicit choice regarding the genre played for each season (instead of playing different ones), in the same way as they choose to play Christmas music to inspire purchase of Christmas gifts, or Rock music to increase the sales of Rolling Stones T-shirts.

Only 40% of the customers were aware of the fragrance in the store (see table 13, in appendix 8). The customers are very neutral towards the fragrance (see figure 14, mean 4.04, Std. deviation 1.3), which is explained by the fact that Dressmann does not use any fragrance to enhance their ambience. It is strongly recommended that they should consider adding a specific fragrance that augments their brand image and influences their behaviour (Hirsch, 1995). In fact, the absence or presence of the odour has proven to have a significant effect on behaviour. One reason is for using fragrance is that customers have experienced that the time they spent in line seemed to be shorter than it actually was due to the presence of fragrance (Spangenberg et al., 1996).

Dressmann’s ambience has a mean value of 5.5, Std. deviation 1.63 (table 3, above). Although the standard deviation is high, 76.6% of the customers have answered 5 and above (see table 10, in appendix 8). This means that the majority of the customers like Dressmann’s ambience. The same analysis that was drawn for JC can conclusively be applied to Dressmann.

### 5.2.3 Carlings – Perception of the Ambient Factors

Figure 11 (above) shows how Carlings’ customers rank the chosen variables in the store. All three ambient factors are above 4, where lighting was the most important with a mean of 5.16. As mentioned above, the reason is that sight is the most important of the senses (Lindstrom, 2005). Compared to figure 13 (above), Carlings’ customers perceived the lighting to be slightly dark with a mean of 3.32; which was the lowest ranking compared with the other two stores. Since lighting was important to the customers and their opinion is that it is slightly dark, a parallel can be drawn to the store manager’s own opinion. He explains that the lighting could be a tad brighter than it is today. The lighting in a store should be designed to strengthen the brand identity (Lindstrom, 2005) and the store image (Baker et al., 1992; Baker et al., 1994).
It is noteworthy that the dark atmosphere in Carlings is deliberate in order to enlighten the colourful clothes with spot-lighting. Since the manager is allowed to control the strength of the lighting; he could easily change the strategy of this ambient factor. Nevertheless, the darkness is part of what makes Carlings differentiate itself from other stores. Table 12 (see appendix 8) shows that 41.9% of the customers react to the lighting, which could be explained due to its darkness. A change in strategy is not fully recommended, but the brightness could be somewhat adapted. Soft lighting tends to create a more relaxing and pleasant mood, than with bright lighting (Meer, 1985).

The customer age-group of Carlings’ exhibits the largest percentage in the 20-29 year range, with 35.5%. This is the largest compared with JC and Dressmann (see table 6, in appendix 8). There are no representatives for the age groups 40 and above, which is explainable since they are not part of the target group. In addition, only 3.2% are between 30-39 years. The majority, 61.3%, were between 10-19 years.

An entirety of 96.8% of Carlings’ customers paid attention to the music (see table 11, in appendix 8). Carlings usually play their music loudly, which could be a valid explanation to this result. This is also confirmed in figure 12 (above) where Carlings’ customers rate the sound level with a mean of 5.4 which is higher than JC and Dressmann. This is another factor that differentiates Carlings from its competitors. The high level of sound does not necessarily mean that it is perceived negatively by the customers. Slow music has a tendency to encourage consumers to remain longer in the store and buy more (Peter & Olson, 1994), which could suggest that Carlings should continue playing Rock music, but consider playing slow rock as well.

The fact that only 25.8% of the customers were aware of the fragrance is not surprising, since Carlings do not use this ambient factor in their strategy (see table 13, in appendix 8). This is a great loss, since the use of fragrance could enhance their brand image and provide a holistic impression of the store ambience. When customers buy an experience, they pay to enjoy a set of memorable events that the company organizes in order to engage them on a personal level (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Since, emotions get our attention through our senses (Lindstrom, 2005), it is important to make use of all senses to affect the customers’ decision making process. Impressions are stored in the brain and when the senses are triggered, a spectrum of memories and emotions unfold (Lindstrom, 2005). In a sense, Carlings should make use of ‘synesthesia’, which is the creation of synergies between the senses that lead to a chain reaction (Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). Another reason is that ambient scent has been proven to contribute to a favourable perception of the store environment and the product quality (Chebat & Michon, 2003).

Table 3 (above) shows a mean of 5.48 and Std. deviation 1.7 regarding the customers’ enjoyment of Carlings’ ambience. The majority (83.9%) ranging from 5 and above, indicating that they like the store’s ambience (see table 10, in appendix 8). This could be improved drastically, since Carlings already has a way of differentiating itself from others. By providing a total impression and affecting the customers’ perception with all senses, the ambience could be strategically boosted.
5.3 Research Question 3

Is there a relation between the consumers’ perception of the ambience and their in-store behaviour (willingness to browse and willingness to buy)?

The analysis of the third research question is based on the authors’ conceptual model in chapter 2.5. As previously explained, the authors aim at exploring the strength and the direction of the relationship between the environmental stimuli, i.e. ambience (lighting, fragrance and music), and the consumers’ emotional states, i.e. pleasurable feelings while visiting the store. Additionally, the strength and the direction of the relationship between the consumers’ pleasurable feelings and their approach behaviour, i.e. willingness to browse and willingness to buy will be explored. This has been measured for all three stores: JC, Dressmann and Carlings.

Also, the authors have compared the share of buyer who purchased at the store (shoppers), and the ones who did not (non-shoppers) with: The ‘purpose of their store visit’ and the ‘number of minutes they spent in the store’. These factors have been compared with the customers’ general perception and attitude towards each store ambience (measured as ‘Enjoyment of store ambience’) based on the statement: “I like the ambience of this store”, which was indicated on a seven point scale; (1 being ‘Strongly disagree’ and 7 being ‘Strongly agree’). The mean measured for the three store ambiances have been compared to the share of shoppers’ purpose of visit and the amount of time they spent in the store. Before analyzing the following figures for each store, it is worth mentioning that since the authors are mostly interested in exploring the possible reason behind why the customers who browsed also purchased, the group of customers whose main objective was to ‘buy a specific product’ will be disregarded. The reason behind removing these shoppers (and non-shoppers) from the analysis is due to the authors’ assumption that customers who in beforehand had decided to visit the store to buy a specific product, did not necessarily purchase based on the influence of the store ambience. Their main intent was to find and buy a specific product, with or without the impact of the ambience. Hence, the share of shoppers whose main intent was to browse and yet purchased during their visit, becomes more interesting. Could the ambience have been a contributing factor behind their purchase?

The authors chose to use simple bivariate Correlation analysis in order to describe the strength and the direction of the linear relationship between the above mentioned variables. Pallant (2001) explains that the correlation coefficients (r) can only take on values from -1 to +1. When there is a positive correlation, it means that as one variable increases so does the other. A negative correlation would mean that as one variable increases the other decreases. The strength of the relationship is determined based on a guideline: \( r = 0.1 \) to \( 0.29 \) equals a weak relationship; \( r = 0.3 \) to \( 0.49 \) equals a moderate relationship; and \( r = 0.5 \) to \( 1.0 \) equals a strong relationship (Pallant, 2001). The relationship between the ambience (measured as ‘ScaleAmbience’) and the positive feelings (measured as ‘PositiveFeelings’) was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analysis were performed beforehand to ensure that there were no violations of the assumptions of normality and the linearity. The relationship between the positive feelings (measured as ‘PositiveFeelings’) and the customers’ willingness to browse (measured as ‘Willingness to browse in the store’) and willingness to buy (‘Willingness to buy gifts at store’) have also been measured.
5.3.1 JC – Correlation, Purpose of Visit and Time Spent in Store

Figure 15 – JC: Purpose of the visit and shoppers/non-shoppers

Figure 15 shows that 20% of the share of shoppers in JC, did in fact visit the store in order to browse. The atmosphere of the place has been proven to be more influential on purchasing decision, than the product itself (Kotler, 1973). Ambience can serve as an affect-creating medium, where explicit situational factors help to convert behavioural intentions into actual buying behaviour (Kotler, 1973). This could be a reason behind the shoppers’ purchase. The ambient factors can lead to a wide range of behavioural responses, such as impulse buying and sales (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

As can be seen in table 3 (above), JC customers’ enjoyment of the store ambience has a mean of 4.67 and Std. deviation of 1.64, where the majority are ranging from 4 (neutral) to 7 (Strongly agree); which means that they like the ambience in JC (see table 10 in appendix 8).
A tendency has been noticed by the authors, that the longer the customers remain in the store, the larger becomes the share of shoppers. This can be shown in figure 16 above, where 60% of the customers who purchased, remained in JC between 11-15 minutes. The desire to physically stay in the store environment is approach behaviour (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982) and it could be related to store patronage intensions. The above mentioned trend could be a performance and satisfaction approach, which is related to repeat-shopping frequency, the amount of time and money spent in the store (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). Experiencing enjoyment and pleasure creates a sense of loyalty, which could lead to repeat visits (Bittner, 1992; Underhill, 1999). In fact, the store environment affects the amount of time the consumers spend in the store (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996); and if the in-store time increases, so does the amount of purchases (Underhill, 1999).

The relationship between ambience (measured as ‘ScaleAmbience’) and positive feelings (measured as ‘PositiveFeelings’) was explored using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There is a strong, positive correlation between ambience and positive feelings in JC (r=0.499, Sig. 0.005). This indicates that when the impact of ambience increases, the positive feelings will also increase (see table 4, below). There is a strong relation between the two variables, and if ambience is used even more strategically than the current one, it will have an even stronger impact on the intensity of the positive feelings. In the next instance, the authors are interested in exploring the correlation between the positive feelings and the consumers’ behaviour, i.e. their willingness to browse. The relationship between the positive feelings and willingness to browse (measured as ‘Willingness to browse in the store’) was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. As is being indicated, there is a moderate, positive correlation between positive feelings and willingness to browse (r=0.419, Sig. 0.021) (see table 4, below). This points out that if the positive feelings increase in intensity, so will the consumers’ willingness to browse in the store.
JC should take advantage of the strong correlation between ambience and positive feelings to increase the intensity of the feelings which will lead to a desire to browse in the store.

Table 4 – Correlations between Ambience, Positive Feelings and Willingness to browse, all three stores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>PositiveFeelings</th>
<th>ScaleAmbience</th>
<th>Willingness to browse in the store</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ScaleAmbience</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to browse in the store without purchasing</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.276</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>PositiveFeelings</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ScaleAmbience</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to browse in the store without purchasing</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.255</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>PositiveFeelings</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ScaleAmbience</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to browse in the store without purchasing</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.476</td>
<td>.244</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
In table 5 (below), the correlation for ambience, positive feelings and the consumers’ willingness to buy is depicted, for all three stores. The relationship between the positive feelings and willingness to buy (measured as ‘Willingness to buy gifts at the store’) was also investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. As can be seen there is a weak, positive correlation between the two variables in JC ($r=0.207$, Sig. 0.273). Same as mentioned above, if JC enhances the influence of ambience on positive feelings to increase the intensity of the feelings, then there is a stronger possibility that the customers will be willing to buy.

Table 5 – Correlation between Ambience, Positive feelings and Willingness to buy, all three stores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>PositiveFeelings</th>
<th>ScaleAmbience</th>
<th>Willingness to buy gifts at the store</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ScaleAmbience</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to buy gifts at the store</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.207</td>
<td>.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>PositiveFeelings</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ScaleAmbience</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to buy gifts at the store</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>-.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>PositiveFeelings</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ScaleAmbience</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to buy gifts at the store</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.505</td>
<td>.426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although, the majority of the customers do like JC’s ambience (mean 4.67, table 3 above), using the ambience in a strategic manner could lead to a larger share of customers who choose to browse and purchase at the store. Similarly, a strategic ambience could also lead to a larger share of customers who remain longer in the store, which could lead to a purchase. As mentioned above, there is a correlation between ambience, positive feelings and consumers’ behaviour.

### 5.3.2 Dressmann – Correlation, Purpose of Visit and Time Spent in Store

![Chart showing correlation between purpose of visit and time spent in Dressmann store](image)

**Figure 17 – Dressmann: Purpose of the visit and shoppers/non-shoppers**

The same tendency is applicable to Dressmann, as can be seen in figure 17, where 10% of the share of shoppers, did browse in the store. Table 3 (above) shows that Dressmann customers’ enjoyment for the store ambience has a mean of 5.5 and Std. deviation 1.63. Although the standard deviation is high, 76.6% of the customers have answered 5 and above (see table 11, in appendix 8). This means that the majority of the customers like Dressmann’s ambience. As mentioned above, the reason could be the influence of ambience on purchasing decisions, since ambience can serve as an affect-creating medium, leading to impulse buying (Kotler, 1973; Turley & Milliman, 2000).
Fig 18 shows a similar outcome as in JC, where staying in the store longer than 10 minutes could lead to a purchase, e.g. 30% of the shoppers remained at Dressmann for 11-15 minutes; 10% remained between 16-20 minutes. As mentioned above, the desire to physically stay in the store environment could be related to repeat-shopping frequency, amount of time and money spent in the store. The store environment affects the amount of time the consumers spend in the store (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996); and if the in-store time increases, so does the amount of purchases (Underhill, 1999).

Measuring the correlation between ambience, positive feelings, willingness to browse and willingness to buy for Dressmann results in the following: There is a moderate, positive relationship between ambience and positive feelings, in Dressmann (r=0.323, Sig. 0.082, see table 4, above). This also indicates that when the impact of ambience increases, the positive feelings will also increase. In the case of Dressmann, there is a weak, positive correlation between the two variables, positive feelings and willingness to browse (r=0.255, Sig. 0.174, see table 4, above). And lastly, there is weak, positive correlation between the two variables, positive feelings and willingness to buy (r=0.193, Sig. 0.307, see table 5, above). By strategically managing the impact of ambience on positive feelings, the intensity of the positive feelings will increase. This in turn should increase the customers’ willingness to browse and willingness to buy, but not as strongly as in JC, according to these statistics.
5.3.3 Carlings – Correlation, Purpose of Visit and Time Spent in Store

Figure 19 – Carlings Purpose of the visit and shoppers/non-shoppers

Figure 19 demonstrates that 14.3% of the customers who purchased something at Carlings, visited the store with the intention to browse. Table 1 (above) shows a mean of 5.38 and Std. deviation 1.7 regarding the customers’ enjoyment of Carlings’ ambience. The majority (83.9%) ranging from 5 and above, indicating that they like the store’s ambience (table 11, in appendix 8). The same reason regarding ambience as an affect-creating medium with an influence on buying behaviour is applicable on Carlings (Kotler, 1973; Turley &Milliman, 2000).
Figure 20 – Carlings Number of minutes spent in the store and shoppers/non-shoppers

By taking a look at fig 20 it is evident that the above mentioned tendency applies, where 57.2% of the shoppers spent between 11-20 minutes in the store. The same reason behind this trend can be applied to Carlings, where the store environment affects the amount of time the consumer spend in the store (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996); and if the in-store time increases, so does the amount of purchases (Underhill, 1999).

The outcome of the correlation measurements reveal (see table 4, above) that the relationship between the two variables, ambience and positive feelings is moderate, positive for Carlings, (r=0.445, Sig. 0.012). In addition, there is a moderate, positive relationship between positive feelings and the customers’ willingness to browse in Carlings (r=0.476, Sig. 0.007, see table 4, above). Similar as the above mentioned analysis, this shows that if the positive feelings increase in intensity, so will the consumers’ willingness to browse in the store. Lastly, Carlings is exhibiting a strong, positive correlation (see table 5, above) between the two variables positive feelings and willingness to buy (r=0.505, Sig. 0.004). It is evident that Carlings would gain very much by strategically using their ambience to increase the intensity of positive feelings, since there is a strong correlation between this variable and the customers’ willingness to buy. The correlation between positive feelings and willingness to browse would also gain from this strategy.
6 Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the study are presented in this chapter, followed by a critique of the study and suggestions to further research.

The purpose of this study was to explore if and how ambience, (lighting, fragrance and music), is used as a strategic marketing approach by retailers in Sweden as well as how the ambience is perceived by the consumers. A significant aspect was to examine if the consumers’ perception of the current ambience is reflected in their in-store behaviour, (willingness to browse and willingness to buy). The following three research questions were addressed and answered in order to fulfil the purpose.

RQ 1: How is ambience used by Swedish retail stores, and is it a planned strategic approach?

From the results, it is apparent that Swedish retail stores, in this case JC, Dressmann and Carlings, do use ambient factors to mainly create a pleasant atmosphere. They put most though on the use of lighting and music, but entirely neglect the use of fragrance to enhance their current ambience. Lighting and music mostly fulfil a purpose of creating an attractive store environment; however it can be questioned if they are fulfilling their optimal potential of encouraging the customers’ willingness to browse and buy. The authors conclude that although two of the ambient factors are used, the managers are not fully aware of how to use them strategically; meaning that they do not know their specific impact on customers. For instance that lighting can influence their perception of store image; that slow music encourages customers to remain longer in the store, or that the presence of fragrance makes the time spent in line appear shorter. The ambience is not used as a factor to maintain the image of a brand, although brands that are able to create emotional connection to consumers are a lot stronger than the ones that have not shaped their specific identity. Instead, the ambience is as mentioned above merely used as a means for creating a pleasant store environment, rather than being a means for intentionally affecting consumers’ in-store behaviour.

RQ 2: How is the ambience (lighting, fragrance and music) perceived by the consumers?

Firstly, it is important to understand that ambience is not necessarily supposed to be directly noticed by the store visitors, but it should rather influence the customers on an unconscious level. For instance, ambience has a function of influencing the customers’ feelings, creating an emotion of pleasure, which in turn affects their willingness to remain longer in the store and browse. The longer the customers remain in the store, the greater the chance of completing a sale. As depicted in the results the three ambient factors are perceived very differently in each store, which according to the authors, is due to the customers’ age-group. The older age-group of Dressmann chose lighting as the most important ambient factor and perceived Dressmann’s ambience as slightly dark. Dressmann’s lighting is similar to JC’s in term of brightness. The customers of JC, consisting of a younger age-group, did on the other hand not perceive the lighting to be dark. This leads to the conclusion that the age-group plays an important role in how the ambience is perceived. Similarly, music was the ambient factor that received most attention in both Carlings and JC. This is another indication of the importance of the customers’ age-group, as Carlings’ customers also consist of a younger range of customers. The perceived atmosphere varies for different customers due to their reactions to ambient factors (Kotler, 1973) meaning that an atmos-
phere that yields a positive reaction in teenagers may produce a negative reaction in older shoppers (Turley & Milliman, 2000). So, even if the ambience is perceived by the customers as being enjoyable, it should be adapted to the range of customers, in order to be effective. The choice of lighting might be soft to create a more relaxing mood, but the purpose might be lost if the dimness of the store causes irritation. Conclusively, the ambience can be designed to have a greater impact on the customers, if each ambient factor is adapted to the customer target group and is used with a purposeful intention.

**RQ 3: Is there a relation between the consumers’ perception of the ambience and their in-store behaviour (willingness to browse and willingness to buy)?**

Based on the authors’ conceptual model, the results show that there is a positive relationship between the consumers’ perception of the ambience and their in-store behaviour; within all three stores (JC, Dressmann and Carlings). Although the strength of the relationships between the variables differs from store to store, it can be concluded that if the impact of ambience increases, the positive feelings will also increase in intensity. Therefore, if the positive feelings increase in intensity, so will the consumers’ willingness to browse in and their willingness to buy from, the store. The same conclusion is therefore drawn for all three stores, pointing out that the store managers should take advantage of the correlation between these variables by strategically planning their ambient factors. Although the effects of each of these variables were not measured nor tested in an experimental approach by the authors, similarities between these conclusions can be drawn to previous research, implying that environmental stimuli affect consumers’ shopping behaviour; where moods act as a mediating factor between these variables (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Donovan & Rossiter, 1982).

In addition, two tendencies were detected when the authors compared the share of shoppers and non-shoppers with the purpose of their store visit and the number of minutes they spent in the store. These factors were compared with the customers’ general perception and attitude toward the store’s current ambience. The first tendency showed that a certain share of the shoppers, visited the stores with the intention of only browsing. This might imply that the store’s current ambience has influenced the customers’ purchase decision. This assumption is further strengthened by previous researches which indicate that ambient factors have been proven to lead to a wide range of behavioural responses, one of them being impulse buying and sales (Turley & Milliman, 2000). The second tendency noted in all three stores is that the longer the customers remain in the store, the larger becomes the share of shoppers. This is further indicated in previous researches that show that the longer customers remain in the store environment, the larger becomes the amount of purchase (Underhill, 1999).

To sum up, although the majority of the customers are pleased with the current store ambience of JC, Dressmann and Carlings, the managers are nevertheless encouraged to strategically make sure that each ambient factor is living up to its fullest potential and is adapted to the target group. The current ambience-strategy in these stores mostly fulfils the first variable, willingness to browse. This conclusion is based upon the fact that some ambient factors have been taken into consideration, in order to create a pleasant and attractive ambience. It is important to point out that the current ambience does not consider the second variable, willingness to buy. The only store that has consciously intended to affect the customers’ willingness to buy is Dressmann, as they play Rolling Stones music to sell Rolling Stones related products. JC, Dressmann and Carlings should therefore plan a strategic utili-
zation of all three ambient factors, since all three factors are perceived to be important to the customers. Since emotions get our attention through our senses and effect our decision making processes (Lindstrom, 2005), it has become even more important for brands to create emotional connections with their customers. If consumers are, through their senses, influenced by environmental stimuli at the point of purchase, then the active creation of significant ambiances should be seen as an important marketing strategy. As pointed out by Bitner (1990), such atmospheric planning can be the difference between the success and failure of a business. As a conclusion, Swedish clothing retail stores should consciously use ambience as a strategic marketing approach to intentionally affect the consumers’ willingness to browse and buy.

6.1 Critique of study and method

The best method to use for any research is probability sampling, since it ensures real randomization. For this reason, one could criticize the use of convenience sampling when conducting this research. On the other hand, the authors assumed that the respondents in the sample group are homogenous and believe therefore that the use of probability sampling would result in a similar outcome. On this basis, the use of convenience sampling did not interfere with the generated results.

The sample size could have been larger than 91 respondents in order to gain more statistical validity. In the same respect, the number of retail stores could have been more than three. The reason for not including more respondents or stores was due to the lack of time and resources. Nevertheless, the authors did meet the requirement for the sample to be large enough, (30 respondents per store). The sample size did therefore correlate with the central limit theorem, which makes the results somewhat generalizable.

The gender distribution of this sample consisted approximately of 2/3 females. This could have had an impact on the customers’ perception of the ambience in each store. Since the main purpose of this thesis was not to compare male and female perceptions, the uneven gender distribution is not considered to interfere with the results.

Lastly, although the measurement of emotions was based on a reliable previous study, there is a need to refine the measurement scale used in the present study, because the consumers did not report much on the negative emotions. For this reason, these variables could not be taken into account in the model. The main explanation for this could be that the consumers did not feel negative emotions, as ambience does not intend to evoke a negative perception of the store environment. The one-item measures of willingness to browse and willingness to buy can also be elaborated, by adding more similar questions, to get a range of answers on this variable.

6.2 Further research

There are several interesting aspects which can be subject for further research within the field of ambience. Although the focus of this study was to explore if Swedish retail stores use ambience as a marketing approach, it could be interesting to investigate the outcome by comparing the design and utilization of ambience in exclusive and budget clothing retail stores. There should be a valuable difference between how, for instance, Armani and H&M use ambient factors to affect consumers’ perception and in-store behaviour.
The environment interacts with the characteristics of individuals to determine their response. This means that an atmosphere that produces a certain response in one individual or group might produce an entirely different outcome in another individual or group. For this reason, the study of ambience within JC, Dressmann and Carlings could be conducted by choosing a perspective based on comparing different age-groups or genders.

Similarly, another suggestion on further research is to compare the male and the female perspective of the impact of ambience, by for instance choosing typical male and female stores to compare how the genders perceive the ambience; and in addition see how the managers choose to market their brand/product/service to each gender with the help of ambience.

Another very fascinating aspect is to compare how culture affects the consumers’ perception of ambience. This study would then be carried out on an international level, focusing on clothing retail stores in several countries. To make it more specific, it would be helpful to choose stores that are represented in several countries, and thereby measure the effect of culture.

If time and resources permit, it would be very interesting to conduct this study on several different clothing retail stores, to generate new valuable information. Another suggestion is to continue studying JC, Dressmann and Carlings stores in Sweden; either by comparing the stores depending on different cities, or by researching these stores in a specific geographical region, e.g. all JC, Dressmann and Carlings stores in southern Sweden.

If possible, it would be fruitful to compare the results from this thesis, with the results of an experimental manipulation carried out in JC, Dressmann and Carlings in Jönköping City. What would the consumers’ perception of the store ambience be if the current ambience was strategically changed?

An experiment can in fact be conducted on all the above mentioned suggestions on further research. It is worth stressing that experimental research depends highly on the clothing stores and their willingness to participate in such an experiment by letting the ambience be controlled and investigated under a longer time period.
List of references


Appendix

Appendix 1 – Intervjumall (på svenska)
Totalt 18 frågor uppdela i tre olika kategorier, samt inledande och avslutande frågor:

Datum:
Butik:
Yrkestitel:
Namn:

Inledande frågor

Har ni en medveten mall för hur butikens utformning ska vara?

Har ni anställt ett företag som har hjälpt er med utformningen?

Hur stor påverkan har du (butikschefen) på utformningen?

Finns det en röd tråd som förenar samtliga butiker?

Musik

Hur väljer ni musiken som spelas i butiken?

Får ni lov att byta musik här i butiken eller är det en bestämd changera som gäller?

Spelar ni julmusik under december?

Spelar ni t.ex. Rolling Stones om ni vill sälja t-shirts med Rolling Stones tryck?

Tror du att musiken är viktig för att förmedla butikens immige?

Doft

Använder ni er av dofter i butiken, t.ex. doft ljus av kanel under julen?

Är dofterna baserade på säsong, årstid, högtider (jul) etc.?

Om du skulle vilja får du då t.ex. spraya din favorit parfym i butiken för att det ska lukta gott?
Appendix

**Belysning**

Hur Planerar ni ljuset i lokalen?

Om du skulle vilja kan du byta till en starkare eller svagare lampa?

Har du möjlighet att byta till färgade lampor som t.ex. gula lampor vid påsk?

**Avslutande frågor**

Anser du att butikens atmosfär speglar varumärket?

Har ni funderat på att använda er av sinnen för att stärka ert varumärke eller öka försäljning/förstärka kundens upplevelse av butiken?

Hur vanligt tör du att det är att använda sig av människans sinnen i marknadsföringssyfte?
Appendix 2 – Interview template (English translation)

A total of 18 questions divided into three different categories, as well as introductory and concluding questions

Date:
Retail:
Professional title:
Name:

Preliminary questions

Do you have a model for how the store layout should be?

Have you hired a company that has helped you with the layout of the store?

How much influence do you as the store manager have on the layout of the store?

Is there a common theme that unites all stores?

Music

How do you choose the music that is played in the store?

Do you have permission to change the music here in the store, or is it a given play list or type of music that has to be played?

Do you play Christmas music in December?

Have you ever played e.g. Rolling Stones music if you want to sell t-shirts with the Rolling Stones motive?

Do you believe that the music is important to convey the store’s image?
Appendix

**Fragrance**

Do you use scents in the store, such as scented candles of cinnamon at Christmas?

Are the scents based on the season, season, holidays (Christmas), etc.?

If you would like to can you spray your favourite perfume in the shop to make it smell good?

**Lighting**

How you plan the lights in the store?

If you would like to, can you switch to a stronger or weaker bulb to affect the brightness in the store?

Do you have the opportunity to switch to coloured lights such as yellow lights at Easter?

**Concluding questions**

Do you consider the store’s atmosphere reflects the brand?

Have you considered the use of human senses to reinforce your brand or increase sales / improve the customer experience of the store?

How common do you think it is the use of human senses for marketing purposes?
Appendix

Appendix 3 – Interview 1 JC (Original form)

Intervju 1 JC

Datum: 2011-03-07
Butik: JC
Yrkestitel: Butiks Chef
Namn: Robert Abrahamson

Inledande frågor

Musiik


Doft
Enligt Abrahamson använder sig inte JC av dofter alls utan det är endast städbolaget som ser till att det är rent och luktar fräscht.

Belysning
Avslutande frågor

Att butikens atmosfär speglar varumärket håller Abrahamsson delvis med om. Även om Abrahamsson påpekar att allt bidrar så framhåller han att säljarna är den största bidragsfaktorn vad det gäller att spegla varumärket.

Abrahamsson säger att JC inte har funnit att använda sig av sinnen för att stärka kundens upplevelse i butiken. Abrahamsson tror inte kunderna bry sig allt för mycket om vilka låtar som spelas eftersom kunderna är i så många olika butiker varje dag. Abrahamsson påpekar också att han personligen aldrig varit med om att en kund frågar om musiken i butiken.

Appendix

Appendix 4 – Interview 2 Dressmann (Original form)

Intervju 2 Dressmann

Datum: 2011-03-07
Butik: Dressmann
Yrkestitel: Butiks Chef
Namn: Nina Johansson

Inledande frågor
Enligt Johansson så har Dressmann en klar mall på hur utformningen i butiken skall vara och det är huvudkontoret som står för mallen. Som butikschef så får Johansson lov att flytta om var varor skall ligga och Dressmann har inga krav på var annonsvaror mm skall vara placerade även om det finns riktlinjer. Samtliga butiker planeras efter mallen och skapar på så sätt en röd tråd genom samtliga Dressmann butiker.

Musik


På frågan om Dressmann spelar Jul musik under december och i så fall varför? Så svarar Johansson att det är för att kunderna ska bli inspirerade att köpa julklappar. Vidare berättar Johansson att kunderna som handlar i december oftast är ute för att just handla julklappar och att det därför är viktigt att kunderna kommer i juststämning.


Johansson tror att musiken är viktig för att förmedla butiken immige och tycker det nya koncepetet med webbradio är en bra ide eftersom det skapar en enhets känsla

Doft

Belysning

Som butiks chef över Dressmann så får Johansson lov att planera belysningen i butiken i den mån om vilka varor som skall punkt belysas etc. Däremot kan Johanson styra över hur ljust eller mörkt det ska vara i butiken utan det styr centralt.

Johanson berättar att Dressmann har en scen där Dressmann har olika förlagda lampor som Dressmann jobbar med, dock så är det bestämt vilka färger som gäller olika veckor och det har Johansson inte inflytande i som butiks chef.

Avslutande frågor

Johanson tycker att atmosfären speglar ett varumärke och tycker därför att det är bra med koncept för klädkedjor så som Dressmann så att Dressmann olika butikerna speglar samma typ a känsla och därmed varumärket.

Appendix 5 – Interview 3 Carlings (Original form)

Interview 3 Carlings

Datum: 2011-03-07
Butik: Carlings
Yrkestitel: Butiks Chef
Namn: Henric Hiljanen

Inledande frågor


Musik

När det gäller musiken så återkommer Hiljanen till att butiken måste få vara lite egen och speciell, om det e två Pop kilar som jobbar så ska de spela pop och om det är två rockiga killar så ska de spela rock säger Hiljanen.

Carlings har en egen radio kanal, där en dj väljer musiken. Den här musiken kan vi alltid spela men det är inte ofta vi gör det berättar Hiljanen ef tersom han inte gillar den typen av musik som är lite mer pop. Det finns inga regler om att personalen inte får byta musik ef tersom det är viktigt enligt Hiljanen att alla butiker ska vara unika.

På frågan om Carlings spelar Jul musik under december och i så fall varför? Så svarar Hiljanen ja men att Carlings inte spelar klassisk jul musik som t.ex. bjällerklang utan att det snarare är mer rockiga nya jul sånger.

Carlings har haft en del samarbeten med olika band så som Danko Jones och Mustasch samtidigt som de säljer produkter med bland annat deras tryck på och har vid dessa tillfällen upplevt en ökad försäljning, men inte bara av de varorna utan även andra heavy-metal relaterade produkter.

Hiljanen är övertygad om att musiken är bland det viktigaste i butiken för att spegla butiken immige. Hiljanen berättar här att Carlings har provat att spela musik som inte alls passar in på Carlings lite rockiga stil som t.ex. Backstreet Boys hit sång ”I want it that way” där reaktionerna från kunderna var tydligt missnöjda.
Appendix

Doft

Enligt Hiljanen har Carlings har aldrig jobbat med dofter i butiken, som t.ex. doft ljus eller att föröka anpassa dofter efter årstider. Hiljanen säger att det inte finns några riktlinjer vad gäller doft och tycker iden är intressant.

På frågan om han skulle vilja spray sin favorit parfym i butiken för att få det att lukta gott så säger Hiljanen att det inte skulle vara några problem så länge som det inte sätter sig på kläderna.

Belysning

Som butiks chef över Carlings så får Hiljanen lov att styra över styrkan på lamporna men påpekar samtidigt att Carlings jobbar mycket med punkt belysning, där det mesta är svart i lokalen så är det de färgglada kläderna som syns extra mycket om man punktbelyser.

Hiljanen påpekar att han gärna hade haft mer belysning i butiken då han upplever att det är för mörkt.

Avslutande frågor

Hiljanen anser att butikens atmosfär speglar varumärket och tycker detta är extra tydligt med Carlings som vill att varje butik skall vara lite unik men fortfarande Rock N Roll och lite skitig, men på ett trevligt sätt tilläger Hiljanen.

Hiljanen tror att det blir vanligare med att använda sinnen i marknadsföring och speciellt musik. Vad gäller doft så tror Hiljanen inte att det påverkar någonting så länge det inte doftar illa,

Carlings har inte själva provat på att ljust använda flera sinnen för att stärka varumärket och kundernas upplevelse i butiken mer än just musiken avslutar Hiljanen.
MARKNADSUNDERSÖKNING
Fråga 1. Kän?
   Män □   Kvinnor □

Fråga 2. Hur gammal är du?
   10-19 år □  20-29 år □  30-39 år □  40-49 år □  50-59 år □  60 + år □

Fråga 3. Har du köpt något i butik X idag?
   Ja □   Nej □

Fråga 4. Vad var syftet med ditt besök?
   Att köpa en specifik produkt □   Att gå runt i butiken □   Både och □

Fråga 5. Hur ofta besöker du butik X?
   Mer än 1 gång/vecka □  1 gång/vecka □  Mer än 2-3 gånger/månad □
   1 gång/månad □   Några gånger/år □   1 gång/år □
   Mindre än 1 gång/år □

Fråga 6. Hur länge befann du dig i butiken?
   0-5 min □  6-10 min □  11-15 min □  16-20 min □  21-25 min □  26-30 min □  30 + min □


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Fråga 8. Var god, uppskatta nedan med vilken intensitet varje ord beskriver dina känslor när du besökte butiken:

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Fråga 9. Atmosfären/stämningen i butik X är:

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Fråga 10. Musiken i butiken var:

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Belysningen i butiken var:

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Doften i butiken var:

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</table>
Fråga 11. Uppmärksammar du musiken i butiken?

Ja □ Nej □

Fråga 12. Reagerar du på belysningen i butiken?

Ja □ Nej □

Fråga 13. Tänker du på doften i butiken?

Ja □ Nej □

| Fråga 14. Jag gillar atmosfären/stämningen i butiken | Instämmer inte alls | | | | | Instämmer helt |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|
|                                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| Fråga 15. Jag kan tänka mig att spendera tid på att gå runt i den här butiken | Instämmer inte alls | | | | | Instämmer helt |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|
|                                                                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| Fråga 16. Jag är villig att köpa presenter i den här butiken | Instämmer inte alls | | | | | Instämmer helt |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|
|                                                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
Appendix 7 – Survey (English translation)

MARKET RESEARCH (English translation)

Question 1. Gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐

Question 2. How old are you?

10-19 years ☐ 20-29 years ☐ 30-39 years ☐ 40-49 years ☐ 50-59 years ☐ 60-69 years ☐ 70+ years ☐

Question 3. Have you purchased anything in store X today?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Question 4. What is the purpose of your visit?

To buy a specific product ☐ To browse in the store ☐ Both ☐

Question 5. How often do you visit store X?

More than 1/week ☐ Once/week ☐ More than 2-3 times/month ☐

Once per month ☐ A few times/year ☐ Once/year ☐

Less than once/year ☐

Question 6. How long were you in the store?

0-5 min ☐ 6-10 min ☐ 11-15 min ☐ 16-20 min ☐ 21-25 min ☐ 26-30 min ☐ 30+ min ☐

Question 7. What is important to you when you visit a store? Evaluate on the scale below.

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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store environment</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The scent</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix**

**Question 8.** Please indicate on the scale below the intensity with which you felt the following emotions, while visiting the store:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low intensity</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>High intensity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentment</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 9.** The atmosphere / mood of the store X is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unattractive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfresh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unappealing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stressful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malodorous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aromatic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 10.** The music in the store was:

<table>
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<th>Low</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**The lighting in the store was:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Strong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**The fragrance in the store was:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfresh</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Fresh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Question 11. Do you pay attention to the music in the store?

Yes □

No □

### Question 12. Do you react to the lighting in the store?

Yes □

No □

### Question 13. Are you aware of the fragrance in the store?

Yes □

No □

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Agree 1</th>
<th>Agree 2</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Agree 4</th>
<th>Agree 5</th>
<th>Agree 6</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 14. I like the ambience of this store</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 15. I would like to spend time browsing in this store</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 16. I would be willing to buy gifts at this store</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8 – Descriptive data

Figure 21 – Entire sample and gender distribution

Figure 22 – Gender distribution for the three stores
Figure 23 – Age distribution of entire sample

Table 6 – Frequency of age distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-19 år</td>
<td>JC Valid</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>56,7</td>
<td>56,7</td>
<td>56,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 år</td>
<td>JC Valid</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26,7</td>
<td>26,7</td>
<td>83,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 år</td>
<td>JC Valid</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>93,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 år</td>
<td>JC Valid</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 år</td>
<td>JC Valid</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 + år</td>
<td>JC Valid</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Dressmann Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-19 år</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>6,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 år</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33,3</td>
<td>33,3</td>
<td>40,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 år</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13,3</td>
<td>13,3</td>
<td>53,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 år</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>63,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 år</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36,7</td>
<td>36,7</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 + år</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36,7</td>
<td>36,7</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Dressmann Valid</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Carlings Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-19 år</td>
<td>Carlings Valid</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>61,3</td>
<td>61,3</td>
<td>61,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-29 år</td>
<td>Carlings Valid</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35,5</td>
<td>35,5</td>
<td>96,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 år</td>
<td>Carlings Valid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Carlings Valid</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 7 – Purchase frequency

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<tr>
<th>Purchased anything in the store</th>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>JC</td>
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<td>83,3</td>
<td>83,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>JC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>JC</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66,7</td>
<td>66,7</td>
<td>66,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33,3</td>
<td>33,3</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>100,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Carlings</td>
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<td>77,4</td>
<td>77,4</td>
<td>77,4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Carlings</td>
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<td>22,6</td>
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<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Table 8 – Number of visits to the store

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 2-3 times per month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A few times per year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 2-3 times per month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A few times per year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a year</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than once per year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
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<td>Once a week</td>
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<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 2-3 times per month</td>
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<td>12.9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>A few times per year</td>
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<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a year</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Table 9 – Number of minutes spent in the store

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-5 min</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 min</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 min</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-20 min</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmann</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-5 min</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 min</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 min</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-20 min</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 + min</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-5 min</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>32.3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 min</td>
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<td>48.4</td>
<td>48.4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 min</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-20 min</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix

**Table 10 – Frequency for enjoyment of the store ambience**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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**Table 11 – Frequency for attention to the music in the store**

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<th>Percent</th>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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**Table 12 – Frequency for reaction to the lighting in the store**

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Appendix

Table 13 – Frequency for awareness of the fragrance in the store

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<th>Store</th>
<th>Awareness of the fragrance in the store</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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Table 14 – Mean and Std. deviation for question 10

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<th>The music in the store was High or Low</th>
<th>The lighting in the store was Strong or Weak</th>
<th>The fragrance in the store was Fresh or Unfresh</th>
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Table 15 – Mean and Std. deviation of emotions

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