Linnæus University
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Bachelor Thesis

How motivation can be explained by consumer engagement

- A quantitative study on how consumer engagement affects motivation to rank and review in an online context

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Of each particular thing ask: what is it in itself? What is its nature?
- Marcus Aurelius (121 AD - 180 AD) –

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The following bachelor thesis has been conducted with the aim to explain how consumer engagement impact motivation to engage online. In order to achieve this aim and gain insight, a quantitative approach was chosen to solidify the current research with empirical reliability.
Additionally, this thesis was written as the last component included in the six semester long Marketing programme at Linnéuniversitetet in Växjö, Sweden.
The conduction of this research has been a giving and rememberable challenge, which has provided further knowledge of social sciences such as marketing and consumer behavior but also an understanding of the online platforms that exist and in turn online behavior.

However, the aim of this prologue is to give thanks to people who have been helpful throughout the research process. First, we wish to thank our tutors Viktor Magnusson and Dr. Setayesh Sattari for their guidance through the jungle that writing a thesis actually is. We would also like to thank our examiner Åsa Devine for her expertise and constructive criticism during the seminars conducted throughout the semester. Additional thanks are going to Amanda Malmberg who provided solid, practical guidance for the statistical analysis as well as all our opponents who have provided us with creative and thoughtful input throughout the research process. Finally, we would like to thank the 117 respondents who gave us four minutes of their time to participate in our online questionnaire.

You made this thesis possible!

Christoffer Jensen   Jakob Segerslätt

Abstract

This thesis has focused on the impact of consumer engagement in relation to motivation to contribute online, applied on ranking and reviewing on price-comparison sites. Previous research on consumer engagement has focused primarily on conceptual research, and thus lacked empirical solidification. This study address this issue as well as provides extended insights from the consumers' perspective of consumer engagement.

Course: 2FE016E

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Title: How motivation can be explained by consumer engagement - a quantitative study on how consumer engagement affects motivation to rank and review in an online context.

Purpose: Explain how consumer engagement affects consumers motivation to rank and review on price-comparison sites.

Hypotheses raised:

H^1 - There is a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.
H^2 - There is a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.
H^3 - There is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.
H^4 - There is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.
H^5 - There is a positive relationship between behavioral consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.
H^6 - There is a positive relationship between behavioral consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.

Methodology: Cross-sectional social survey design with a self-completion questionnaire.

Conclusion: Based on this research all hypothesis tied to each individual dimension has been accepted, thus it can be concluded that consumer engagement does have a positive relationship with consumer's motivation to engage online.

Keywords: Consumer engagement, motivation, price-comparison sites, online contribution, rank, review,

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1 Introduction

The following chapter introduces the reader to the online information environment and price-comparison sites, as well as the concepts of consumer engagement and motivation. This is then followed by a problem discussion regarding consumer engagement which funnel into the chosen purpose of this thesis.

Internet today is a natural part of many people's daily lives (Olenski, 2013). Now, in the 21th century, we are still experiencing a significant change in the commerce environment (De Chernatony et al., 2011). Furthermore, the accessibility of information has increased tremendously, which in turn has lead to a variety of new innovations e.g. social media platforms as well as other communities tied to specific interests (De Chernatony et al., 2011). As social media platforms have become so popular, one can state that engaging online has become rather normalized and an action that is encouraged (Olenski, 2013).

Furthermore, the ability for consumers to engage online has lead to the introduction of online services or communities such as price-comparison sites e.g. *hotels.com, prisjakt.nu* and *pricerunner.com* etc. (Ansari et al., 2000; Jung et al, 2014; Smith, 2002; Serenko and Detlor, 2004; Serenko et al., 2007). On price-comparison sites the consumer's ability to engage become apparent as they have the ability to rank and review products, brands and services in order to share their experiences tied to those subjects (Jung et al., 2014; Serenko and Hayes, 2010). From a company's perspective these platforms are of importance as they create external brand communities of sorts where both positive and negative feedback is publically displayed (Wirtz, et al, 2013). Hence, these platforms become communication channels for brands to gain insight from (Jung et al., 2014). Furthermore, the expansion and increased usage of the web along with the increased encouragement of engagement allows for the gathering of vast amounts of data, referred to as *big data* (SAS, 2015). The big data is used by companies in order to tailor and offer information e.g. advertisement based on the personal data collected from the individual. As companies have a lot to gain from this data a lot of research has been conducted on the subject (SAS, 2015).

However, when observing the phenomena from the opposite perspective, the perspective of the consumers, much less research has been conducted. Primarily, there seem to be a general lack of research regarding this perspective and what actually motivates consumers to engage (Cheung and Lee, 2012). In accordance, Cheung and Lee (2012) mention the importance of motivation by stating that it drives, creates and sustains online communities, and thus is essential for their survival. This brings us to the question of what actually motivates consumers to contribute and engage online. More specifically, what motivates consumers to engage and contribute on price-comparison sites, who do not offer the same personal profile and feel as social media platforms do i.e. Facebook, even though they are both driven by consumer or personal online engagement (Cheung and Lee, 2012).

1.1 Problem discussion

As consumers get more internet-knowledgeable, they tend to use price-comparison sites in their risk analysis during the pre-purchase process (Jung et al, 2014). This is primarily since the sites provide added transaction value for the consumers and influence their reference price, trust and confidence of product choice (Hoffman, 2004; Jung et al., 2014; Benbasat and Wang, 2007). Van Doorn et al. (2010) discuss that sharing content online (as on price-comparison sites) is one form of *consumer engagement*, a theory which explains an engaged consumer's action through different dimensional aspects, where the most frequent being the affective, cognitive and behavioural dimensions as identified by Dessart et al. (2015).

By understanding the perspective of consumer engagement, the underlying factors behind a specific action become more clear (Vivek et al., 2014). However, the research up until this point have been of an experimental nature, and as a consequence it lacks empirical reliability (Vivek et al., 2012). Furthermore, Dessart et al. (2015) show that the research has mainly focused on brand-related sites and communities, thus overlooking the application of the theories of consumer engagement to other areas, and in turn miss out on gaining understanding of the possible outcomes that has been theorized by e.g. Wirtz et al. (2013), Vivek et al. (2012), Brodie et al. (2011b) and Higgins and Scholer (2009). Van Doorn et al. (2010) further suggest that consumer engagement theory needs to be applied to practical areas in order to determine how the dimensions of consumer engagement interact with each other in different contexts.

One suggestion for one such practical area is price-comparison sites, which hosts other consumers' reviews and rankings of products, brands and retailers. These sites exhibits

engaged consumers who are expressing e-Word of Mouth (eWOM), which in turn is an identified consequence of consumer engagement according to Vivek et al. (2012). Although there has been research aiming to explain what creates eWOM on platforms such as price-comparison sites (Henning-Thurau, 2004; Cheung et al, 2012; Tong et al, 2013), these studies focus on motivational theory to map the antecedents of eWOM with the perspective that a higher level of motivation increases the possibility of eWOM. However, a study applying consumer engagement theory would further provide insight to which factors there is that actually creates motivation, as consumer engagement theory maps the psychological process as well as the behavioral manifestations of a consumer's actions (Dessart et al., 2015).
Additionally, earlier research on consumer engagement tend to keep a company perspective while mapping out how companies can create or control engagement, such as Kumar et al, (2010), van Doorn. (2010), Vivek et al. (2014), Wirtz et al. (2013) and Mosteller et al. (2014). Hence, a study focusing on the consumers' perspective would add value to the existing literature as well as the scientific area of consumer engagement. Additionally, results from such a study may aid in gaining further understanding the consumer in an online context.

Connecting back to price-comparison sites, the action of ranking and review products have been seen as an outcome of a consumer's motivation to do so (Cheung & Lee, 2012). Van Doorn et al. (2010) argue that an increase in consumer engagement further leads to an increase in consumer motivation and that the current literature lacks research on how these dimensions of consumer engagement interact and create the consumer's motivation. Dessart et al. (2015) has summarized the acknowledged dimensions of consumer engagement examined by a variety of authors into a conceptual framework. However, the act of putting the theory into practice still remains to be done. Hence, by applying consumer engagement theory on a practical outcome, such as rank and reviewing on price-comparison sites, the current research would be valuably extended with empirical solidification based on a consumer perspective.

1.2 Purpose

Explain how consumer engagement affects consumers motivation to rank and review on price-comparison sites.

2 Literature review

The literature review will firstly discuss motivation as a theoretical concept, before discussing the concept of consumer engagement. The research conducted on consumer engagement have previously focused on several dimensions of the concept. Dessart et al. (2015) researched and summarized previous literature on consumer engagement and identified three fundamental dimensions: affective, cognitive and behavioural. The following theory chapter will therefore firstly provide a review on consumer engagement in general based on those dimensions. Secondly, it will include a review on the three fundamental dimensions acknowledged by Dessart et al. (2015) and their underlying sub-dimensions, in order to gain an understanding of consumer engagement, what drives it and how one can make use of it.

2.1 Motivation

The concept of motivation refers to incentives and drives which leads to a certain behaviour, i.e. a determinant to behaviour (Gee-Woo et al., 2005). Motivation additionally affect the likelihood that a behaviour will occur and how strong that behaviour is, which means that motivation can be seen as the cause of behaviour. By measuring an individuals motivation to perform a certain behaviour, one can thus examine the likehood of that behaviour occurring (Kankanhalli et al., 2005).

There are several ways of categorizing motivation. Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) explains the subject by dividing it into five utilities: *Focus related utility, Consumption utility, Approval utility, moderator-related utility* and *Homestase ultility*. All five discuss different motivational factors that affect an individual's motivation, mostly from a pshycological standpoint.

Another common approach to the subject of motivation is to divide it into three separate parts or ways that motivation can manifest itself from: *amotivation, extrinsic motivation* and *intrinsic motivation* (Tong et al., 2012; Running et al., 2009; Ryan and Deci, 2000). Amotivation can simply be described as an emotional state in which the individual do not sense an attraction towards a specific task or behavior, which in turn signifies a lack of motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Extrinsic motivation can be described as motivation tied to a specific task, that are manifested by external factors and circumstances and which leads to a specific behavior (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Tong et al., 2013). As that is the case extrinsic motivation can be perceived as the least autonomous of the three as behavior caused by this type of motivation is carried out in order to cater an external request, get an external reward or to avoid punishment (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Furthermore, extrinsic motivation is connected to rewards external from the behavior resulting in the reward. Hence, an example of an activity representing extrinsic motivation could be the participation in a contest where the winning prize symbolizes the external reward (Running et al., 1999). Intrinsic motivation on the other hand is the strongest type of motivation as it is characterized by factors such as inner joy for being able to participate or carry out an action or behavior of interest, educating oneself or mastering a skill (Ryan and Deci, 2000b). Additionally, intrinsic motivation is associated is unitized with the activity or behavior, which resembles the actual reward. Compared to extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation is connected to inner, personal rewards such as feeling a sense of talent, competence or self-determination that one wish to further explore (Running et al., 1999; Tong et al., 2013). Additionally, intrinsic motivation is fueled by individual's interest for the actual activity or behavior as well as the sense of meaningfulness (Running et al., 1999).

As stated, one commonly separate extrinsic motivation from intrinsic motivation (Tong et al., 2012; Running et al., 2009; Ryan and Deci, 2000). What generally separates the two are which kind of reward the behavior or action correlate to. However, worth noting is that the two can be combined and lead to certain actions and behavior and do not have to be separated from one another (Running et al., 1999).

Looking at sharing information online in relation to the subject of motivation, Tong et al. (2013) concludes that all manifestations affect the consumer's motivation to do so. Self-evidently, this means that by measuring the different levels of manifestations, one measures the individual's motivation. However, previous researchers have used a number of different ways to measure motivation, such as cost versus benefit analysis (Gee-Woo et al., 2005), incentive systems (Kankanhalli et al., 2005) and organizational climate (Purvis et al., 2001; Gee-Woo et al, 2005). Consequently, an individual's motivation is therefore affected by both personal factors and the surrounding environment and should be measured as such (Chai and Kim, 2012).

2.1.1 Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory is an established motivational theory that imply that people have three fundamental needs essential for creating an attraction towards an act or a certain behavior: self-determination, competence and sense of belonging (Ryan and Deci, 2000a).

The first one, the need represented by self-determination implies that individuals wish to perceive an act or a behavior as the result of free will. The second one, describes people's wish to improve the competence in a variety of areas in order to handle their surroundings in the best possible way (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). Finally, the need for sense of belonging describes individual's strive to feel connected to one or several people within their surroundings, a mutual feeling of trust, love or communion between friends. Combining these three factors in multiple ways will affect the level of motivation an individual may feel (Ryan and Deci, 2000a).

2.1.2 Herzberg's two-factor theory

Herzberg (1973) examined motivation from a business perspective. According to his theories motivation can be described as hygiene- and motivational factors. Hygiene factors are defined based on physical work, these include, among other things, management's ability to guide and control the work successfully, social relationships, salary and other financial rewards, employment protection and privacy. However, hygiene factors do not solely contribute to experienced motivation. Hygiene factors in combination with the motivational factors affects an individual's perception of e.g. his or her work assignments. Furthermore, the motivational factors are explained in six different work motives. These motives represent the satisfaction of performing a good job, recognition, interesting and varied assignments, ability to influence work conditions, opportunity for advancement and progress through the ability to learn new things (Herzberg, 1973).

Additionally, Herzberg (1973) considers the hygiene factors to correlate to being the foundational security of an organization. However, they do not motivate the individual in his or her work life, besides the fact that it prevents amotivation.

In order to create stronger motivation among individuals, focus should also be according to Herzberg (1973) on motivation factors not linked to the physical work environment. Such as personal development, recognition, appreciation and interesting work assignments creates stronger motivation.

2.2 Consumer engagement

There are a variety of different definitions of engagement and models (Vivek et al., 2014). O'Brien (2009) states that these definitions and models are incomplete or are in need of revision in order to keep up with the ever-changing online environment. However, Attfield et al. (2011) define engagement in general as 'the emotional, cognitive and behavioral connection that exists, at any point in time and possibly over time, between a user and a resource'. O'Brien (2009) on the other hand provide a simplified definition of the concept by stating that 'engagement has been defined as both the act of emotionally involving someone or the personal state of being in gear'. A third and slightly older description of the concept is provided by Jacques and Carey (1995) along with Hutchins et al. (1986) who base engagement on a relationship between three factors: attention, motivation and perceived control of the action that can be perceived between the user and the system.

Recently, consumer engagement have achieved much attention in marketing research as a branch from relationship marketing (Vivek et al., 2014). Despite this, new definitions for the concepts appear apart from the ones previously mentioned (Brodie et al., 2011a; Dessart et al, 2015). Bowden (2009) takes a view which takes the psychological dimension into focus and connect it to customer loyalty. Brodie et al. (2011a) have a similar psychological view by highlighting interactivity and co-creation experiences with a focal agent (i.e. brand/organisation) as a necessity for consumer engagement. However, van Doorn et al. (2010) takes a different approach and sees consumer engagement as a sum of *behavioural* manifestations for a brand, that goes beyond purchase due to motivational drivers. The common ground in consumer engagement research is that it involves a brand or organisation and an explanation of how consumers interact with it and to which extent (Dessart et al., 2015; Vivek et al., 2014).

Consumer engagement has further been researched with numerous dimensions in focus. However, Dessart et al. (2015) has identified, connected and presented the fundamental ones in their research, which are the: affective, cognitive and behavioural dimension of consumer engagement. The affective part of consumer engagement involves the consumers enthusiasm and enjoyment in regards to the engagement e.g. getting feedback from other consumers on their own posts (Vivek et al., 2014). The cognitive dimension discuss the amount of cognitive activity (i.e. thinking) that the consumer spend (Dessart et al., 2015). The last dimension, behavioural engagement, takes the actions of consumers into focus (van Doorn et al., 2010) and is arguably the strongest indicator of consumer engagement as it requires effort from the consumer (Wirtz et al., 2013). In summation, by being engaged the consumer show involvement, which goes beyond traditional consumer behaviour as the consumer further connect with a brand, organisation as well as other consumers (Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

2.2.1 Engagement in an online environment

The increased global web activity and ability to connect from any location is not just a convenient tool that helps online users to connect with online content creators, it is also a tool of engagement (O'Brien and Toms, 2008). Theories and methods of engagement can easily be adapted into the online environment. However, Sheedy (2008) states that adapting engagement to the online environment requires careful planning, support as well as creativity. O'Brien and Maclean (2009) further state that engagement in an online environment correlate directly with the quality of user experiences that a particular online platform provides. Additionally, online engagement is connected to users' impression of the website itself, the perceived quality and satisfaction that it provides (Quesenbery, 2003).

2.2.2 Affective engagement

The affective dimension involves the emotions and feelings that the consumer possess towards the object of engagement (Dessart et al., 2015). Additionally, it is classified as the *emotional dimension* by Brodie et al. (2011). Hollebeek (2011) concludes that the emotional dimension can be represented by the degree of *passion* that a consumer exerts towards a focal object, meaning that engaged consumers feel very strongly towards the brands or the products that they are engaged with. Hollebeek (2011) further argues that the consumers' positive affection from brand interactions determines the level of emotional investment that a consumer invests in a brand, which ultimately measures the consumer's passion towards the brand.

When looking at causes for consumer engagement from an affective perspective, Cheung and Lee (2012) concludes that a consumer's sense of belonging in a community has a strong effect on consumers motivation to review online, also known as altruism. These findings highlight the importance of endorsing social value and factors on an online review site in order to impact the consumer's affective commitment (Cheung and Lee, 2012). The consumers affective engagement is also connected to the consumer's sense of pride towards the brand that's being reviewed (Hollebeek et al., (2014). Furthermore, the affective dimension can be further divided into the sub-dimensions of *enjoyment* and *enthusiasm* (Dessart et al., 2015).

2.2.2.1 Enjoyment

The dimension of enjoyment is derived from the consumers perceived pleasure when integrating with a brand community or other engaged consumers (Dessart et al., 2015), for example when writing a review that is later liked and appreciated by other consumers. That increases the consumer's sense of belonging, which Cheung and Lee. (2012) and Tong et al. (2013) concludes is a strong antecedent to consumer engagement. Hollebeek et al. (2014) shows that happiness and positive feelings when using a brand’s products or services further strengthens the consumers affection for the brand, while Higgins and Scholer (2009) concludes that when a consumer is about to engage with others the polarity of the surrounding environment matters. If faced with negativity, consumers’ effort to engage rises which makes it likely that the consumer will choose to take action. Furthermore, the reward of opposing or overcoming the negative forces will ultimately be a positive experience for the consumer, applying to the consumer's sense of pride discussed by Hollebeek et al. (2014).

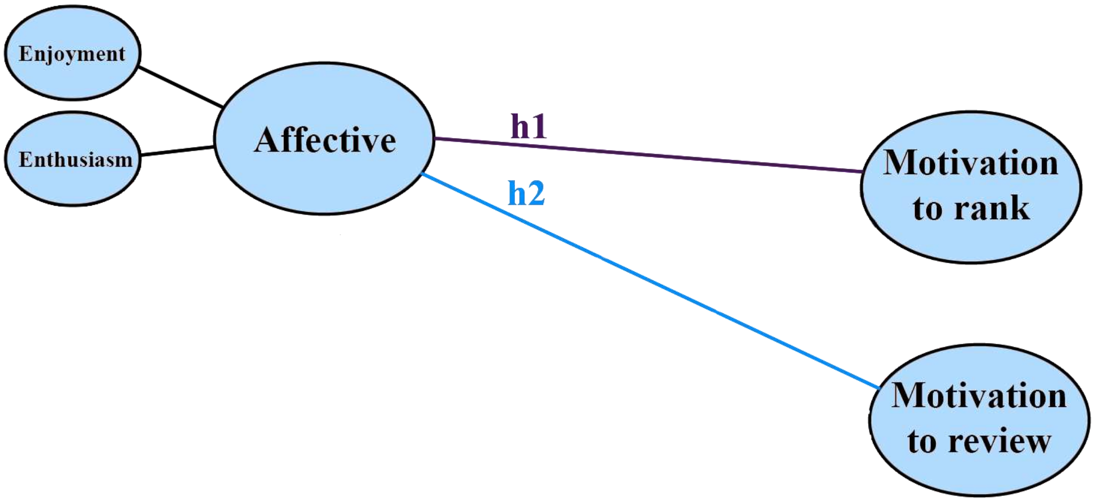
2.2.2.2 Enthusiasm

Vivek et al. (2014) discusses enthused participation to be a major part of consumer engagement, defining it as a consumer’s reactions and feelings that results from using or interacting with the object of engagement. The enthusiasm factor can be triggered by excitement or interest in other consumers’ engagement (Dessart et al., 2015), e.g. by seeing positive posts that the consumer agrees with (Higgins and Scholer, 2009). Enthusiasm among consumers further fuels the online participation, increasing the online conversation and presence (Cheung and Lee, 2012).

Based on the literature discussing antecedents and outcomes (such as motivation) from consumer engagement and specifically the dimension of affective engagement, this thesis hypothesize:

> **H^1:** *There is a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.*

H²: *There is a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.*



2.2.3 Cognitive engagement

The cognitive dimension refers to the mental state of the consumer in regards to the brand, e.g. how much the consumer are thinking about the brand and the effort that is required to do so (Dessart et al., 2015). The more cognitive effort that a consumer spend on a brand or product, the higher the level of engagement (Vivek et al., 2014; Hollebeek, 2011; Dessart et al., 2015). However, Dwivedi (2015) shows that spent time is not the critical factor to create cognitive brand engagement and further state that the engagement is a result of how involved the consumer is in a specific product category.

Looking at cognitive aspects, the brand itself play a strong role for consumer engagement, a stronger brand with higher reputation and higher brand equity is more likely to generate consumer engagement in various forms (de Matos and Rossi., 2008; Walsh et al., 2009). However, Roehm and Brady (2007) conclude that if a high reputation brand fails or gain bad publicity, the result in terms of consumer engagement may be substantially high and the disappointment from the consumers may also lead to negative word of mouth (Higgins and Scholer, 2009).

Other factors that has shown to have a positive relation to consumer engagement are trust, commitment and customer satisfaction (Hollebeek, 2011) but also more complex constructs such as consumers *sense of fair play* when a change of information occurs online (Poddar et al., 2009). Furthermore, by giving the impression of being fair also builds trust and form stronger customer relationships (Gefen and Straub, 2004).

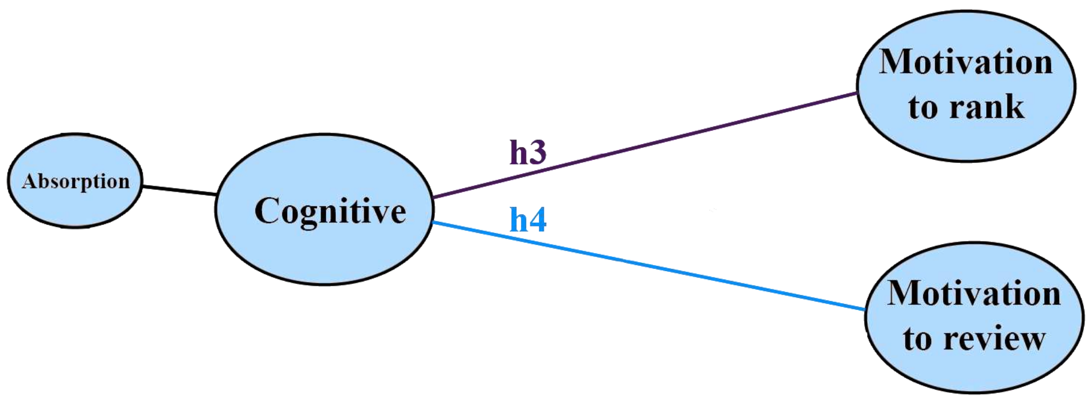
Cheung and Lee’s (2012) research on eWOM in an online review context reveal that the cognitive aspects of helping other consumers and gaining reputation in the community is a strong antecedent to eWOM (and thus consumer engagement), which is further strengthened by Tong et al's, (2013) theory that consumers' improvements of their self-image affect their intention to review. Additionally, a prominent sub-dimension to cognitive consumer engagement is *absorption*, which demonstrates a high level of cognitive engagement (Dessart et al, 2015).

2.2.3.1 Absorbtion

Patterson et al. (2006) identifies absorption engagement as the consumer being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in its' customer role, which can be clarified as the consumer being immersed with a brand or their products and unable to let go cognitively (Dessart et al., 2015). Hollebeek, (2011) further describes absorption as a dimension of immersion and defines it as the consumer brand-related concentration, in particular brand interaction, i.e. the cognitive investment in brand interactions. When a consumer is being absorbed, he/she is exhibiting a high level of cognitive engagement, however it is not always a positive relationship between the consumer and the company as it can create difficulties of detachment for the consumer and a possibility of dissatisfaction (Dwivedi, 2015; Dessart et al., 2015).

In summation, the literature discuss antecedents and outcomes e.g. motivation as a result of consumer engagement, and more specifically its dimension of cognitive engagement. Hence this study hypothesize:

> **H^3:** *There is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.*
> **H^4:** *There is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.*



2.2.4 Behavioural engagement

Behavioral engagement in context describes *consumers' behavioral manifestation towards a brand or a firm, beyond purchase, which results in motivational drives* (van Doorn et al., 2010). These motivational drives can be categorized into five different sub-dimensions of behavioral engagement: valence, form or modality, scope, nature of its impact and customer goals (van Doorn et al., 2010).

Valence acknowledges if the consumer's engagement has positive or negative consequences from the perspective of a firm, bearing primarily financial and marketing aspects in mind (Brady et al., 2006; van Doorn et al., 2010). Additionally, valence bring up the subject of actions that may be perceived as predominantly positive i.e. recommendations to friends and family but which may potentially be negative for a firm e.g. if the fit between a new customer and a brand is poor as a result (van Doorn et al., 2010).

Form and modality refer to the different ways in which customer engagement can be expressed in terms of connected resources e.g. time and money as the engagement and how it manifests itself is determined by one's personal limitations of resources (van Doorn et al., 2010).

Scope as a sub-dimension of behavioral engagement acknowledges whether the actual engagement is momentary or ongoing. Scope also includes the geographical aspects of the customer engagement, whether it is local as in the case of word of mouth from person to person or global as when posting content on viral webpages (van Doorn et al., 2010).

Nature of impact is the fourth sub-dimension brought up by van Doorn et al. (2010). They state that the nature of impact refers to how quickly behavioral customer engagement affect other connected components e.g. a firm's target group. Hence, there is a great difference when comparing the time efficiency offered by different platforms that support consumer engagement (e.g. Internet versus letter).

Finally, van Doorn et al. (2010) bring up customer goals as a sub-dimension of note. This sub-dimension bring up questions of relevance connected to the actual engagement i.e. to whom is the engagement directed, to what extent the engagement is planned and to what extent the goals of a customer correlate to the goals of a brand (van Doorn et al., 2010).

2.2.4.1 Sharing.

According to both Brodie et al. (2011b) and Vivek et al. (2014) sharing content through communication channels is heavily connected to behavioral engagement, something that gained even more attention through the increased popularity of social media platforms and their ability to share content rapidly (Brodie et al., 2011b). Additionally, Vargo and Lusch (2004) as well as Cheung and Lee (2012) state that communities online rely heavily on exchange of content in order to exist, gain awareness and remain popular. Hence, sharing is defined as a collective and interactive action that both let people communicate at the same time as it fuels communities and social media (Brodie et al., 2011b; Cheung and Lee, 2012; Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

2.2.4.2 Learning

Learning can be described as the opposite of sharing. The fact of the matter is that consumers seeks content in order to gain desired information about any subject (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Furthermore, Brodie et al., (2011b) states that the learning aspect of behavioral consumer engagement is growing ever more important as the sense of helping one another is facilitated through people's engagement online. Additionally, Dholakia et al. (2004) state that some of the key aspects of an online community is to learn and improve abilities, which platforms such as social media and comparison sites are well suited for (Zaglia, 2013).

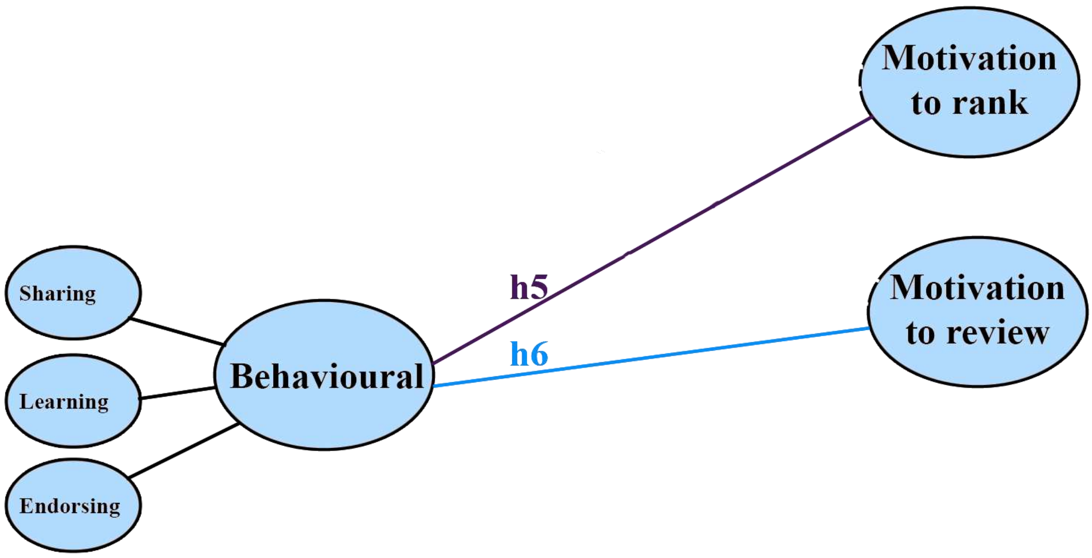
2.2.4.3 Endorsing

Behavioral consumer engagement may also be motivated by endorsement (Gummerus et al., 2012). On online platforms such as price comparison sites or social media members may support group activity tied to e.g. a brand by approving that brand's individual page or by ranking and reviewing (Gummerus et al., 2012). Additionally, Schau et al. (2009) and Brodie et al. (2011) refer to endorsement in behavioral engagement as *impression management*, with people approving, neglecting and stating opinions regarding content they come in contact with. Furthermore, Mosteller and Mathwick (2014) argue that the act of ranking correlates with specific social settings and that a social value in the ranking process therefore needs to be reinforced in order to gain consumer engagement.

Based on the literature discussing antecedents and outcomes (such as motivation) from consumer engagement, and specifically its dimension of behavioural consumer engagement, this study hypothesize:

> **H^5:** *There is a positive relationship between behavioural consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.*

H6: *There is a positive relationship between behavioural consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.*



2.3 Summary of consumer engagement theories

The following figure 2.1 and table 2.1 illustrates the current and reviewed literature on consumer engagement and the dimensions that have previously been researched by different authors. In the figure the main dimensions of consumer engagement is marked as blue, with their sub-dimensions marked in green.

The table that follows shows the research conducted on each dimension. On the left-hand side the research authors are stated, while the top column states the main dimensions in bold with the underlying sub-dimensions following to the right.

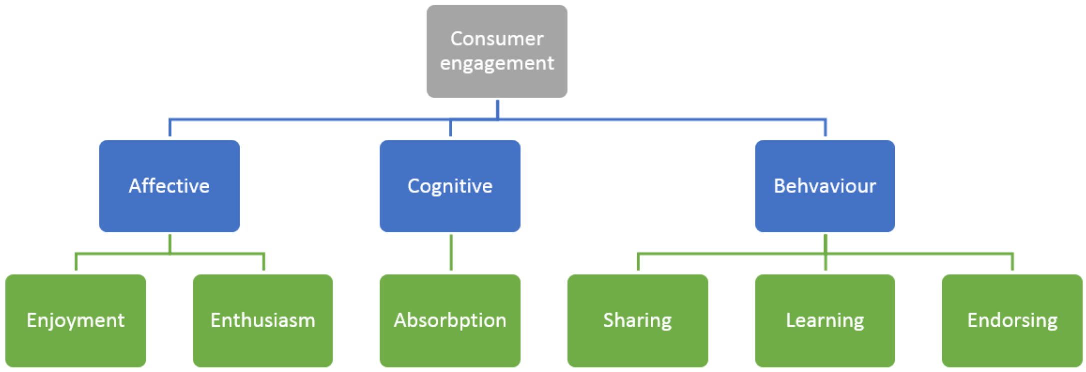


Figure 2.1: Dimensions of consumer engagement identified by Dessart et al. (2010), including sub-dimensions.

Author\Construct	**Affective**	Enthusiasm	Enjoyment	**Cognitive**	Absorption	**Behavioral**	Sharing	Endorsing	Learning
Attfield et al, 2011	**X**			**X**		**X**			
Bowden, 2009	**X**			**X**					
Brodie et al, 2011b	**X**			**X**		**X**	**X**		**X**
Cheung and Lee, 2012	**X**		**X**	**X**			**X**	**X**	
Dessart et al, 2015	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
van Doorn et al, 2010						**X**			
Dwivedi, 2015					**X**				
Higgins and Scholer, 2009	**X**		**X**	**X**	**X**				
Hollebeek, 2011	**X**			**X**	**X**	**X**			
Hollebeek et al, 2014	**X**		**X**	**X**		**X**			
Mosteller and Mathwick, 2014	**X**			**X**		**X**			
Poddar et al, 2009				**X**					
Vivek et al, 2014		**X**	**X**	**X**			**X**		
O´Brien, 2009	**X**								

Table 2.1: Research on consumer engagement dimensions.

2.4 Conceptual model

The following model summarizes the literature into dimensions and show the hypotheses for this study, which has been presented in this chapter.

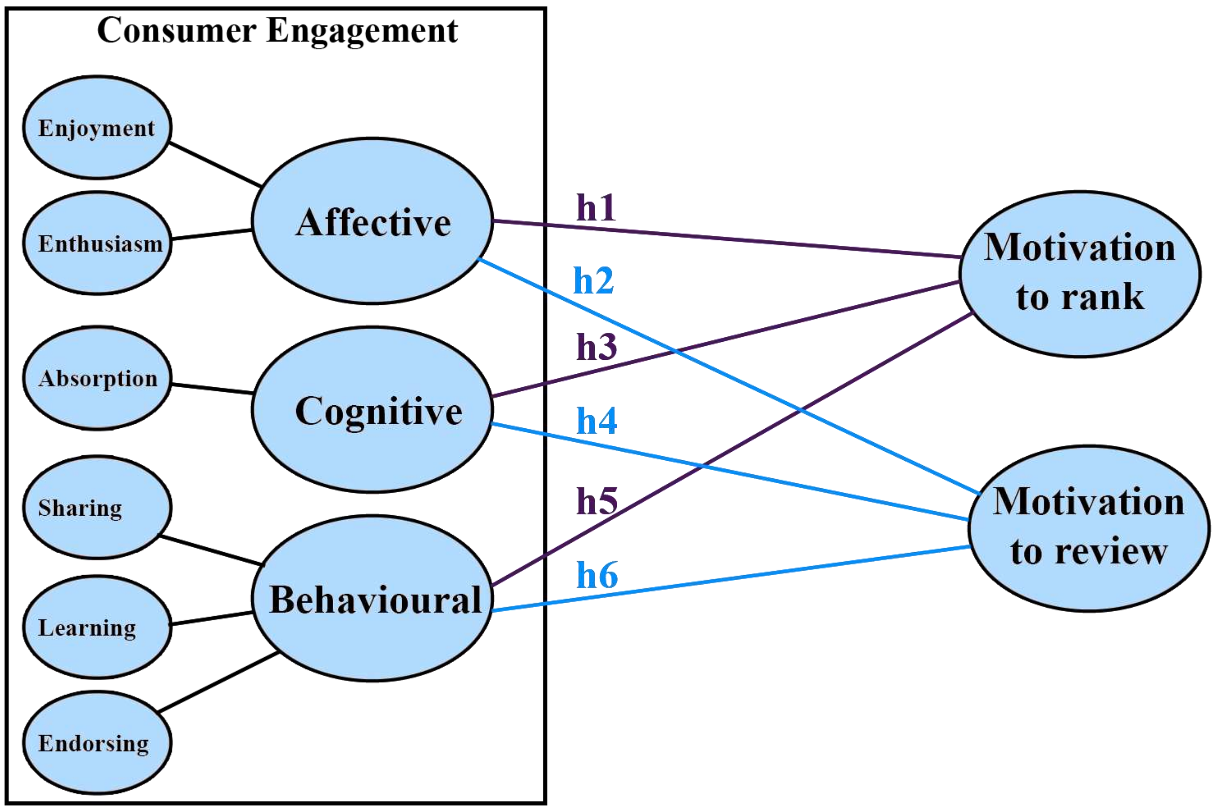


Figure 2.2: Conceptual model

3 Methodology

The following chapter presents the methodological choices available and argue for the ones that were specifically chosen for this thesis. That includes the choice of research approach, -strategy, -design as well as data collection, sampling, data analysis and quality criteria of the study. An illustrated summary of the choices can be seen at the end of the chapter, 3.10 Method summary.

3.1 Method structure

The methodology for this study mainly follows the process of Saunders et al. (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2011) with additional knowledge from other published literature. To illustrate methodology as a concept, Saunders et al's. (2009) *research onion* can be observed. As seen in the illustration below, various choices are available for the different stages of methodology. The research onion further shows the complexity of methodology as a concept and how researchers need to take a systematic approach in their research process. Naturally, not all of the different *layers* of the graph are relevant for this thesis but the graph provides a valuable overview. Additionally, the methodological theories of Bryman and Bell (2011) are presented and discussed later in this chapter.

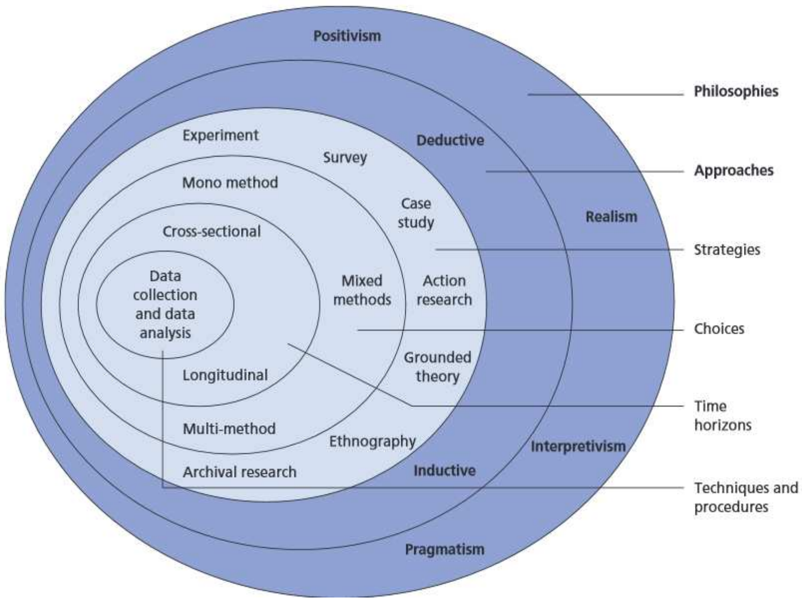


Figure 3.1: The *research onion*, Saunders et al. (2009).

3.2 Research approach

3.2.1 Deductive and inductive research

Both inductive and deductive theories are approaches to implement as a researcher when conducting research. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), Hanley (2014) and Saunders et al (2009) each of the two approaches shall be viewed upon bearing different perspectives in mind.

Inductive theory is described as one that follows a non-linear research process. By describing it as non-linear defines the process of continuously being flexible during the research process, bringing the study forward while at the same time going back revising previously handled elements (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Additionally, inductive research is founded on constructionism, which is described as the theory and belief that people create reality through subjective and collective social interaction (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Hence, inductive research is regarded as suitable for conducting research of an ontological nature, research that focus on *what is* such as *objectivism* and *constructionism* (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Deductive theory, on the other hand, is commonly emphasized within business research (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In comparison to inductive research being described as non-linear, deductive research is regarded as linear as the research follows a linear line of action (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Rather than being suitable for research of an ontological nature as inductive research, deductive research is suitable for research of an epistemological nature or in other words research about *knowledge understanding* such as *positivism, realism* and *interpretivism* (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

This study has been based on existing theory, followed a linear line of action based on six hypotheses and explained a phenomena in a set context. Hence, this study has focused on the understanding of already presented knowledge and has in turn an epistemological approach. Hence, in summation, the study conducted is deductive in nature.

3.2.2 Qualitative and quantitative research

There are two main approaches to use when conducting research: quantitative and the qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011).

As the term qualitative indicates this area of research emphasizes the qualities of entities and on processes that are not experimentally examined or measured (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Quantitative research, on the other hand, focuses on the measurement and analysis of quantifiable data such as amount, intensity or frequency and the causal relationships between variables (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Furthermore, qualitative research methods are founded on an inductive approach where one wishes to come up with new theory whereas quantitative research follows a deductive approach or in other words a approach of testing already existing theory (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Additionally, one may simplify the description by stating that quantitative research methods emphasize the analysis of numbers whereas qualitative research methods emphasize the analysis of words (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Punch, 2013).

The two approaches differ in terms of the areas where they are usually applied (Ingham-Broomsfield, 2015). Qualitative research methods are usually applied and suitable for social and behavioral sciences where the aim is to gain a deep understanding of human behavior and its nature. As that is the case, a qualitative approach is a suitable choice when the researcher wants to explore previously unexplored areas (Pekrun et al., 2002; Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, in order for one to successfully conduct a qualitative study one must acknowledge the importance of the basic underlying theories tied to the chosen subject such as the constant evolvement of society and individuals' subjective perception of reality (Taylor, 2005; Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The way from which data is collected between the two approaches varies greatly (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As mentioned, quantitative research methods are emphasized in scientific areas where there is a desire to test existing theory. This is done by quantifying statistical data, testing relationships between variables and making statistical generalizations based on the data collected (Yin, 2014; Bryman and Bell, 2011). In order for one to gather data to be analyzed from a quantitative perspective, the data itself needs to be gathered in unison with fixed answer alternatives (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Hence, questionnaires and structured interviews are common instruments used during the data collection of a quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011).

As mentioned, qualitative research aim to gain a deep understanding of a chosen subject, something that may be hard to do when dealing solely with numbers. Hence, the researcher need to interact with the studied population on a more personal level (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As that is the case, semi- or open-interviews as well as focus groups are preferable when conducting qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Naturally, there are drawbacks with each approach. The primary critic aimed at the quantitative research approach is generalization (Saunder et al., 2009). When generalizing statistics it becomes hard for one to distinguish people and as the data is summed up in numbers the quantitative approach is perceived as one providing a static view of a subject (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Another negative aspect, which is often brought up in this debate, is the distance that usually exists between the researchers and the studied population (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011).
Qualitative research on the other hand, is often perceived as too subjective. Hence, critic is often aimed at qualitative research for being hard to generalize, due to the researcher's subjective interpretation and use of the gathered data (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Another common obstacle in qualitative research methods, tied to the researcher's individual perception of the study, is the difficulty for one to understand the research process (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The aim of this thesis is to explain how theories of consumer engagement affect motivation to rank and review on price-comparison sites. As that is the case, the authors aim to conduct statistical generalizations of data gathered from a population. Furthermore, the study is based on already existing theory, which gives it a deductive approach. Hence, a quantitative research approach has been implemented for this thesis. The fact that the authors wish to reach a generalizable conclusion further strengthens the choice of a quantitative methodological framework chosen for the thesis.

3.3 Research design

The *research design* determines the framework for the collection of data (Bryman and Bell, 2011). To clarify, it is the general plan for how the research question can be answered through a research project (Robson, 2011). There are various ways to go about this, however it is important to keep in mind that the purpose of the research design is to set rules and terms that directs the researchers in how they can analyze their data and gain evidence for the conclusions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). For market research, the general choice of design often falls upon *exploratory*, *descriptive* or *explanatory* research designs (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The exploratory aims to gain understanding and provide insights of the nature of the research phenomenon. Descriptive aims to portray an accurate profile of a phenomenon (describe it). Lastly, explanatory design aims to establish causal relationships and test relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2009).

This study investigates how consumer engagement affect motivation, meaning that independent variables based on current theory needs to be tested against a dependent variable (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Bearing this in mind, it fulfills the criteria for an explanatory research design as it additionally aims to apply current theory on a new area to gain further insights. Explanatory studies are often characterized by their use of statistics in order to understand relationships (Saunders et al., 2009), which this study has aimed to do by studying the relationship between consumer engagement and motivation to rank and review.

3.4 Research strategy

There are several research strategies that need to be considered in order to meet the objectives of the study (Saunders et al., 2009). According to Yin (2014) there are no restrictions of strategy in regards to if the study is exploratory, descriptive or explanatory, which leads Saunders et al., (2009) to argue that no research strategy is superior or inferior to any other. The research strategy choice should rather be decided based on if it will answer the raised research questions and meet the objective of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders et al, 2009). In addition to the research question and objectives, the researcher(s) should take the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other resources that are available into account as well as the philosophical underpinnings of the researcher(s) (Saunders et al., 2009).

Saunders et al. (2009) bring up the following research strategies; *experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research,* while Bryman and Bell (2011) add *longitudinal* and *comparative* studies to the list. However, these are not restricted to being used exclusively, meaning that researchers can encompass more than one strategy if needed e.g. a survey within a case study (Saunders et al., 2009).
An **experimental strategy** uses manipulation of an independent variable usually with two samples where one sample is exposed to a change, which may have an affect on the outcome (Saunders et al., 2009). Originally experimental design derives from the natural sciences (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and is seen as the strategy from which other strategies is

formed (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011). As experimental strategies require a large amount of control over the variables it tend to be hard utilize for business research. However, if used it usually have a high internal validity (Saunder et al., 2009). Furthermore, due to the change in the variables of an experiment and the importance of the change, the strategy is often implemented to answer questions of *how* and *why* in explanatory and exploratory studies (Saunders et al., 2009).

A **survey strategy** is often used in deductive business and management research to answer questions of *who, what, where, how much* and *how* (Saunders et al., 2009). It allows for quantitative analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics, and is an easy way of researching larger populations. However, there are challenges for researchers in ensuring a representative sample, relying on goodwill from participants as well as the limitation of of the data collection i.e. it tend to be narrow in comparison to other research strategies (Saunder et al., 2009). A common misconception of the survey strategy is that it only involves the questionnaire collection method, however structured observation and structured interviews can also be used in survey strategy.

Case study strategies involves a particular contemporary phenomenon for an empirical investigation while using multiple sources of evidence (Robson, 2011). It can be either a single organization, location, person or event with a detailed and intensive analysis of the case (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) further argues that case studies is often, but not exclusively, applied to qualitative research due to its favour of unstructured interviews and participant observation. In contrast to experimental and survey strategies, case studies tend to be far less controlled and thus used in explanatory or exploratory research (Saunders et al., 2009).

Grounded theory is often used in inductive approaches and qualitative studies, to predict and explain behaviour and ultimately develop new theory (Saunders et al., 2009. It often leads to concepts and categories as outcomes of the research, which is done through coding and deep analysis of data (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The final strategies that Saunders et al., (2009) discuss are the following three:

- **Action** research, which focus on answering how questions and invoke change in an organization.
- **Ethnographic** research, which is heavily related to inductive approaches as it studies the social world through a long period in time, making it very time-consuming.

- **Archival** research which focuses on coding already existing documents, thus making it irrelevant for this study (Saunders et al, 2009).

The choice of research strategy for this study has taken the proper assessments into account, which are first and foremost the purpose and the objective of this study,

> *Explain how consumer engagement affect consumers motivation to rank and review on price-comparison sites.*

which inclines that a *how*-question needs to be answered which can be done by either a social survey or action research. Additionally, this study has a deductive, quantitative approach which makes grounded theory and ethnographic research hard to apply, while survey research on the other hand often is used in deductive, quantitative studies. Due to the extent of knowledge that the researchers hold, an experimental design would most likely be unreliable as it requires a great amount of control over the variables, which in this case would be the consumer's motivation to rank and review. Lastly, this study did not aim to understand a specific case but rather a phenomenon and how it happens. Hence, a social survey strategy was chosen and has helped in answering the objective of this study.

3.4.1 Time horizon

Together with planning the research strategy, a time horizon of the study needs to be established. Saunders et al., (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2011) both discuss cross-sectional and longitudinal studies as options. Where a cross-sectional approach is the most common and is used in a single point in time a longitudinal approach investigates a phenomenon over a longer period in time to gain understanding of the possible development that may occur (Saunder et al., 2009: Bryman and Bell, 2011). For quantitative studies, a cross-sectional design is often applied and for the purpose of this study, a longitudinal design is not necessary as this study investigates a phenomenon during a specific point in time. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design often use the survey strategy making it suitable for this study (Saunder et al., 2009).

3.5 Data collection method

In order to be able to conduct research, investigate and analyze identified problems one first need to gather empirical data to be interpreted and to draw conclusions regarding the acknowledged research problem (Bryman and Bell, 2011). There exist a variety of data collection methods to implement, which makes it important to choose one that suits the data desired for the study as well as the type of analysis, which is to be carried out (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005).

Furthermore, the chosen research design is essential to take into consideration, as different designs require different data collection methods (Malhotra, 2010) e.g. exploratory research designs are more suitable for qualitative research methods whereas descriptive research designs are more suitable for quantitative research methods. Additionally, research designs of an explanatory nature are suitable for both method areas (Malhotra, 2010; Bryman and Bell, 2011).

This thesis applied a self-completion questionnaire as the chosen data collection method, which in turn was distributed through both a social media platform as well as e-mail. Questionnaire was chosen as the data collection method as the thesis itself and its purpose is of an explanatory nature with a cross-sectional survey approach that aim to draw conclusions based on a large population of respondents. A cross-sectional approach can be closely compared to a social survey e.g. questionnaires and structured interviews. However, self-completion questionnaires enable the respondents to stay anonymous which may result in a greater answer rate. Furthermore, the researcher may reach a larger population of potential respondents as there is no need for face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the respondents, as when conducting qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders et al, 2009).

3.5.1 Self-completion questionnaire

A questionnaire, or instrument as it is also referred to as, can be described as a tool for gathering structured data. The main aim of this technique is to receive answers on a set of questions with prepared answer-options (Malhotra and Birks, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2011).

As that is the case, the chosen subject of the questionnaire often regard people's opinions, behavior or knowledge of a specific subject (Graziano and Raulin, 2010). Furthermore, one needs to acknowledge the importance of gathering authentic and accurate data from the respondents (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Questionnaires that are not completed in full are of limited use, which is why trying to gather completed answers is of the essence (Malhotra, 2010).

There are a variety of actions to implement in order to handle these stated problems e.g. motivate and encourage the respondents by asking questions that they are likely to want to answer, avoid subjects that are perceived as taboo or intimidating and to keep the questionnaire and its items short and simple (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011; Malhotra, 2010). Tied to the latter is also the importance of response rate and response error (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As a researcher, one aims to have a high response rate and a low error rate. The most common way of achieving this is to let the respondents fill in their answer by themselves (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and let them participate in a so called *self-completion questionnaire* (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Nardi, 2003). Additionally, the respondents may be invited and come in contact with the questionnaire in a variety of ways, which in turn give one greater chances of receiving a satisfactory response rate (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Commonly used ways of distribution are e.g. post, e-mail and links through social media etc. (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Furthermore, one needs to continuously bear in mind the underlying psychological thinking of the respondents e.g. the populations wish to remain anonymous during participation (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Finally, time should be acknowledged as an influencing factor tied to response rate and error rate, as a time consuming questionnaire is more likely to be perceived as a burden for respondents (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

3.5.2 Questionnaire construction

The questionnaire construction undertakes the formation of the question and how the overall design should be (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, the design structure will affect the response rate, reliability and validity of the data collection (Saunders et al., 2009).

When designing the questionnaire, Saunders et al. (2009) points out the following important aspects to take into consideration; a clear and pleasing layout of the questionnaire, lucid explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire, easy to understand questions as well as a pilot testing and a well executed administration of the questionnaire. Bryman and Bell, (2011) further discuss respondent *fatigue* and that it needs to be avoided in order to boost response rate. That means one should avoid designing unnecessary long questions, while maintaining a clear and appealing presentation of the questionnaire. Additionally, if the questions use words and terms that the respondent are unfamiliar with the response rate may decrease.

The self-completion questionnaire for this thesis has taken the previously stated criterias into consideration and created a questionnaire using *Google Forms*. The authors has identified other alternatives and websites for conducting questionnaires such as *surveymonkey.com*, *surveygizmo.com* and *mysurvey.com* but the authors chose Google Forms due to past experience with the plattform and the collaborative attributes of it. The presentation text is designed to be as short as possible but still explain the purpose of the study and other valuable information yet further provide instructions on how the questionnaire is designed and how the respondents should think when answering the questions, which Saunders et al. (2009) endorse as an important aspect.

To increase the response rate, the authors choose to create a *Facebook*-event with invitations to 520 acquaintances of the researchers, which the authors believe creates more attention. An additional 30 respondents were also sent a link to the questionnaire by e-mail in order to receive more diverse answers, especially from individuals who do not spend as much time on social media platforms or have a differnet perception of or relationship to the Internet compared to younger generations.

For further details regarding the distribution see chapter *3.5.4 Distribution.* As the target population for this thesis were Swedish consumers, the questionnaire was translated to Swedish in order to reduce the likelihood of respondents neglecting the study due to lack their lack of proficiency in the English language. The development of the questions for the questionnaire is explained below.

3.5.2.1 Question structure

The questions asked can either be closed- or open ended meaning that the respondent can either answer freely or is bound to a pre-determined set of choices (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Open ended questions are often difficult to code and thus hard to analyse in descriptive and explanatory research, which makes it appropriate for exploratory research. Close-ended questions are more suitable for quantitative analysis which further often makes it the main choice for questionnaires (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In particular, a seven-point likert scale helps pre-code the answers for further analysis, while keeping it detailed and logical enough for the respondents (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Hence, for the purpose of investigating the impact of consumer engagement dimensions on motivation, this study implemented a seven-point likert scale for questions connected to the consumer engagement dimensions and to which extent the consumer's motivation is affected by it.

The questions has been designed with Bryman and Bell’s (2011) and Saunders et al.’s (2009) criterias in mind, which is to avoid negatives in the questions as well as questions that are leading, double-barrelled, general and too long. Ultimately, the questions need to be easy to understand and easy to relate to the research questions (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

There are a variety of different questions that can be asked that in turn yield different types of variables such as ratio, ordinal and nominal variables (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The use of a likert scale yields scale variables, which is prefered in the later stages of quantitative analysis and was thus chosen as suitable for this study.

For a full view of the questionnaire from the respondents' perspective, see *Appendix 2*.

3.5.3 Research ethics

According to Bryman and Bell (2011) ethical aspects of research are essential to acknowledge as ethical issues may arise during the conduction of the study.
The ethical issues themselves may be of different character e.g. harm to participants/respondents, lack of consent, invasion of privacy as well as deception (Diener and Crandall, 1978). However, one should note that qualitative research generally go into greater depth, which in turn puts the research at greater risk of running into ethical issues tied to invasion of privacy etc. (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

This thesis, which is based on quantitative empirical data gathered from a questionnaire, has focused on concepts of engagement and motivation for engagement in an online context. Even though the questionnaire is self-completed it is important to acknowledge potential aspects that may be perceived as harmful to the respondents e.g. invasion of privacy or asking questions that may cause stress (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As a result, the questionnaire of this thesis has avoided collecting the respondents names and keeping a large extent of their personal information anonymous (except gender and age). Furthermore, the respondents were informed about this fact before they participated. The issue of deception in the thesis was also avoided by stating the purpose of the questionnaire, the study itself and how the answers would be used. The researchers were also sure to include their contact information if the respondents were to have any questions tied to the questionnaire or the research itself.

3.5.4 Distribution

There are two primary ways of distributing a questionnaire and reaching respondents, the first being sending it out by email or social networks and the other being meeting the respondents face to face or sending it out by regular mail. Christensen et al. (2001) states that the latter is a rather costly alternative both regarding time and money the primary choice would be the first alternative, which can be described as the opposite when dealing with the aspect of resources. Bryman and Bell (2011) further state that by distributing digitally one is able to reach a greater amount of people than when using other options. Based on those factors, this thesis has distributed its questionnaire digitally through the primary channels of social networks and through e-mail.

3.5.5 Pre-testing of questionnaire

To check if the questions fulfill the mentioned criterias, a pre-test of the questionnaire should be administered to subjects that represent the sample of interest in order to deem the questions suitable and easily understand (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunder et al., 2009). Furthermore, a pre-test helps with checking the validity and reliability of the collected data and if not satisfactory the questions can be adjusted (Saunder et al., 2009). Other valuable information that can be collected through a pre-test are how long it takes to complete the survey, presentation clarity, if questions are unambiguous and other general problems with the questionnaire that the respondents perceive, which self-evidently needs to be addressed (Saunder et al., 2009). Once the pre-test is completed, amended and the sample selected (see chapter *3.7 Sampling*), the questionnaire can be administered (Saunder et al., 2009).
This thesis used participants related to the sample for pre-testing as well as feedback regarding validity from tutors at hand. The pre-test acknowledged how long the questionnaire took to complete and provided feedback for making the questions more easily understood.

3.6 Operationalization

The quantitative operationalization process discuss how the theory can be measured and how it can be turned into quantifiable data (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) further highlights that it is imperative that the interpretation of the theory needs to be thoroughly reasoned in order for the operationalization to be plausible. Operationalization is done through a series of steps, all with replicability in mind in order for other researchers to be able to replicate the study later on (Saunders et al., 2009).
The first step is to identify which *theory concepts* one should collect data for, in this case the impact of consumer engagement in connection to motivation, as well as to provide a *definition* for it. This is followed by providing measures for the concept, also known as *operational definition*, where indicators are identified that can represent the concept. The

next step is *measurement*, meaning how the operational definition can be realized (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

For the full list of questions and how they have been derived, see *Appendix 1*. It includes the identified measurement items from the literature and shows from which author(s) it is originated and lastly which question it corresponds to. The finished questionnaire can be seen in *Appendix 2*.

The following figure show the operationalization process and clarifies the necessary concepts for this study:

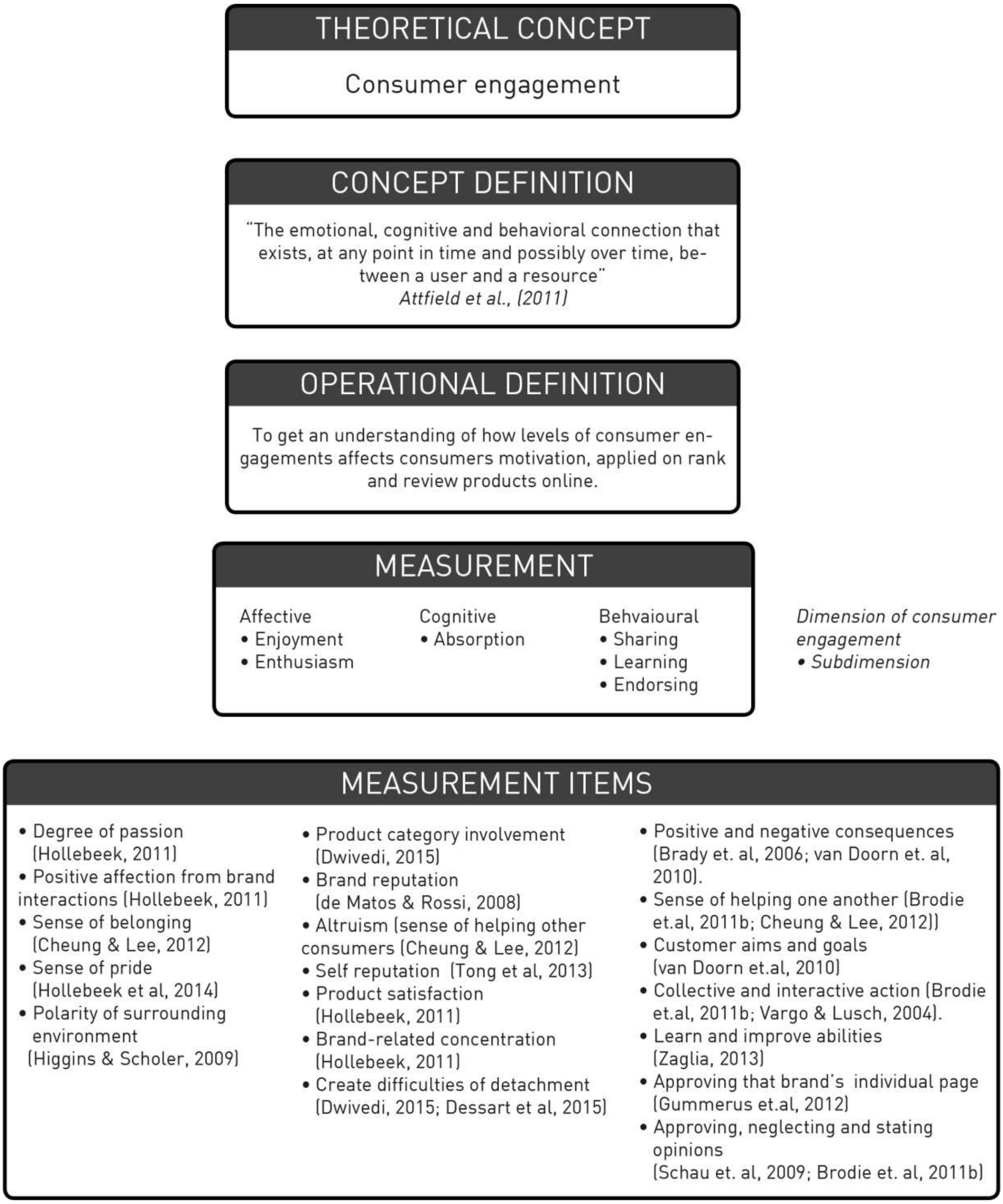


Figure 3.1: Operationalization.

3.7 Sampling

When conducting research the main objective is usually to collect data tied to specific aspects of a population of interest e.g. measurable variables, characteristics and behavior (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Furthermore, time and money are the two primary resources that determine how large a population a research may investigate (Holme and Solvang, 1997). Hence, the researchers chose a sample of the population of interest to investigate, a part of population that represents the rest (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011).
A population investigated can itself be described as a sum of characteristics and elements shared (Malhotra and Birks, 2003) but may not necessarily include people but also products and organizations (Graziano and Raulin, 2010). Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge the importance of the origin of the data collected (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). It is the responsibility of the researchers to choose a sample that correlates with the aim of the study itself, in order for the conclusions to be relevant and generalizable (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Additionally, sampling can be split into a probability and a non-probability sampling approach. The difference between the two is that within a probability sample each respondent of the observed population has exact same probability to be picked and included (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) further state that by using probability sampling one can draw statistical conclusions based on the population from which the sample has been selected. Furthermore, there are a variety of sampling techniques that are suitable for application when conducting probability sampling e.g. simple random sample, systematic sample and multi-cluster sampling (Malhotra and Birks, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2011).
Non-probability sampling, on the other hand, is suitable in the cases where probability sampling is not i.e. where it is not practical or even necessary to conduct probability sampling (Nardi, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Probability sampling is reliable due to chance and random variety whereas non-probability sampling is determined and deemed reliable by the judgments made by the researchers themselves (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Hence, non-probability sampling lacks the ability to be generalized to the same extent as probability sampling (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). However, as with probability sampling, there are several sampling techniques tied to conducting non-probability sampling e.g. judgmental, quota, snowball and convenience sampling (Malhotra and Birks, 2003;

Bryman and Bell, 2011). Convenience sampling can be described as a sampling method used due to its accessibility from the researcher's perspective as well as its ability to receive a good response rate (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Having said that, there are obstacles that follow is convenience sampling is selected, primarily that the result will be hard to generalize since the population studied might not correlate with the greater mass (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Nevertheless, this thesis has based its conclusions on non-probability convenience sampling. Furthermore, the sample has been based on mixed genders and age-spans in order for the answers themselves to be of great variation and the conclusions to be drawn based data of the same nature.

3.7.1 Target population

In order for one to avoid inaccuracy in the results it is important to thoroughly examine the population before the actual research is conducted (Aaker et al., 2010). As mentioned previously, the target population can be described as all features and fundamental elements of interest relevant for the study (Aaker et al., 2010).

This thesis focused on describing the relationship between variables. However, elements such as age or gender do not determine the chosen target population. Instead, this thesis has aimed focus at a population with online experience who in turn are familiar with price-comparison sites. Furthermore, the timespan of the study should be noted as all data has been gathered in May 2015.

3.7.2 Sampling frame

A sampling frame is essential in order to conduct a sampling from which conclusions regarding a population can be drawn. The actual sampling frame indicate specific characteristics or control variables that the respondents shall have in order to be a part of the research sample itself e.g. nationality, city of origin, employer, previous online experience etc. (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005; Aaker et al., 2010; Field, 2009). The set sampling frame should be designed in a comprehensive way and correlate well with the purpose of the research one wish to conduct. Aaker et al. (2010) further state that it is essential to determine the sampling frame before the sampling technique and the actual sampling data is gathered. Additionally, Bryman and Bell (2011) state that in case the sampling frame is unsuitable in its design and do not correlate well with the chosen population of interest the actual sample cannot be representative for that population. Hence, the sampling frame is crucial for any thesis.

In order to deem the respondents well suited or able to represent the population one includes control questions as a part of the constructed instrument or questionnaire (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In the case of this thesis the first questions acknowledge if the respondent is motivated to rank and review, if they have previous experience of doing so and planning to do so in the future. If the respondent indicates a low or no motivation when asked these questions one can state that these respondents are of less significance for the study. Having said that, they are still important, as the aim of the study is to understand the phenomena from a comprehensive perspective.

The respondents were gathered through two different channels. The primary channel was Facebook where an event was created which 520 people were invited to. The invited also had the opportunity to share the questionnaire further as the event was public. Additionally, the questionnaire was posted in the Facebook-group *Svensk E-handel* which has 3618 members. However, as posts are added regularly within that group far from all members could have been reached. Secondly, the questionnaire was sent out through email to reach 30 respondents who were not users of Facebook and hence could not reach the questionnaire from that channel.

3.7.3 Sampling technique & sample size

The choice of sampling technique is directly linked to the chosen target population or sample as well as the sampling frame (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Furthermore, sampling technique raises the question of whether the actual sample should be probable or non-probable in nature (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). As stated, probability sampling is generally preferred due to the fact that the sample will be built up randomly (Aaker et al., 2010). However, Guest et al. (2006) state that even though researchers should try to use a probability sample at all times, the chance of actually being able to do in reality is minor. Due to the fact that the sample of this thesis was not randomly selected to a full extent, probability sampling had to be neglected. As a result of that fact, in combination with a rather narrow timeframe, non-probability sampling was, as previously stated, chosen as the sampling technique for this study.

The sampling framework written in the previous chapter explained how the questionnaire was distributed through a variety of distribution channels and as stated convenience sampling used. By creating a Facebook-event, sharing via email and posting the questionnaire within *Svensk E-handel* the researchers were able to gather responses from 117 people in four days. Furthermore, by sharing the questionnaire from a variety of distribution channels the researchers were able to collect responses from a varied population, which in turn lead to the collection of more diverse and reliable data (Aaker et al., 2010).

One also need to acknowledge the importance of gathering the minimum amount of responses in order for the conclusions of the thesis to be reliable and trustworthy (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, Bryman and Bell (2011) further state that there is no set determination of how large a sample size needs to be in order for it to be deemed credible. Be that as it may, the larger the sample size the more reliable the data (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Having said that, van Voorhis and Morgan (2007) states that a minimum of 50 respondents should be included in any research in order to examine variables and the relationships among them. This thesis has based its result on 117 collected responses, which connected to the theory of van Voorhis and Morgan (2007) is 134 % in addition to the minimum of 50 respondents required, which in turn deems the sample sufficiently reliable.
Furthermore, the questionnaire was sent out to 550 people through the Facebook-event and email all together, which correlates to a response rate of 21%. However, if including the group *Svensk E-handel* with its 3618 members, the thesis would have a response rate of around 2.8%.

3.8 Data analysis method

Once the data collection is complete, the data needs to be processed and analysed into usable information, which for quantitative data often is done through a computer program such as SPSS to save time and avoid human errors (Saunder et al., 2009). The choice of data analysis technique should be considered at an early stage of the research process, particularly when designing a questionnaire, coding scheme or observation schedule in order to be able to apply it in regards to the variables that are undergoing research (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) further explains that with this in mind, there there are three kinds of analysis available:

- *Univariate* analysis for a single variable.
- *Bivariate* analysis for relationships between two variables.
- *Multivariate* analysis when researching three or more variables.

In this study, linear analysis will be conducted due to the relationship of the variables of consumer engagement dimensions and motivation to rank and review.
Although SPSS aids with the statistical analysis of the data, the input data needs to be coded in order to make it comprehensive e.g. put numbers on answers that otherwise would be words or meanings (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011). As previously stated, this thesis chose to use a likert-scale with the answers ranging from 1-7 (4 being neutral), from *do not agree* to *fully agree.* This enables one to calculate mean, median and mode (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Further coding was done to the measurement items, to *Aff, Cog* and *Beh* each representing the three acknowledged dimensions of consumer engagement.
Robson (2011) highlights that researchers should not aim towards the more advanced analysis method, thinking it will yield better results. Simple descriptive statistics often provide the right interpretation for social science research (Robson, 2011). The questionnaire for this study contains statements with a 1-7 likert-scale which identifies consumer engagement dimensions for motivation, which was entered into SPSS into a new data sheet with the appropriate coding 1-7 in each question, interpreted as scale variables. Each question was put in a separate column, making each row an individual respondent. To reduce human error the data was compared to the built-in descriptive statistics provided by Google Forms in order to make sure no errors occurred (Robson, 2011).

3.8.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics refers to data related to the population under investigation e.g. gender, age, occupation and income, which can be statistically calculated for mean, median and mode etc. (Saunder et al., 2009). For this study gender and age was precautionary collected in order to acknowledge a demographic profile of the sample to a certain extent (Saunder et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, descriptive statistics allows for analysis by looking at established central tendencies which calculates dispersion from the mean by standard deviation, which in practise means how much the collected data differs from the mean of each measurement item (Saunder et al., 2009). This furthermore enables eliminating the extremes of each item (Saunder et al., 2009).

3.8.2 Regression analysis

The regression analysis is a technique often used to acknowledge the relationship between two or more variables i.e. if a dependent variables is affected by an independent one (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This means that it can be used in both bivariate analysis- and multivariate analysis-approaches. However, even though it can show a relationship between variables, it does not necessarily mean that it is a causal relationship. The strength of the analysis is rather that it can see how significant a relationship is (Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

The first step of an regression analysis is to identify the dependent and independent variables, and in the case that there are only one of each, a linear regression analysis is possible (also known as bivariate regression) (Malhotra, 2010). The linear regression takes the mathematical relationship between the independent and the dependent variable into account in order to see if they match, often displayed through a simple linear graph (Malhotra, 2010). If there are more variables to take into account, a multiple regression analysis is needed (also known as multivariate regression). Multiple regression analysis uses two or more independent variables against one dependent variable, however in practise it is not a more advanced technique than univariate analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

This study has included six independent variables and two dependent variables. However, due to the different hypotheses this study has utilized univariate regression analyses, i.e. linear regression. This choice was made as it connects the research question to the investigation of variable relationships. A linear regression analysis further provide insight into how significant the relationship is between consumer engagement dimensions and motivation to rank and review online. As previously stated, the data was entered into SPSS and thus the program was used for the analysis, first by computing new means-variables for each variable followed by performing the regression analyses.

3.9 Quality criterias within quantitative method

Bryman and Bell (2011) stress the importance of making sure that the study conducted is valid and reliable. Hence, researchers shall state criteria to be met tied to the quality of the research. Nardi (2003) as well as Bryman and Bell (2011) state three criteria as common in a research context: *validity*, *reliability* and *replicability*. Bryman and Bell (2011) further state that the quality of the research conducted is determined by these three criteria or concepts. Validity measure to which extent a research investigates what it intends to investigate. Reliability, on the other hand, measures the stability of the measurement instrument. As a result, all three criteria have been included in this thesis in order to deem it credible and qualitative (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Having said that, there is an ongoing debate among researchers regarding to which extent the validation should be specified. Silverman (2013) state that all results and conclusions drawn need to be backed up by reliable and validated data or sources in order to become credible. However, the aim of research validity is to provide understanding of the gist of the study rather than convincing the reader of the credibility of the conducted research according to Wolcott (1990).

3.9.1 Content validity

Content validity or face validity is one method for a researcher to use in order to determine that the measures conducted correlate with the purpose of the actual research (Nardi, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2011). In practice content validity lets a person of expertise within a specific subject of interest go through the material before it is sent out e.g. go through the constructed operationalization including all items included in the research instrument/questionnaire (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Malhotra, 2010). In accordance, the content validity for this thesis was determined by having two tutors, who can be deemed as professionals within the subject of quantitative research and marketing, provide expertise regarding the questionnaire and the underlying language, theories, data and operationalization. Additionally, it should be noted that both experts are employees of the Linnaeus University. As a result the quality of the thesis increased as the questions included in the questionnaire and for the data collection were deemed relevant and in line with the purpose. In greater detail, the professional opinions were used during the pretesting phase of the thesis. Bryman and Bell (2011) state that within the pretesting phase all items of the instrument are gone through in order to deem them understandable, ethically correct and if they will provide the desired data. As stated, pretesting also prevents the researcher from running into misunderstandings in terms of items or data at a later stage in the research.

3.9.2 Construct validity

Construct validity is another method for measuring reliability, quality and research credibility. As a method it is used by gathering information based on published theories that are deemed relevant to the chosen research subject (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, Saunders et al., (2009) and Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) state that construct validity is used as a measure in order to determine to which extent the questions included in the operationalization measure that which is desired in terms of chosen and included constructs. One can state the construct validity describe the accuracy of the measurement items included.

Hence, one can also see the resemblance between construct validity and content validity, but there are differences between the two. Primarily, content validity focus on deeming the operationalization and its content reasonable. Construct validity, on the other hand, focus on to which extent the measurement items or questions included in the operationalization can be calculated through statistics (Nardi, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) further state that common tools used when determining construct validity is *factor analysis* and *correlation analysis* which bring us to the subject of *Pearson's r* (Bryman and Bell, 2011). . Pearson's r is a tool used for measuring the concept of convergent validity, which Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) describes as the phenomena of one variable correlating to another variable to a certain extent. They further state that using convergent validity enables one to determine that not all variables included measure the same relationship and hence it is useful in order to see the connections among the total number of variables acknowledged (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005). However, one needs to determine whether the correlation is high or low in order to gain understanding of the relationship. Pearson's r measures and describes the relationship between variables between a scale of 0 to 1 (Bryman and Bell, 2011). A result of below 0,3 or lower indicates a weak relationship (low correlation) between variables whereas a result of 0,9 and above indicates a strong relationship (high correlation). A result in between indicates that there is a relationship, but an intermediary one (Dancey and Reidy, 2004). Additionally, one can state that if the relationship is non-existent in terms of correlation, the variables do not measure the same thing which is what any research strives for.

3.9.3 External validity

External validity, or generalizability, acknowledges to which extent a research e.g. a thesis can be generalized (Malhotra, 2010; Bryman and Bell, 2011). In other words, it refers to the research's ability to be applied to other populations apart from the one that symbolized by the study's included sample (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Nardi, 2003).
However, this is no easy task. This has to do with a variety of reasons but primarily because populations differ between each other. Aspects such as demographics, social structure and norms are not unanimous among populations and hence it is hard to generalize conclusions based upon a single or a few populations within a specific geographic area and even if they can be made there is a certain level of uncertainty included (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The external validity of this thesis can be perceived as valid to a certain degree due to a number of factors. As the aim of this thesis is to examine what motivates one to engage in terms of rating and reviewing on online price-comparison sites, the results might be applicable to populations similar to Sweden with similar demographics, web usage habits and familiarity with the online environment. However, one should still bear the uncertainty of this statement in mind, as further research regarding the desired study population needs to be conducted in order to fully strengthen or deny the statement.

3.9.4 Reliability

Reliability is the quality criteria tied to the measurements included in the study, simply put if they are reliable. Bryman and Bell (2011, p.158) explains it as *the consistency of a measure of a concept* and propose three factors that can check reliability of a research. Firstly, *stability*, which represents the basic foundation of reliability - that a measure should yield the same results if asked multiple times (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This is commonly known as the test re-test method (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2011) due to its nature of doing re-tests of the same measurements and on the same sample but at different points in time. Robson (2002) adds that stability is a basic form of *replicability,* which is a foundation for scientific research to avoid biased results meaning that a study as well as its measurements is replicable for other researchers, who wishes to perform a similar study or use the same measurements (Saunders et al., 2009).

The second method, which both Bryman and Bell (2011) and Saunders et al. (2009) discuss, is
internal reliability, which determines if the indicators used to measure a concept are consistent with each other (in this case questionnaire items/questions). The respondent's answer on several indicators (questions) tied to the same concept and should yield similar results in order for the indicators to have internal reliability (Saunders et al., 2009). A way of checking this is through the statistical test Cronbach's alpha which calculates a value for each item, ranging from 0 (no internal reliability) to 1 (indicating perfect internal reliability) (Bryman and Bell, 2011). There is no specific value that is invariably used by researchers to accept internal reliability, however 0,8 is a typical and accepted value (Bryman & Bell, 2011) as well as 0,6 as stated by (Hair et al., 2006. This study will use Cronbach's alpha with an acceptance level of 0,8.
The final factor behind reliability proposed by Bryman and Bell (2011) is *inter-observer consistency*, which describes the researchers or observers own risk of being biased. Saunders et al. (2009) refers to it as *observer bias* while highlighting that researchers should be aware of the possible bias caused by observations. However, this is more relevant when gathering data based upon open-ended questions. As this study uses a self-completion questionnaire with a 7-point likert-scale, observer bias has a low chance of occurring since it generates scale variables.

3.9.5 Source criticism

When conducting research it is important to acknowledge and aim critic during the data collection in order to deem gathered information true, valuable and relevant. Thurén (2013) states the procedure includes carefully going through the acknowledged sources and the content that they provide and deeming it useful or useless in relation to the chosen subject do this. If done correctly the end result should be a truthful one. Thurén (2013) further state that one should acknowledge the nature of the source i.e. whether it is written, material or verbal, all alternatives being acceptable.
Furthermore, one should bear the following four criteria in mind when handling source criticism: *authenticity*, *temporal association*, *independence* and *tendency* (Thurén, 2013). The first, authenticity, acknowledges to which extent the source and its content actually correlates to what its proclaimed aim. Time association brings up the phenomena of sources becoming less relevant and useful the older they become. A newer source brings up more recent and up-to-date information and hence it is deemed more useful.

Independence is rather straightforward; source should not be a copy of a previously published source. Finally, tendency brings up the importance of the source being true to an objective perception of reality as well as being free from the subjective opinion, interests and reality of the author (Thurén, 2013).

Additionally, Linnaeus University (LNU) has stated a number of questions to bear in mind that concerns source criticism and the interpretation of scientific articles (LNU, 2013; LNU, 2014). Much like Thurén (2013), LNU has stated four source criticism criteria to acknowledge. However, the criteria are not referred to with the same terminology but hold similar meaning: *authority*, *objectivity*, *authenticity* and *relevance*.
Authority handles information about the author him/herself with questions such as:

- Does the author have the correct qualifications for being a reliable source in relation to the chosen subject?
- Is the source connected to a trustworthy institution or organization?

Objectivity acknowledges the aim of the actual source, its purpose, with raised questions such as:

- Is the purpose of the source to inform or sell?
- Is the source raising objective or subjective opinions?
- Does the source give a biased view of the subject?
- Is the platform of distribution true in nature or might it be false?

Authenticity acknowledges critic aimed at the actual information or content of the source:

- Does the source refer to other sources for factual information and derive the knowledge?
- Are the referred sources correct in terms of facts and origin?

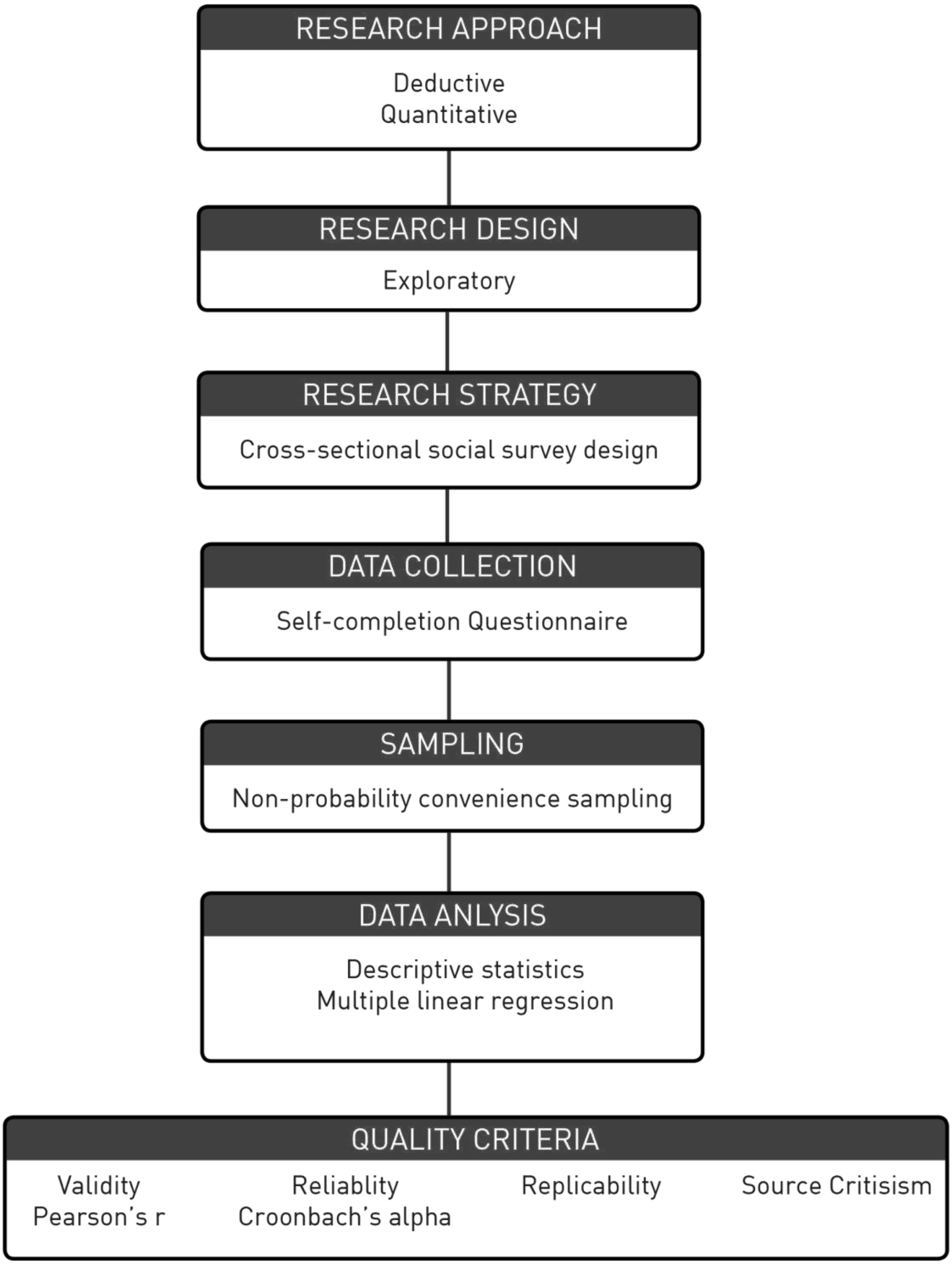
Lastly, relevance aims focus at the timeframe of the publication:

- Is the actual content of the source still perceived as up-to-date?
- If in an online environment, has the platform of distribution been updated recently?

(LNU, 2013)

Furthermore, all scientific articles collected should be controlled and checked in a referral database in order to deem them truly scientific and peer-reviewed. An example of such a database would be *Ulrichsweb* and *OneSeach* supplied by LNU. As for this thesis, the scientific articles included in the theoretical framework have been assessed bearing the previously stated aspects and questions in mind, in order to gather truly scientific data written from a non-biased and objective perspective. Furthermore, all sources have been deemed relevant in terms of their time of publication and the relevance of their content in a current setting.

3.10 Summary of method



4 Results

The following chapter presents the results from the data collection with the appropriate tables generated through SPSS. These includes descriptive statistics for the population and the variables, as well as reliability and validity tests. The later part of the chapter then presents the hypothesis testing through linear regression analysis and interprets the results.

***Abbreviations used in SPSS**:*
Mot = motivation, Ra = rank, Re = review, Aff = affection, Cog = cognitive, Beh = behavioural

4.1 Descriptive statistics

The questionnaire was sent out to 550 respondents through social media and e-mail, while additionally posting it within the group *Svensk E-handel*. From this, a total of 117 responses was collected leading to a response rate of 21 %.

In table 4.1 below the gender balance is presented, showing a fairly even participation among the genders, although a slight majority of women with 56.8% representation.

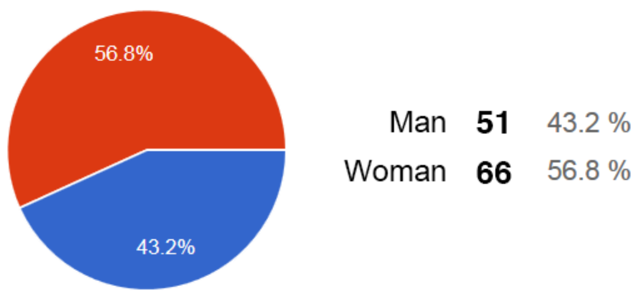
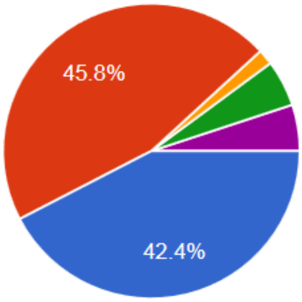


Table: 4.1: Gender balance.

The age distribution among the respondents can be seen in table 4.2. As the graph depicts a strong majority (88,2%) is below 30 years old, leading this study to arguably apply mainly to these age groups. However, there is still variety among the respondents and representation from each age group. A reason behind the age tendencies is presumably because of the age of the researchers (24 years old) and the acquaintances being of a similar age. Furthermore, one should note once more that the sampling was of a convenience, non-probability nature, which further explains the data presented below.



Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
18-23	**50**	42.4 %	42.4 %
24-30	**53**	45.8 %	88.2%
31-35	**2**	1.7 %	89.9%
36-45	**6**	5.1 %	95%
46+	**6**	5.1 %	100%

Table: 4.2: Age distribution.

4.2 Summated means

	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Motivation to rank	1	7	3,08	1,660
Motivation to review	1	7	3,88	1,208
Affective engagement to rank	1	7	3,728	1,203
Cognitive engagement to rank	1	7	3,930	1,237
Behavioural engagement to rank	1	7	3,9578	1,314
Affective engagement to review	1	7	3,6944	1,184
Cognitive engagement to review	1	7	3,859	1,257
Behavioural engagement to review	1	7	3,910	1,333
Gender	-	-	-	-
Age	-	-	-	-

N = 117

Table: 4.3: Descriptive statistics of the variables.

Table 4.3 above presents the range available for answers (i.e. a 7-point likert-scale) and the calculated means for each variable as well as each means' standard deviation. What the standard deviation shows is to which extent the answers on each question differ from each other i.e a dispersion measure. The mean values are those that are used later on in the regression analysis, each connected to their respective theoretical concept and presented as either a dependent or an independent variable. In this case the *motivation to rank* and *motivation to review* are the dependent variables, and the consumer engagement dimensions are independent variables.

4.3 Reliability test

	Chronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Motivation to rank	,921	3
Motivation to review	,921	3
Affective engagement to rank	,836	7
Cognitive engagement to rank	,854	7
Behavioural engagement to rank	,858	7
Affective engagement to review	,854	7
Cognitive engagement to review	,849	7
Behavioural engagement to review	,863	7

N = 117

Table 4.4: Reliability test Cronbach's alpha.

In order to check if the measurement items has been correctly operationalized, a reliability test was made using Cronbach's alpha. The test is valuable as calculates if the questions asked measure the same theoretical concept. If so, those questions should be made redundant and be removed (Bryman and Bell, 2011). For more arguments why this study includes a Cronbach's alpha test, see chapter *3.8.2 Reliability*.

Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha test yields a variable between 0 and 1, were a minimum of 0,8 has been argued for in this study. As shown in table 4.4 all variables (seen in the left column) passed the test with a high variable (seen in the middle column), which means that no unnecessary measurement items exist and thus none should be removed for the regression analysis. The right column shows the number of items (questions) for each measured variable. The reason why the independent variables (marked *italic* in the table) has as many as seven items is due to the number of sub-dimensions within the concepts from which the items were derived.

4.4 Validity test

Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1 Motivation to rank	**1**								**Pearson Correlation**
									Sig. (2-tailed)
2 Motivation to review	,302**	**1**							**Pearson Correlation**
	,001								Sig. (2-tailed)
3 Affective engagement to rank	**,517****	**,758****	**1**						**Pearson Correlation**
	,000	,000							Sig. (2-tailed)
4 Cognitive engagement to rank	**,497****	**,774****	**,857****	**1**					**Pearson Correlation**
	,000	,000	,000						Sig. (2-tailed)
5 Behavioural engagement to rank	**,451****	**,746****	**,806****	**,860****	**1**				**Pearson Correlation**
	,000	,000	,000	,000					Sig. (2-tailed)
6 Affective engagement to review	**,517****	**,786****	**,951****	**,868****	**,838****	**1**			**Pearson Correlation**
	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000				Sig. (2-tailed)
7 Cognitive engagement to review	**,423****	**,818****	**,873****	**,929****	**,831****	**,886****	**1**		**Pearson Correlation**
	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000			Sig. (2-tailed)
Behavioural engagement to review	**,434****	**,782****	**,811****	**,821****	**,885****	**,851****	**,867****	**1**	**Pearson Correlation**
	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000		Sig. (2-tailed)

N = 117

** p<0.05; ** p<0.01 (2-tailed)*

Table 4.5: Correlation analysis showing Pearson's r.

To check for validity of the variables, a correlation test was made as seen in table 4.5. The test yields a value known as Pearson's r (marked with bold text in the table) which measures the correlation between the different variables seen in the left column and in turn if they measure the same theoretical concept. Naturally, if tested with itself it gives the number 1 (perfect correlation) which can be seen as a diagonal line across the table. The maximum accepted correlation is 0,9 since a greater value would show that the variables measure the same concept. However, all the variables are not used in the same regression analysis, and hence the correlation is only significant when observing variables that used in the same regression analysis. The variables measuring motivation to rank exist as one model and motivation to review exist as another, meaning that they will be used in different regression analyses and thus their correlation with each other can be disregarded. On the contrary, seeing as they are based on the same theoretical concept, they should show correlation as seen between variables 3 and 6, 4 and 7 and 5 and 8.

This study includes variables 1, 3, 4 and 5 in one regression analysis, and 2, 6, 7 and 8 in another. The values for those does not exceed 0,9 meaning that they do not measure identical concepts. However, variables 3 to 8 are derived from dimensions of consumer engagement, which is the reason why they still have a relatively high correlation with each other. The Sig. (2-tailed) number shows the significance of each variables, which should be below 0,05 meaning over 95% significance. All of the variables pass as significant and can therefore be used in the regression analysis.

4.5 Regression analysis

Six multiple linear regression analysis was conducted in order to test the hypotheses, as presented in the following sub-chapters. The first two regression analyses takes the affective dimension of consumer engagement into account and tests if it has a positive relationship against consumers motivation to *rank* and *review*, separately. The following four regression analyses takes the same approach but for the other two dimensions of consumer engagement, cognitive and behavioral.

The analyses yield three important variables that this thesis observe, firstly the significance of the independent variable, which essentially determines if the hypotheses is supported or not (it requires a value of <0,05 for 95% confidence interval). Secondly, the adjusted R Square (R^2), which explains to which extent the dependent variable (motivation to rank/review) is affected by the independent variable (consumer engagement dimension). The final value is the beta coefficient, which explains the correlation between the dependent and independent variables, i.e. a beta of 0,712 means that for every unit the independent variable changes, the dependent changes 71.2 percent.

4.5.1 Hypothesis 1

H[1]; *There is a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.*

The regression analysis for H[1] can be seen in table 4.6, which shows significance for the affective dimension (,000) supporting H[1] that consumer's motivation to rank products online are positively affected by affective consumer engagement.

The adjusted R^2 was calculated to 0,261, which means that the variance in consumer's motivation to rank can be explained by the variance in affective consumer engagement by 26.1%. Additionally, this means that the remaining variance in motivation to rank is explained to 73.9% by other factors.

The last variable, the beta coefficient, was calculated to 0,712, which means that for every "unit" the affective dimension change, the consumer's motivation to rank changes by 71.2%. To elaborate, it can be viewed as a reasonably strong, positive relationship, further strengthening support of H[1].

						Unstandardized coeffiecients			
	R	R Square (R2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Affective dimension	**,517a**	**,267**	**,261**	**1,429**	**,267**	**,712**	**,111**	**6,416**	**,000**

Dependent variable: Motivation to rank
a. Predictors: (Constant), RaAffMean

Table 4.6: Regression analysis for H[1].

4.5.2 Hypothesis 2

H^2: *There is a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.*

The regression analysis for H^2 can be seen in table 4.7, which shows significance for the affective dimension (,000) supporting H^2 that consumer's motivation to review products online are positively affected by affective consumer engagement.

The adjusted R^2 was calculated to 0,615, which means that the variance in consumer's motivation to review can be explained by the variance in affective consumer engagement by 61.5%. Additionally, this means that the remaining variance in motivation to review is explained to 28.5% by other factors.

The last variable, the beta coefficient, was calculated to 0,801, which means that for every "unit" the affective dimension change, the consumer's motivation to review changes by 80.1% To elaborate, it can be viewed as a significantly strong, positive relationship, further strengthening support of H^2.

						Unstandardized coeffiecients			
	R	R Square (R2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Affective dimension	**,786a**	**,618**	**,615**	**,749**	**,618**	**,801**	**,059**	**13,529**	**,000**

Dependent variable: Motivation to review
a. Predictors: (Constant), ReAffMean

Table 4.7: Regression analysis for H^2.

4.5.3 Hypothesis 3

H^3: *There is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.*

The regression analysis for H^3 can be seen in table 4.8, which shows significance for the cognitive dimension (,000) supporting H^3 that consumer's motivation to review products online are positively affected by cognitive consumer engagement.

The adjusted R^2 was calculated to 0,240, which means that the variance in consumer's motivation to rank can be explained the variance in cognitive consumer engagement by 24%. Additionally, this means that the remaining variance in motivation to rank is explained to 76% by other factors.

The last variable, the beta coefficient, was calculated to 0,666, which means that for every "unit" the cognitive dimension change, the consumer's motivation to rank changes by 66.6%. To elaborate, it can be viewed as a fairly strong, positive relationship, further strengthening support of H^3.

						Unstandardized coeffiecients			
	R	R Square (R2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Cognitive dimension	**,497a**	**,247**	**,240**	**1,448**	**,247**	**,666**	**,110**	**6,083**	**,000**

Dependent variable: Motivation to rank
a. Predictors: (Constant), RaCogMean

Table 4.8: Regression analysis for H^3.

4.5.4 Hypothesis 4

H4: *There is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.*

The regression analysis for H4 can be seen in table 4.9, which shows significance for the cognitive dimension (,000) supporting H4 that consumer's motivation to review products online are positively affected by cognitive consumer engagement.
The adjusted R^2 was calculated to 0,666, which means that the variance in consumer's motivation to review can be explained by the variance in cognitive consumer engagement by 66.6%. Additionally, this means that the remaining variance in motivation to review is explained to 33.3% by other factors.
The last variable, the beta coefficient was calculated to 0,785, which means that for every "unit" the cognitive dimension change, the consumer's motivation to review changes by 78.5%. To elaborate, it can be viewed as a significantly strong, positive relationship, further strengthening support of H4.

						Unstandardized coeffiecients			
	R	R Square (R2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Cognitive dimension	**,818a**	**,669**	**,666**	**,698**	**,669**	**,785**	**,052**	**15,107**	**,000**

Dependent variable: Motivation to review
a. Predictors: (Constant), ReCogMean

Table 4.9: Regression analysis for H4.

4.5.5 Hypothesis 5

H^5: *There is a positive relationship between behavioural consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to rank products online.*

The regression analysis for H^5 can be seen in table 4.10, which shows significance for the behavioural dimension (,000) supporting H^5 that consumer's motivation to rank products online are positively affected by behavioural consumer engagement.

The adjusted R^2 was calculated to 0,196, which means that the variance in consumer's motivation to rank can be explained by the variance in behavioural consumer engagement by 19.6%. Additionally, this means that the remaining variance in motivation to rank is explained to 80.4% by other factors.

The last variable, the beta coefficient was calculated to 0,570, which means that for every "unit" the behavioural dimension change, the consumer's motivation to rank changes by 57%. To elaborate, it can be viewed as a reasonably strong, positive relationship, further strengthening support of H^5.

						Unstandardized coeffiecients			
	R	R Square (R2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Behavioural dimension	**,451a**	**,203**	**,196**	**1,488**	**,203**	**,570**	**,106**	**5,372**	**,000**

Dependent variable: Motivation to rank
a. Predictors: (Constant), RaBehMean

Table 4.10: Regression analysis for H^5.

4.5.6 Hypothesis 6

H^6: *There is a positive relationship between behavioural consumer engagement and the consumer's motivation to review products online.*

The regression analysis for H^6 can be seen in table 4.11, which shows significance for the behavioural dimension (,000) supporting H^6 that consumer's motivation to review products online are positively affected by behavioural consumer engagement.

The adjusted R^2 was calculated to 0,607, which means that the variance in consumer's motivation to review can be explained by the variance in behavioural consumer engagement by 60.7%. Additionally, this means that the remaining variance in motivation to review is explained to 29.3% by other factors.

The last variable, the beta coefficient was calculated to 0,708, which means that for every "unit" the behavioural dimension change, the consumer's motivation to review changes by 70.8%. To elaborate, it can be viewed as a significantly strong, positive relationship, further strengthening support of H^6.

						Unstandardized coeffiecients			
	R	R Square (R2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Behavioural dimension	**,782a**	**,611**	**,607**	**,757**	**,611**	**,708**	**,053**	**13,316**	**,000**

Dependent variable: Motivation to review
a. Predictors: (Constant), ReBehMean

Table 4.11: Regression analysis for H^6.

5 Discussion

The previous chapter presented the gathered quantitative data and results of this thesis. The following chapter raises a discussion regarding those results in relation to the chosen purpose as well as the theoretical framework. The chapter is divided by first acknowledging ranking followed by reviewing. Additionally, the acts of contribution are seen respectively from the perspective of the acknowledged dimensions along with the stated hypothesis tied to those dimensions. Lastly, a discussion regarding the two acts and their differences are included.
Note that the means of the individual measurement items are presented in parenthesis (e.g. 4.0) to support the stated arguments.

5.1 Motivation to rank

The results from the analysis indicates that each of the hypotheses were supported and accepted, which further imply that *motivation* to both *rank* and *review* is positively affected by consumer engagement. Looking at *motivation to rank*, the different dimensions had small differences in its variance effect as well as correlation. The *affective* dimension had a relatively high impact on motivation to rank, as it can explain 26 % of the consumer's motivation to rank, with a correlation of 71% and thus supports the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the two. Looking at the previous research, the affective dimensions involves feelings such as enthusiasm and enjoyment (Dessart et al., 2015; Vivek et al., 2014), which leads to the argumentation that the consumers pleasure of using a product has a high significance for its' motivation to rank products. The individual measurement items used in this study show that passion for a product (4,9) and enjoyment from using it (4,4) is what creates the most motivation to rank within the affective dimension which goes in line with Hollebeek's (2011) study. While in contrast, a sense of pride (2,8) and enjoyment when engaging online (3,1) showed lower impact on motivation to rank, thus Hollebeek et al's., (2014) and Cheung and Lee's (2012) conclusion regarding these factors are not applicable when it come to motivation to rank. In summary, it can be argued that the affective dimensions impact on motivation to rank is largely due to the consumer's connection to the product and not the online community, leading to the belief that a product's characteristics play a strong role for consumer's motivation to rank.

Looking at the *cognitive* dimension, it had a similar impact on motivation to rank. The analysis show that the cognitive dimension explain the consumer's motivation to rank by

24 %, with a correlation of 66% and thus supports the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the two. The highest impact within the cognitive dimension according to the measurement items was tied to the consumer's sense of helping others (4,6) and their self-perception of their expertise on the subject (4,8) thus providing support for Cheung and Lee's (2012) and Hollebeek's (2011) conclusion regarding altruism and brand-related concentration. Tong et al. (2013) argue that the consumer's strive for a higher reputation and self-image when engaging online, however this was shown through the measurement item that it did not apply to ranking products as it had a significantly low mean (2,6). Additionally, Dwivedi (2015) and Dessart et al, (2015) argue that an absorbed consumer with difficulties to let go of the product/brand mentally has a higher rate of engagement, however this does not translate to the consumer's motivation to rank products according to the measurement item that has a reasonably low mean (3,2). Hence, it can be argued that this is due to the negativity connected to detachment difficulties and the fact that just because a consumer is deeply absorbed he or she do not necessarily indicate that it is purely positive absorption. While in contrast, being satisfied with the product rather creates a stronger motivation for ranking products (4,4), in accordance with the theory of Hollebeek (2011). The cognitive dimension is characterized by Dessart et al. (2015) as the mental state of the consumer against the brand or product and this thesis supports that the cognitive aspects have an impact on consumers' motivation to rank.

The final dimension of consumer engagement, *behavioral*, showed a slightly smaller impact in comparison to the other dimensions on motivation to rank at 19%. The correlation was calculated to 57%, also slightly less than for the other dimensions but still reasonably strong and thus supporting the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between behavioral dimension and motivation to rank. Uniquely for the behavioral dimension was that the measurement items were all relatively neutral, with means ranging between 3,5-4,6. The highest score observed was the one regarding the consumer's belief that their actions would have positive consequences for the company (4,6). The theories of behavioral dimension is mainly contributed by van Doorn et al. (2010) who argue for behavioral manifestation as a drive for the consumer's motivation. These include the amount of resources the consumer puts into his or her activities and wanting to help other consumers or praising or aimin critic at a brand. In this process sharing, learning and endorsing can be acknowledged, all of which prove to have an effect on motivation to rank as stated by previous research (Brodie et al., 2011b; Cheung and Lee, 2012; Zaglia, 2013).

The reason behind the slightly smaller impact and correlation of the behavioral dimension in contrast to affective and cognitive is arguably due to the nature of the first two dimensions. Being more directly focused on mental states than behavioral ones (Dessart et al., 2015), they provide more incentive to a psychological concept such as motivation. Furthermore, affective and cognitive engagement both showed more extreme means within their measurement items, which may be a reason behind them being a stronger factor compared to the more neutral means of the behavioral dimension.

5.2 Motivation to review

The results of the analysis show that all the measured dimensions have an effect on consumers' motivation to review on price-comparison sites.
The affective engagement proved to have 61 % impact on motivation to review, which therefore supports the stated forth hypothesis. However, it also shows that 39 % of consumers' motivation to review has nothing to do with the affective engagement and hence is a result of different factors. Furthermore, the conducted regression analysis with a beta of 0,8 shows that consumers' motivation to review increase along with increased affective engagement. In other words, if observing the phenomena graphically, motivation to review would increase by 0,8 if the affective engagement were to increase by 1. Furthermore, one should acknowledge the significance presented in the data. As it has been proven to 0,00 one can state that the result may be applicable on a larger population. That said, one should also acknowledge that there is no guarantee that a result is applicable on another population as there is a variety of factors that may influence the result (more information on the subject raised in *6.3 Limitations and directions for future research).*

According to Hollebeek (2011) consumers' feel more prone to engage if they feel a degree of passion. This theory was also supported by the gathered data of this thesis as the mean of the responses proved to be high and greater than the neutral number of 4 on the seven grade likert scale, when asked about their engagement towards a product (4,7). Additionally, these results and the relationship between variables correlate well with the theory of by Cheung and Lee (2012) who argue that a sense of belonging increases consumers' motivation to engage online.
However, the data also gave clarity to other raised questions of interest. Hollebeek et. al. (2014) as well as Cheung and Lee (2012) states that a sense of pride and feeling content correlate with engagement. This was proven to be false according to the included thesis

sample. Sense of pride proved to have a significantly negative mean (2,9) along with feeling content through engagement, which had a slightly lower but still negative mean as well (3,2). Regarding the questions raised that refer to the polarity of the surrounding environment (Higgins and Scholer, 2009) in terms of positive and negative comments as a catalyst for motivation, the data could be deemed as insignificant. This since the data of the respondents resulted in a neutral or slightly negative mean on all three questions (4,0; 3,6; 3,2).

Furthermore, the cognitive engagement proved to have 66,6 % impact on motivation to review, which therefore supports the stated fifth hypothesis. Additionally, it shows that 33,3 % of consumers' motivation to review was a result of different factors apart from cognitive engagement. Regarding the conducted regression analysis cognitive engagement had a beta value of 0,785; proof that if motivation to review would increase by 0,785 if the affective engagement were to increase by one unit. Also, much like affective engagement, cognitive proved to have a significance value of 0,00, which theoretically makes it applicable on a larger population.
In terms of specific data gathered from the measured items, it was shown that the results varied greatly. In correlation with the theory of Cheung and Lee (2012) as well as Hollebeek (2011) the respondents felt that their motivation to engage increased when sensing that they were helping others but also when they felt satisfied with the product of interest (4,3; 4,6). The same occurrence, however to a smaller extent due to a lower mean (4,5), was acknowledged when observing the respondents' motivation to engage if they felt confident in their expertise (4,3) (Hollebeek, 2011). On the other hand, the respondents did not feel as motivated in regards to items that referred to brand reputation (3,6) (de Matos and Rossi, 2008), self-reputation (2,7) (Tong et al., 2013) or when dealing with difficulties of detachment (3,2) (Dwivedi, 2015; Dessart et al., 2015). These items all resulted in negative means in relation to the neutral value of four and hence deemed untrue to the sample and the study.

Behavioral engagement on the other hand proved to have 60 % impact on motivation to review, which therefore supports the stated sixth hypothesis. In addition that shows that 40 % of consumers' motivation to review was a result of other factors unrelated to behavioral engagement. As for the conducted regression analysis behavioral engagement had a beta value of 0,708 which proves that if motivation to review would increase by 0,708 if the behavioral engagement were to increase by one unit. Like the other dimensions of interest, behavioral engagement proved to have a significance value of 0,00, which theoretically makes it applicable on a larger population.

Regarding the items connected to the presented theories of the behavioral dimension the means were somewhat scattered but mostly positive. The respondents felt that their motivation to engage increased if they knew that it would have negative consequences for a brand (4,4) but not vice versa (3,9). This correlates well with the theories presented by Brady et al. (2006) as well as van Doorn et al. (2010) and the sub-dimensions of behavioral engagement.

Furthermore, Cheung and Lee’s (2012) theory of that informing and helping others increases one’s motivation to engage also resulted in a positive mean (4,3) and can therefore be deemed true to the theory in this thesis. The same can be stated for when the respondents felt that they were endorsing a brand to other consumers (4,1), which go hand in hand with the theory of Gummerus et al. (2012) who state that consumers feel more motivated to engage when they feel that they have the ability to justify or approve brands’ individual pages and content. Additionally, the respondents felt that if they wished to aim critic their motivation to engage increased (4,1), which can be derived back to the theories of van Doorn et al. (2010).

However, the respondents did not agree with the theories raised by Brodie et al. (2011b) and Vargo and Lusch (2004) and did not feel more prone to engage when they reached out to a greater amount of people (3,3). Furthermore, the respondents did not feel that they were more motivated to engage in order to improve their own knowledge or competence (3,8). Hence, the theory of Zaglia (2013) can be rejected in this context as learning and improving abilities did not prove to be a valid reason for engagement.

5.3 Ranking contra reviewing

When looking at the results connected to the act of reviewing, the data differs largely from the one connected to ranking in regards to the level of explanation (R^2). Judging by the results gathered from the conducted regression analysis one can state that consumer engagement has a stronger impact on consumer’s motivation to review, as the R^2 are significantly higher in those tests. To understand why that is and why the two actions do not present the same results, even though they are both similar ways of contributing online, one should observe the individual items measured. For example, when seeing negative comments on favoured products, consumer expressed a higher motivation to review in contrast to rank, arguably because they want the public opinion to change (Higgins and Scholer, 2009). Furthermore, the differences in results should also be explained by looking at the differences in the actions themselves and what potential gains the consumer may perceive with these actions. Essentially, a rank is practically just a number, indicating how a product compares to other products of the same category, while a review expresses possible positive and negative aspects and opinions of other consumers in greater depth. Hence, it can be stated that reviewing is an action that demands more effort from the consumer and also one that the consumers' themselves perceive as more giving in terms of feeling content, aiding others and increasing one's self image. From the contributors perspective, a review may therefore be perceived as more valuable to perform. Additionally, when further comparing ranking and reviewing the former may be perceived as rather simplistic. Hence, even though both actions share the same purpose the reviewing has the ability to engage the consumer on a deeper affective, cognitive and behavioral level and express more detailed information and explanations for *why* a certain opinion is stated.

6 Conclusion

The following chapter concludes the major findings of this study, followed by theoretical- and managerial implications.

The purpose of this study was to *explain how consumer engagement affects consumers motivation to rank and review on price-comparison sites*. The analysis shows that the three fundamental dimensions of consumer engagement has positive effects on the consumer's motivation, as each hypothesis was supported. However, there was a difference when it came to ranking and reviewing as actions. Consumers which exhibited higher engagement were more motivated to review products rather than ranking them, which can be argued to be due to consumers perceiving a review as more valuable in both giving and receiving. The dimension that showed most influence on consumer's motivation was the affective dimension, pointing towards the fact that consumers' enthusiasm and enjoyment of a product or brand works as the stronger catalyst for their motivation to engage online. The influence in contrast to the cognitive and behavioral dimensions was however very small, as they showed similar numbers and values in the results.

In summation, this study aimed to extend the understanding of consumer engagement in practical contexts online and how the different dimensions of consumer engagement could impact and influence consumers' motivation to engage online, which the results of this study has concluded.

6.1 Theoretical implication

The theory of consumer engagement has gained increasing attention recently, which has lead to various different concept names for the theory e.g. consumer engagement, customer engagement and customer engagement process (Vivek et al., 2014). However, Dessart et al. (2015) provides a thorough literature review, which maps the research up until this point (2015) and applies it to online brand communities. By using this new and clarified research, this thesis aimed to address the practical and empirical concerns that van Doorn et al. (2010) expressed about the subject of consumer engagement that it is undergoing almost exclusively conceptual research. Additionally, the authors found the research on price-comparison sites to be scarce seeing as most research that would touch upon the subject would do so from an eWOM-perspective, such as Cheung and Lee (2012) and

Henning-Thurau et al. (2004). This study therefore provides a fresh take on price-comparison sites and extend the research from a new perspective, using the consumer engagement framework.

To conclude, this thesis has had the purpose of explaining how consumer engagement motivates online contribution in terms of ranking and reviewing. Hence, this thesis has contributed to filling in that research gap, based on the selected theories. The consumer engagement dimensions focused on in this thesis; affective, cognitive and behavioral all contribute as motivators for contribution online as discussed in the previous chapter *5 Discussion*.
Additionally, the current research tend to keep a company perspective on consumer engagement, looking at how companies can create or manage consumer engagement. This study takes the opposite approach, that of a consumer's perspective, and provides empirical solidification tied to that perspective.

6.2 Managerial implications

As for managerial implications, the data and results presented in this thesis would primarily be suited for companies operating in an online context. The thesis presents a variety of valid and usable information that would help companies to better understand how consumers generally think and act while surfing the web in terms of engagement.
If a company wish for consumers to engage on their website an understanding of the dimensions and aspects that will lead to the desired result is highly valuable. An example of a practical implication for this thesis could e.g. be software companies, who aim to code systems that simplify and invite consumer engagement. For instance, it would be essential for such companies to have an understanding of which key factors they should focus on in the work and design process e.g. ability to share content, rank and review systems as well as scoring systems in accordance with level of engagement. Furthermore, as this thesis provides a theoretical understanding of why people engage and contribute online the results would also be of use for sciences of a similar nature within marketing and behavioral sciences.

The thesis focused on the subject of how consumer engagement may motivate contribution online with a focus on the three dimensions of engagement: *affective*, *cognitive* and *behavioral*. Apart from the statistical aspects, the result can be deemed as trustworthy as the respondents of the included sample all had experience of engagement online and could imagine how they would act in certain situations and the underlying reasons for these actions. Hence, the results would in turn be reliable as managerial implications for companies.

However, one should acknowledge the fact that the online environment and online behavior and trends are constantly evolving. Hence, the results need to be continuously updated in order for them to be deemed reliable. Additionally, the thesis is conducted based on users with swedish demographics and hence the results may not be applicable internationally without first comparing demographics between the original population and the population of interest.

6.3 Limitations and directions for further research

This thesis has focused on the impact of consumer engagement in relation to motivation to contribute online, especially on price-comparison sites. Statistical analytics has been used in order to acknowledge the relationships between the dimensions and the consumers' motivation. The significance that that result provided for each examined dimension all turned out as 0.00, which states that the result may be applicable on a larger population. However, one should also acknowledge that the chosen sample of this thesis correlate directly to its conclusion, meaning that the sample is well-connected to this case but the results may not be the same in general or globally for that matter.

The primary responses gathered for this thesis were most likely respondents who were invited to the Facebook-event created. This can be stated as the majority of the respondents were of a rather young age. Knowing that social media platforms are more common amongst younger generations it is likely that the respondents of older age were those who responded via e-mail, as that was the purpose of using that distribution channel. The older respondents may also be members of group *Svensk E-handel,* however the age span of members within the group are scattered. Hence, it is impossible to estimate how many out of the group's members actually responded to the questionnaire, which is why such speculations are excluded from this thesis. This serves as a limitation as the results become based on less varied sample. The data and results are still reliable but one should acknowledge the underlying basics behind the result to gain perspective of the data presented.

Due to the lack of time and financial resources the research chose to conduct convenience sampling. This resulted in that mainly responses from a specific geographic area and specific social standards were included, which might influence the results. As stated in the methodology of this thesis using convenience sampling may be misleading. By collecting responses from a vastly larger geographical area it is likely that the results would have been more varied and in turn more reliable. Furthermore, as convenience sampling was used and a large number of the respondents are students themselves (87 % between the age of 18 to 30) the result may correlate very well with that particular age span, social situation or demographics yet there is a risk of the result not correlating as well with people tied to control variables with different values etc.

Hence, directions for further research focus on investigating the same subject but based on a larger sample in order to find out if the result would differ. It would also be of interest to see if the result differs with a difference in control variables and demographic changes i.e. nationality, social status, an even more varied age span and an individual's level of education.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Operationalization

Operationalization of the questions, derived from identified measurement items. Each questions will be asked twice, first with ranking products in mind, then with reviewing products in mind. For the exakt presentation, see appendix 2 for the questionnaire.

	Measurement item	Question/Statement
Affective dimension	**1** Degree of passion (Hollebeek, 2011)	I feel passionate about the product.
	2 Positive affection from brand interactions (Hollebeek, 2011)	I get a positive feeling from using a brand.
	3, 4 Sense of belonging (Cheung & Lee, 2012)	I feel attached to the price comparison community. I feel content when I engage with other engaged consumers.
	5 Sense of pride (Hollebeek et al, 2014)	I get a sense of pride when I engage online.
	6, 7 Polarity of surrounding environment (Higgins & Scholer, 2009)	I see negative comments on a product I like. I see positive comments on a product I like.
Cognitive dimension	**1** Product category involvement (Dwivedi, 2015)	I have an interest in a specific product category.
	2 Brand reputation (de Matos & Rossi, 2008)	The brand has a high reputation.
	3 Altruism (sense of helping other consumers (Cheung & Lee, 2012)	I feel that I am helping other consumers.
	4 Self reputation (Tong et al, 2013)	I feel that my reputation improve on the site.
	5 Product satisfaction (Hollebeek, 2011)	I feel satisfied with the product.
	6 Brand-related concentration (Hollebeek, 2011)	I have confidence in my knowledge and expertise in a given product category.
	7 Create difficulties of detachment (Dwivedi, 2015; Dessart et al, 2015)	I have spent more time on the price comparison site.
Behavioural dimension	**1, 2** Positive and negative consequences (Brady et al., 2006; van Doorn et. al, 2010).	My actions may result in positive consequences for the manufacturer or brand. My actions may result in negative consequences for the manufacturer or brand.
	3 Sense of helping one another (Brodie et al., 2011b; Cheung & Lee, 2012))	When I wish to inform other consumers.
	4 Customer aims and goals (van Doorn et al., 2010)	I wish to criticize.

	5 Collective and interactive action (Brodie et al., 2011b; Vargo & Lusch, 2004).	I reach out to a large group of consumers.
	6 Learn and improve abilities (Zaglia, 2013)	I feel that I am improving my own knowledge and competence.
	7 Approving the brand's individual page (Gummerus et al., 2012)	I endorse the brand to other consumers.
Questions to measure the respondent's motivation to rank products online. Adapted from Chai and Kim (2011) and Cheung and Lee, (2012).		I frequently rank products online.
		I feel motivated to rank products that I buy online.
		I intend to rank products that I buy online in the future.
Questions to measure the respondent's motivation to review products online. Adapted from Chai and Kim (2011) and Cheung and Lee, (2012).		I frequently review products online.
		I feel motivated to review products that I buy online.
		I intend to review products that I buy online in the future.
Demographic questions		Gender
		Age

Appendix 2 - Questionnaire

The following is an exact image copy of the questionnaire, provided via google forms and translated to Swedish in order to get a higher respondent frequency as argued in *3.4.2 Questionnaire construction*.

Kandidatuppsats om motivation

Tack för att ni tar er tid att genomföra denna enkät som handlar om motivationen till att ranka och recensera produkter genom jämförelsesidor (t.ex. hotels.com; prisjakt.se). Vi som står bakom enkäten är två studenter som går vår sista termin på Linnéuniversitetet. För oss är era svar guld värda och det är dem som kommer ligga till grund för vår kandidatuppsats.

Enkäten tar cirka 3-4 minuter att genomföra och dina svar är anonyma. Tänk på att det är en 7-gradig skala!

När du gör formuläret är det två saker som du skall ha i åtanke:

1. När vi nämner "ranka" produkter menar vi när du sätter ett betyg (ex. 1-5) på en produkt.

2. När vi nämner "recensera" en produkt menar vi när du skriver ett omdöme om produkten (behöver inte vara både för- och nackdelar).

Har du några frågor angående enkäten är du välkommen att kontakta oss på antingen: js222xb@student.lnu.se eller cj222hi@student.lnu.se.

Stort tack!

Christoffer Jensen & Jakob Segerslätt

*Obligatorisk

Jag rankar ofta produkter online. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig motiverad att ranka produkter som jag köper online. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag har för avsikt att ranka produkter som jag köper i framtiden. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag recenserar ofta produkter online. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig motiverad att recensera produkter som jag köper online. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag har för avsikt att recensera produkter som jag köper i framtiden. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Del I, tänk på att alltid ha nedanstående uttalande i åtanke när du läser frågorna.

Jag är mer motiverad till att ranka en produkt när...

Jag känner passion för en produkt. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag får en positiv känsla från användandet av ett varumärke. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig nöjd när jag engagerar mig i ett online-community. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig nöjd när jag engagerar mig med andra engagerade konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig stolt när jag engagerar mig online. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

När jag ser negativa kommentarer på en produkt jag gillar. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

När jag ser positiva kommentarer på en produkt jag gillar. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag har ett intresse för den specifika produktkategorin. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Varumärket har ett starkt rykte. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner att jag hjälper andra konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag känner att mitt rykte förbättras inom community:n. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stämmer helt

Jag är nöjd med produkten. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Jag har självförtroende för min kunskap och expertis inom produktkategorin. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Jag spenderar mer tid på prisjämförelsesidan.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Mina handlingar kan resultera i positiva konsekvenser för varumärket. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Mina handlingar kan resultera i negativa konsekvenser för varumärket. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

När jag vill informera andra konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Jag önskar ge kritik. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

När jag når ut till ett stort antal konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Jag känner att jag kan öka min egen kompetens. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Jag förespråkar ett varumärke till andra konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Stämmer helt

Fortsätt »

50 % ifyllt

Kandidatuppsats om motivation

*Obligatorisk

Del II - Recensera, tänk på att alltid ha nedanstående uttalande i åtanke när du läser frågorna.

Jag är mer motiverad till att skriva ett omdöme på en produkt när..

Jag känner passion för en produkt. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag får en positiv känsla från användandet av ett varumärke. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig nöjd när jag engagerar mig i ett online-community. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig nöjd när jag engagerar mig med andra engagerade konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag känner mig stolt när jag engagerar mig online. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

När jag ser negativa kommentarer på en produkt jag gillar. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

När jag ser positiva kommentarer på en produkt jag gillar. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag har ett intresse för den specifika produktkategorin. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Varumärket har ett starkt rykte. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag känner att jag hjälper andra konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag känner att mitt rykte förbättras inom community:n. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag är nöjd med produkten. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag har självförtroende för min kunskap och expertis inom produktkategorin. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag spenderar mer tid på prisjämförelsesidan.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Mina handlingar kan resultera i positiva konsekvenser för varumärket. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Mina handlingar kan resultera i negativa konsekvenser för varumärket. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

När jag vill informera andra konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag önskar ge kritik. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

När jag når ut till ett stort antal konsumenter. *

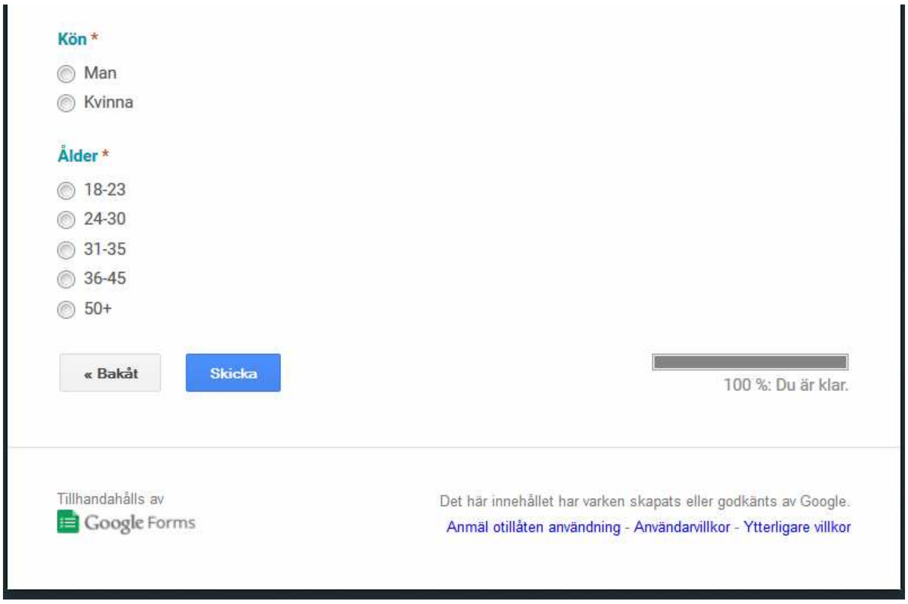
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag känner att jag kan öka min egen kompetens. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt

Jag förespråkar ett varumärke till andra konsumenter. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stämmer inte alls								Stämmer helt



Kön *

- Man
- Kvinna

Ålder *

- 18-23
- 24-30
- 31-35
- 36-45
- 50+

« Bakåt   Skicka

100 %: Du är klar.

Tillhandahålls av Google Forms

Det här innehållet har varken skapats eller godkänts av Google.

Anmäl otillåten användning - Användarvillkor - Ytterligare villkor