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**Correlations between Health and Communication Trends:
An Analysis of the Impact on Swedish Supermarkets**

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Abstract

This thesis aims to examine the development of health trends in Sweden, since it is argued that they will prevail and even become more extreme in the near future. Supermarkets will have to understand the impact of those health trends on consumer behaviour and therefore are required to comprehend the sociological, cultural and psychological factors behind these. It is proclaimed that the current health trends stand in close connection to the developments within communication, since they are exacerbated by social media. This thesis uses the theory of new sociological institutionalism in order to examine the emergence of health trends and the trends within communication. It is the purpose of this thesis to understand how the decline of traditional institutions is influencing the development of both trends. It further seeks to evaluate how supermarkets can use the trends within communication in order to attract more customers. Moreover, the authors will provide suggestions regarding how supermarkets can best adopt current health trends to their marketing strategies.

The authors used semi-structured interviews in order to obtain the best available knowledge for an analysis of the two trends. It was decided to collect empirical data from two groups of professionals, where the first one entailed academic researchers from different business areas and the second one consisted of managers and owners of Swedish supermarkets. This thesis discovered that institutional decline has given rise to an individualisation of society, which is using particular eating patterns as substitute for traditional structures. Furthermore, the authors argue that the online community on social media platforms has managed to create a new sense of belonging in a destructured society. It became apparent that supermarkets need to understand the trends within communication in order to successfully adopt the current health trends. Throughout this study, the authors came to the conclusion that the discipline of promotion is the most appropriate form of marketing in order to advertise products that are in line with current health trends.

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1. Introduction

1.1 General Information

Surveys demonstrate that there has been a rising awareness regarding food consumption in Sweden, indicating that society is witnessing the emergence of a trend focused on health (EY Survey, 2015). This suggests that individuals are gaining more knowledge about healthy diets and hence are developing new food preferences. The authors argue that those health trends are exacerbated by social media platforms since they allow to publicly display healthy food choices online. These new trends within communication promote healthy living as an aspiring way of life, which causes more people to follow health trends. This development represents a market opportunity for supermarkets since the customer base for healthy products is growing significantly. Further, those products are often more expensive and consequently implementing them is very profitable for supermarkets (Jetter and Cassady, 2006).

This thesis claims that current health trends and the trends within communication correlate significantly. Therefore, it is aimed to analyse the connection between these two phenomena and to identify the other factors that have to be considered.

The authors use the theory of new sociological institutionalism in order to explain the two trends at hand. New sociological institutionalism is perceived to be a suitable approach since it declares that society is influencing institutional practice (Powell, 2007). The authors argue that this has been the case with health trends since they originated in society and now shape the institutional practice of supermarkets. It is further claimed that there has been a decline of traditional institutions e.g. family and religion, which causes individuals to seek structure in new ways. This development will be also be considered when analysing the emergence of health trends and trends within communication. In order to understand the two phenomena at hand, the authors will provide a definition of each.

Definition: Health Trends

It is important to note that there are many different concepts and definitions when it comes to health trends since there is a constant discussion surrounding this topic. This thesis refers to a vegetarian, vegan, lactose- or gluten-free diet when discussing health trends. The authors exclude organic products from their definition of healthy products since they overlap with the trend around sustainability and therefore might create confusion for the reader. Besides the products that are in line with the trends just mentioned, the term ‘healthy products’ used throughout this thesis also includes products that contain no additives, are low in sugar, saturated fats and cholesterol and give the body part of its daily nutrients.

Definition: New Trends within Communication

The recent rise of digitisation has resulted in the emergence of new trends within communication, which are heavily determined by social media (Van Dijck, 2013). Therefore, when the authors mention new trends within communication, they refer to social media e.g. Facebook, Instagram. Due to new technology, this new form of communication is accessible in any situation and hence entrenched in every part of life. Further, social media allows for a more personalised form of communication as each individual can express his/her own opinions online and reaches a broad audience (Chua and Chang, 2015). This leads to an increase of self-representation, since this new medium allows the power of images to create a second reality (Chua and Chang, 2015).

1.2 Case Study: Sweden

This thesis uses the Swedish food industry as a case study in order to understand how supermarkets can best adopt healthy products in their marketing strategies. Therefore, a short account of this industry is given.

There are six dominant food retailers in Sweden, accounting for a market share of 98 percent. This market domination is distributed between the ICA Group with almost half of the market shares (49.4 percent), Coop with 20.3 percent, Axfood with 15.9 percent, Bergendahls with 7.7 percent, Lidl with 2.8 percent and Netto with 1.9 percent (Gullstrand and Jörgensen, 2011, p.4).

Surveys emphasise the development of health trends since they indicate that 67% of the Swedes perceive themselves to be healthy and 82% prefer healthy options when food shopping (Axfood, 2016). The trend towards a more healthy diet is also reflected in the product range of Swedish supermarkets as customers are presented with more vegan and vegetarian food options (Smith and Dahlbacka, 2012). Further, the offer of gluten-free and lactose-free products has grown immensely in the last years (Axfood, 2016).

So far, Sweden is known to be one of the least obese countries in Europe (Neovius, Janson and Rössner, 2006). This is due to Sweden's focus on healthy eating and nutritional education that have acted as preventive measurements against adiposity (EASO, 2010). Although Sweden has witnessed the emergence of health trends in recent years, almost half of all grown up Swedes are overweight or obese and this share has doubled since 1990 (Axfood, 2016). This trend is also reflected by Sweden's dramatic increase in consumption of ultra-processed foods (Juul and Hemmingsson, 2014), indicating that the majority of the population still seems to follow an unhealthy eating pattern.

The Paradox of Health Trends

During the research process of this thesis, the authors came across a paradoxical consumption behaviour within society. Whereas one part of the population is increasingly occupied with a healthy diet, the other one is becoming more and more obese (Nicolova and Inman, 2015). Statistics conducted by the World Health Organisation demonstrate that especially young people are becoming increasingly overweight; at least 42 million children worldwide under the age of five are considered obese (WHO, 2015).

When it comes to health trends, many different stakeholders are involved. This thesis perceives nutritionists and the food industry to have great influence on consumption behaviour. Both stakeholders have different interests at heart and will seek to influence the consumer in order to achieve their goals. This clash of interests causes the consumer to be confused when deciding which products to buy since the advice on this topic varies according to each of the different stakeholders. It is argued that the stakeholders use new forms of communication in order to publically voice their opinion on this subject.

Misguidance by Nutritionists

Nutritionists continuously change their mind when it comes to determining which diets work best. Every year, many new nutrition guides are published, promising the ultimate advice on how to create a healthy diet and on how to lose weight (Saris and Foster, 2006). With increasing research done in this field, new findings are constantly challenging existing opinions about healthy nutrition (Saris and Foster, 2006). These new diets are continuously promoted and advertised by the media, making it very confusing for the consumer to choose the right one (Grabe, Hyde and Ward, 2008). It is argued that the many rules associated with a healthy eating behaviour often leave the customer frustrated and demoralised. Furthermore, it is claimed that an extreme focus on weight control often results in an increase in weight rather than in the desired weight reduction since the mind's constant occupation with food stimulates appetite (Balantekin, Birch and Savage, 2015).

Misguidance by the Food Industry

The industry heavily influences the consumption behaviour of individuals and often misuses its power by not correctly labelling food products (Messer, Bligh and Costanigro, 2015). This lack of transparency causes the consumers to be misguided since the so-called 'healthy' food options in supermarkets are when examined more closely, not healthy at all. This is confirmed by Messer, Bligh and Costanigro (2015, p.2) who state that "[the] distance between the consumer and producer in today's global food system poses obstacles for effective communication and establishment of trust".

There are many temptations on the market, offering faster and more convenient food options that appeal to the customer (Nestlé Study, 2015). However, these are mostly unhealthy and deprive the consumer of the chance to develop a healthy eating pattern. By aggressively promoting unhealthy products such as ultra-processed foods, the industry has a negative effect on its customer (Juil and Hemmingsson, 2014). It has been proven that this strong presence of unhealthy products has led to an increase in frequent snacking or consuming soft drinks (Juil and Hemmingsson, 2014). It is argued that since the food industry is part of the free market economy, its stakeholders will always act opportunistically to maximise their profit (Ludwig and Nestle, 2008). Nevertheless, society often fails to bare this in mind and believes the false promises of the industry (Ludwig and Nestle, 2008).

1.3 Problem Discussion

This thesis aims to study health trends in more detail, since the authors are convinced that they will prevail and even become more extreme in near future. Health awareness has not only increased when it comes to food consumption, but there has also been a rise in physical activity, indicating once again the importance of this health trend (Nestlé study, 2015).

According to the EY Study (2015), 24 percent of consumers in the Nordic region of Europe indicate that they will reduce their meat consumption in the upcoming five years. It is predicted that due to a decrease in meat and dairy products, the trend of veganism will be manifested in the future (Nestlé Study, 2015). The food industry will have to understand the impact of those health trends on consumer behaviour in order to cater to the market's demand. It is important for supermarkets to fully grasp the surrounding cultural, sociological and psychological factors that contribute to these trends in order to successfully adopt healthy products to their marketing strategies. Further, in order to effectively promote those products, supermarkets also need to understand the developments that have occurred within communication e.g. social media. Throughout this thesis, it has become apparent that the two phenomena described correlate significantly and that both have a strong effect on consumer behaviour.

1.4 Research Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to understand how the decline of traditional institutions is influencing the development of health trends and the trends within communication in Swedish society. It further seeks to evaluate how the developments within communication can help Swedish supermarkets to attract more customers and how supermarkets can best adopt the current health trends in their marketing strategies.

1.5 Research Questions

The authors formulated the following three research questions to rightly capture the subject of this thesis. These research questions will be used throughout the analysis in order to guarantee that the purpose of this thesis will be answered.

RQ1: *How is the decline of traditional institutions influencing the development of health trends and the trends within communication?*

RQ2: *How can supermarkets utilise the developments within communication in order to attract more customers?*

RQ3: *How can supermarkets best adopt current health trends in their marketing strategies?*

1.6 Contribution

Health trends and new forms of communication (e.g. social media) are two phenomena that have developed very recently. Although they have been thoroughly discussed throughout literature, it is important to note that their development is not yet completed and hence will result in a constant revision of the existing research. Whereas previous literature has analysed health trends and new forms of communication individually, this research project forms a theoretical contribution by examining how these interlink and why they need to be analysed in combination with each other. By using new sociological institutionalism, the authors seek to examine the development of health trends and the trends within communication from a new angle. Although previous literature has studied marketing practices such as customer trust by using institutional theory (Humphreys, 2010b), the connection between communication and health trends has not yet been assessed from this perspective. Due to the authors' background in Social Sciences, new sociological institutionalism is perceived as the most appropriate theory in order to examine the phenomena at hand since this approach regards "the creation of markets as a social process" (Humphreys, 2010b, p.2).

It is argued that this theory permits to analyse organisational change from a less business-orientated angle. However, the one year Master in Management has allowed the authors to gain insights into several different business areas such as decision-making, marketing and strategy. This newly acquired knowledge could be applied throughout this thesis and hence has allowed the authors to formulate more developed arguments.

1.7 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis contains five main parts. The first chapter starts with background information on the topic discussed, including definitions of health trends and trends within communication. This is followed by an introduction to Sweden's food industry, which is examined throughout this thesis.

Preceding the introduction, the reader is presented with the methodology where the process of data collection is explained in detail. It was decided to place the methodology before the literature review, since the data collected provided direct consultation on which research fields, theories and concepts could be useful in order to answer the research questions. This inductive approach caused the interviews conducted to heavily determine which areas of research were addressed within the review.

The third chapter provides the literature review. Here, new sociological institutional theory is used as an overarching approach in order to examine the two trends at hand. This chapter covers the role of individualism, media and marketing practices that are vital when understanding the correlation between health trends and the trends within communication.

Chapter four presents the analysis and discussion by connecting the empirical data with the literature review. Further, recommendations are formulated regarding how supermarkets could best adopt the current health trends in their marketing strategies. Finally, the fifth chapter gives concluding remarks and also provides suggestions for further research.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Philosophy

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how the decline of traditional institutions is influencing the development of health trends and the changes within communication in Swedish society. It further seeks to evaluate how these developments shape the relationship between supermarkets and their respective customers. This thesis uses qualitative research and is taking on an inductive approach. The epistemological stance of this study is interpretivist and its ontological position derives from relativism, more precisely constructionism.

According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012), Management and Business research can only be conducted successfully when incorporating philosophical theories since they are able to provide the theoretical framework for the research at hand. The appropriate philosophical framework is used to map out the social context in which the research is conducted (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012).

This thesis uses qualitative research, since this type of research is more concerned with words than with numbers and seems, in this case, more adequate when grasping the complex dynamics influencing health trends and trends within communication (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Qualitative research exposes behavioural patterns that are hidden and require a greater understanding of the social context in order to be discovered (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Therefore, qualitative research gives the possibility to evaluate various different factors that contribute to the emergence of a particular social phenomenon, whereas quantitative research examines in detail one specific domain (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Considering the complexity of current health trends and developments within communication, a qualitative analysis is necessary.

Furthermore, qualitative research indicates that social life occurs in terms of processes, “[t]his includes understanding how the past history of an organization shapes the present reality and how the ‘interchange between agents and contexts

occurs over time and is cumulative” (Pettigrew, 1997 in Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.404). Therefore, by using qualitative research, this thesis has observed how the decline of traditional institutions is influencing the development of health and communication trends.

Within qualitative research, this thesis chooses an inductive approach where it seeks to form its own theoretical stance of the phenomena examined. Once data collection is completed, a new theory or approach is developed (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Marshall (1981 in Bryman and Bell, 2011) argues that this angle enables to discover inherent patterns that are prevalent within society and also helps to understand the essence of this particular behaviour. However, the research project is clearly influenced by existing theories that shape the understanding of the authors, which makes it partly deductive. Nevertheless, the inductive approach is crucial since it explicitly avoids to impose preconceived ideas as they are incapable of fully comprehending the insights that derive from an unconscious level. This impartiality allows the authors to make new connections between existing phenomena (Marshall, 1981 in Bryman and Bell, 2011). Only inductive theory is truly concerned with understanding the ‘essence of things’, in this case crucial when recognising the development of health trends and the changes within communication (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As Blumer (1954, in Bryman and Bell, 2011) rightly states, inductive theory avoids to put a straightjacket on the social world and prefers to underline the importance of context when it comes to examining the complex structures of society.

The epistemological position of a theoretical framework seeks to help enquire the nature of the world (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Here, one can witness a debate between the theories of positivism and interpretivism. Positivism perceives the social world as an organisational entity that can be analysed through the regularities of data, hence excluding speculation through scientific knowledge (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Interpretivism on the other hand is strongly influenced by Weber’s notion of ‘Verstehen’, underlining that the wider social context needs to be taken into consideration when exploring social phenomena (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Interpretivism allows to perceive the world through the eyes of the individuals who are studied. Therefore, the epistemological stance of this study will be interpretivist as it focuses on examining how the predominant health trends have been established by

society. It is not solely aimed to explain social behaviour but rather to understand the factors that it entails. This helps to comprehend the mindset of the individuals and hence allows supermarkets to understand how to best adopt health trends in their marketing strategies. Interpretivism allows to expose appearances that are hidden beneath the surface since they are part of a complex social environment and therefore only discoverable once a greater understanding of the social context is developed. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

The ontological position defines the nature of reality and existence that is used by the research project (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Ontology is marked by a debate between realism and relativism, where realism emphasises “[...] that the world is concrete and external, and that science can only progress through observations that have a direct correspondence to the phenomena being investigated” (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012, p.55). Relativism on the other hand acknowledges the existence of absolute laws but recognises that those are created by human beings. Hence, no definite answer can ever emerge since the legitimacy of the social context and its institutions always depends on society’s differing interests and perceptions. Therefore, according to relativism, the truth is always subjective as it is influenced by different perspectives (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Since the structure and purpose of institutions constantly alter due to the ever changing nature of society as it is argued by new sociological institutionalism, this thesis is situated within the ontological approach of relativism.

Within the overarching philosophical realm of relativism, this thesis will transfer its ontological approach onto constructionism (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). This approach emphasises that social properties, in this case the development of health trends and trends within communication, are based on interpersonal interactions. Therefore, these trends are ambiguous phenomena that are shaped by the individuals involved and consequently altered throughout time (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, according to constructionism, communication is vital since experiences are shared through language which helps individuals make sense of the world around them (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Although constructionists recognise that there are some objective truths, the concept of reality itself is seen as socially constructed (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It is important to keep

in mind that experiences have different meanings for most, since the perception of personal truth is mostly subjective and differs between individuals (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Nevertheless, there are still certain behavioural patterns that are predominant within a particular societal framework. Therefore, it is important for researchers to observe those newly emerged behavioural patterns in order to comprehend and explain social phenomena, here the emergence of health trends and the developments within communication (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

2.2 Research Design

This thesis uses a case study design, since it examines closely the Swedish food industry and its dynamics (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Through this analysis, the authors attempt to understand how the decline of traditional institutions has affected the development of health and communication trends and how these will influence the supermarkets' relationship with the consumers. Those developments are crucial to evaluate in order to comprehend how they affect the customer's perception of reality and hence his/her consumption behaviour.

By exploring the social reality of the case at hand, one will be able to better comprehend and explain the correlation between the two social phenomena of health and communication trends (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In order to do so, two different groups of professionals were interviewed who helped the authors to develop a better understanding of the two trends at hand.

2.3 Research Method

As mentioned, this thesis focuses on qualitative research in order to capture how the two social phenomena are actively shaping the institutional practice of supermarkets. Therefore, recorded semi-structured interviews are perceived to be the best research method in order to conduct a refined analysis.

The nature of this thesis demands insight information from active participants who are witnessing and actively working with the trends described. The authors perceive data collected from two different groups of professionals as vital in order to obtain the best available knowledge. The conducted interviews were carried out in a semi-structured format that allowed for latitude when asking questions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Semi-structured interviews permit to ask “more open [...] interview questions [that] often give a higher degree of confidentiality as the replies of the interviewees tend to be more personal in nature” (Easterby, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012, p.246). This type of interview made it possible for the interviewers to avoid restricting the person questioned, allowing him/her to express his/her own thoughts on the subject (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This enabled the authors to grasp a general overview over health trends and trends within communication.

The first group interviewed consisted of store managers and owners of Swedish supermarkets. During the interviews, they were able to give an overview of how the supermarkets in Lund have dealt with the recent rise in health trends. In order to capture this phenomenon rightly, store managers and owners from the Swedish supermarkets ICA, Coop and a small ecological store called ‘Tant Gurkan’ were questioned. In total, this group consisted out of four persons. Since ICA is with 50% of the market shares the most dominant market player, it was decided to interview two different ICA managers/owners in order to investigate their different marketing approaches (Axfood, 2016). Coop as direct competitor to ICA was also interviewed to evaluate differences regarding the adoption of health trends between the two stores. Furthermore, understanding how purely ecological stores, here ‘Tant Gurkan’, have experienced the recent rise in health trends, was seen as important additional information.

The other group that was interviewed consisted out of six academic researchers from Lund University within the field of marketing, corporate branding, trend watching, retail and decision-making. These interviewees were able to give insights into the areas mentioned. This was perceived as viable, since the writers' background knowledge regarding these fields is limited. It helped to understand the correlation between the development of health trends and the trends within communication. Further, it allowed to better comprehend how supermarkets could improve the relationship with their respective customers.

2.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative research poses the difficulty that the richness in data sometimes complicates the process of finding the information needed to answer the research questions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Whereas quantitative data collection has clear rules when it comes to its evaluation, qualitative research has various different evaluation approaches and hence relies on its researcher to make the appropriate choice for the research project (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This thesis uses the approach of grounded theory in order to evaluate the qualitative data collected. Grounded theory allows according to Strauss and Corbin (1998, in Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.579), for “a set of well-developed categories [...] that are systematically related through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explain some relevant social [...] or other phenomenon”. Here, it is aimed at establishing a formal theory from the data collected since this allows for more generalisation and hence leads to a higher degree of abstraction (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Within grounded theory, coding “ [...] is the process of generating ideas and concepts from raw data such as interviews [...]” (Benaquisto, 2008a, p.3). This process allows to segment and categorise the data acquired and permits for a thematic analysis (Benaquisto, 2008b). It entails the three steps of open coding, axial coding and selective coding which will be discussed in the following part.

After having completed all ten interviews, open coding was used to evaluate the information seen as necessary to develop potential indicators of concepts and ideas (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Hereby, all statements were documented in a table without examining whether they stood in any relation to each other (Benaquisto, 2008a) (see Appendix I).

During axial coding, the data found was put into broad categories such as brand management, decision-making, marketing, trend watching, media, health trends etc. (see Appendix II). This enabled to “identify [...] potentially interesting events, features, phrases, behaviors, or stages of a process and distinguishing them with labels” (Benaquisto, 2008a, p.3).

This was followed by selective coding that enabled to further narrow down and divide appropriate categories and to connect them with each other (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It allowed the authors to understand the dynamics at play. Throughout this step, a correlation between institutions, communication and health trends was made that enabled to better understand the relationship between supermarkets and their customers. These dynamics were then illustrated by a diagram (see Appendix III).

Once those core categories were developed, a process also known as theoretical saturation demanded for additional information to be collected in order to create a more detailed picture of the categories established (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Constant comparison then allowed to form a direct relation between concepts and categories, so that they were kept in line with the purpose of the study (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

2.5 Validity and Reliability

There is a constant discussion concerning the quality of qualitative research as this discipline of data collection entails several limitations. Although the concept of validity and reliability was developed for quantitative research, LeCompte and Goetz (1985 in Bryman and Bell, 2011) argue that these measurements can also be adapted to qualitative research. These researchers suggest four subcategories according to which a study's reliability and validity can be assessed: external reliability, internal reliability, external validity, internal validity.

First, one is to examine the external reliability of the data collection which indicates whether the study can be replicated (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Qualitative research poses difficulties when it comes to this criteria as it is impossible to “freeze a social setting and the circumstances of an initial study” (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Therefore, it becomes challenging to replicate the study at hand since the interviewees might answer differently when placed in different social setting (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, in order to overcome this weakness, LeCompte and Goetz (1985 in Bryman and Bell, 2011) suggest that when reproducing this study, the new authors should adopt a similar social role to the ones that initiated the study.

The internal reliability assesses the extent to which the research team agrees about what they see and hear (Bryman and Bell, 2011). When multiple researchers are involved in a study, differences in perception can lead to a false interpretation of the data collected, since the analysis of the findings are heavily influenced by the researchers' perception of reality, hence are shaped by what they perceive to be significant (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, this thesis only entails two authors who both come from identical cultural backgrounds. Therefore, both authors share the same understanding of the world, which results in little differences when it comes to the interpretation of data. Furthermore, since both studied Social Sciences as their Bachelor degree, a similar knowledge framework is used in order to assess the data collected.

As mentioned, it is difficult within qualitative research to replicate the studies conducted. Therefore, one might argue that a generalisation of the findings becomes challenging and consequently the external validity can be questioned (LeCompte and Goetz 1985 in Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, this study seeks to determine and understand the relation between abstract concepts (new sociological institutionalism, health trends, communication) and therefore, there is little need for further generalisation. Since this thesis gives a general explanation for the interaction between the phenomena discussed, the results can be transferred onto other places and social settings. Although Sweden is used as a case study, the authors claim that the conclusions drawn can be generalised and applied to the Western world. It is argued that those countries have common cultural values and therefore witness similar trends within society such as the development of health trends and the changes within communication.

This study's internal validity is perceived as highly developed, since the authors have been exposed to the phenomena studied. Both authors belong to generation Y that has grown up with increased health awareness. Further, this generation has been exposed to new forms of communication such as social media from an early age onwards. Therefore, internal validity is ensured since LeCompte and Goetz (1982) argue that a high involvement in the area studied leads to "a high level of congruence between concepts and observations" (LeCompte and Goetz, 1985 in Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.395).

Another concern is that there is a lack of transparency since qualitative research does not permit to fully comprehend how the interviewees were selected and in which way the authors obtained their final analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Further, it is questionable if the people interviewed throughout this thesis can be seen as representatives of their respective fields (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, the authors selected their interviewees according to criteria that allowed to obtain a vast variety of opinions. Within the group of academics, the authors interviewed individuals who have differing academic focuses within business research. Further, the group of supermarket owners and managers was selected carefully in order to ensure that the main types of supermarkets present within the Swedish food industry were covered.

As mentioned, the authors used the discipline of coding in order to evaluate the data. However, this process entails several limitations since the vast amount of data might cause the authors to lose focus on what is important (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, coding can lead to a fragmentation of data which then might fail to answer the initial purpose of the thesis (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996 in Bryman and Bell, 2011). Nevertheless, since the purpose of this thesis was established before the interviews were conducted, the questions asked were directly aimed at answering the research questions. Therefore, even though significant amounts of data were collected, the thesis was able to remain focused.

Moreover, this study covers several different research fields in order to capture all influences that are shaping the trends discussed. This could cause the authors' analysis to lack focus, since they could fail to consider every important aspect that is prevalent within the respective fields. However, since the interviews were conducted before the literature review was written, the interviewees were able to give appropriate guidance through the vast amount of literature and further allowed the authors to deepen their analysis of the respective fields.

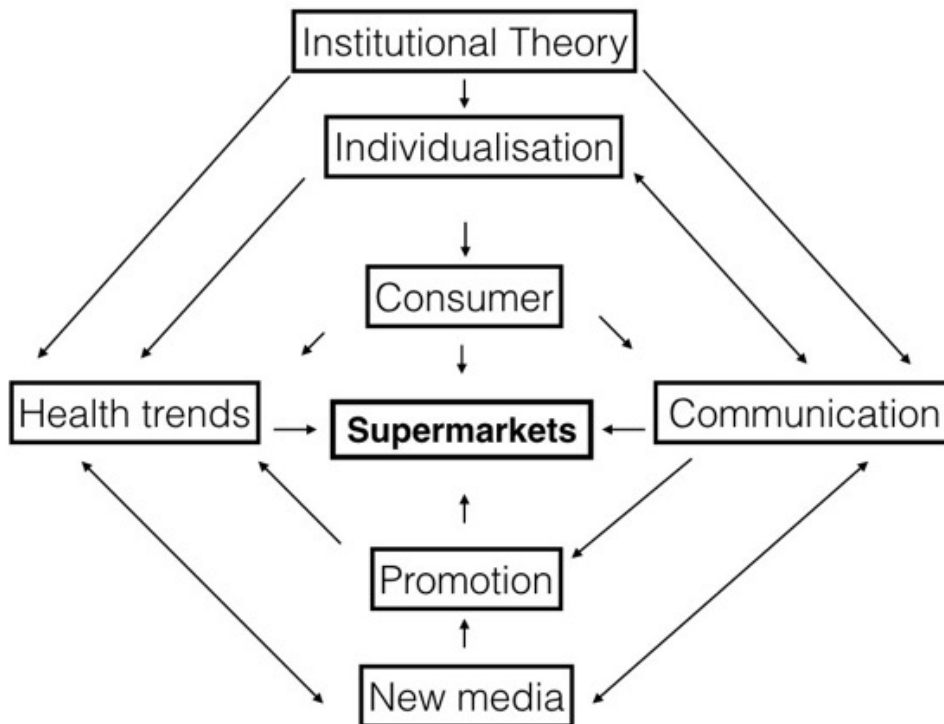
Additionally, due to strict time constraints, the research conducted within these areas was limited. It is possible that a broader collection of data and research would have led to different outcomes. Nevertheless, the authors still interviewed two groups with different expertise in order to obtain differentiated insights on the phenomena studied.

Although the methodological framework used throughout this thesis has its flaws, it is still perceived as the approach with the highest validity and reliability to fulfil the purpose of this thesis. It has permitted the authors to explore which factors were crucial when analysing the correlation between institutional change, health trends the developments within communication. The qualitative research method of semi-structured interviews enabled the authors to obtain the best knowledge available, since the different groups of interviewees allowed to see the trends discussed from different angles. Further, qualitative research has permitted the authors to develop an understanding of the social context in which the phenomena occur and also how these phenomena interlink.

3. Literature Review

Throughout the literature review, it became apparent that many different concepts need to be taken into consideration in order to examine the relationship between health trends and trends within communication. The diagram below demonstrates how these different stakeholders and concepts relate to each other. Evidently, supermarkets are placed at the core of the diagram since this study seeks to evaluate the phenomena discussed from the perspective of grocery chains. The following chapter introduces literature found on each of the different concepts and stakeholders presented in the diagram. A deeper analysis of the interplay between the factors at hand will be provided by the authors in the analysis and discussion chapter.

Visualisation of the factors at play



3.1 Institutional Theory

As mentioned above, this thesis uses the theoretical framework of new sociological institutionalism in order to provide a comprehensive analysis regarding the interplay between companies, the market, trends and consumers. The theory of institutionalism has been highly debated by renowned sociological thinkers such as Tocqueville, Pareto, Marx and Weber (Nee, 1998). The latter, Max Weber, states that institutions are necessary to give guidelines of behaviour (Koelble, 1995). Nee (1998,p.1) further indicates that “sociologists have all along argued that institutions have consequences for social and economic action”.

Different to new rational choice institutionalists who perceive individuals as logic beings using organisations for utility-maximisation, new sociological institutionalists focus on the power of culture and its undeniable effect on organisational structure (Koeble, 1995). Institutionalists argue that organisations themselves are highly influenced by their social and political environments and hence organisational practices are merely a reflection and response “to rules, beliefs, and conventions built into the wider environment” (Powell, 2007, p.1). These cultural and organisational fields affect the individual’s perception when it comes to interest and utility (Koelble, 1995). This essentially indicates that a collective movement, sparked by cultural and sociological factors is able to change organisational structure. As Cornelissen et al. (2015) argue, new sociological institutionalism emphasises the importance of collective cognition to understand the macro-level features of institutions. This explains the powerful influence of current health trends, derived through sociological and cultural factors, on the institutional structure of supermarkets. Here, the consumers have formed a ‘collective identity’ (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2012), that has demanded change and hence managed to alter institutional practices.

This institutional change however can only be achieved through a complex process of legitimisation (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2012). Max Weber argues that the concept of legitimacy itself is essential since “legitimacy is a mechanism for explaining why people regularly and voluntarily submit to authority” (Weber, 1978 in Humphreys, 2010b, p.3). By comprehending how consumer practices become legitimate, we can

better recognise how consumer practice and perception functions (Humphreys, 2010a). This concept is further essential in order to understand how institutions seek to influence markets and how they try to gain broader consumer acceptance (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2010). Therefore, new sociological institutionalism gives the appropriate theoretical framework when analysing the influence of health and communication trends on institutional practices and how these developments are influencing consumer behaviour.

There are three types of legitimacy that can cause organisational alteration: regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive legitimacy (Scott 1995 in Humphreys, 2010a).

Regulative legitimacy is perceived as important for organisational change. It facilitates the creation of new markets since regulative factors “are tied to consumers’ willingness to adopt or change particular sociocognitive schema” (Humphreys, 2010b, p.2). This is in line with normative legitimacy that occurs when a practice becomes tolerated and hence socially acceptable. Normative legitimacy does not require the approval of a subordinate institution as it is solely in the power of society to determine whether a practice, movement or idea will become tolerated. Nevertheless, a change in normative legitimacy takes time, since the new practices need to be present for some time in order to become accepted by society. (Humphreys, 2010b)

Cultural-cognitive legitimacy describes the degree to which organisations are compatible with their cultural environment; and the degree to which they are understood by society and perceived as an integrated part of it (Humphreys, 2010b). Cultural legitimacy is essentially “determined by distinctions drawn around social class and through consumption practices” (Bourdieu, 1984; Holt, 1997 in Humphreys, 2010a, p.502). Once a collective movement is perceived as ‘cool’ and removed from stigmatisation, it automatically connects itself to a cultural elite that seeks to place itself above ordinary consumers (Humphreys, 2010a). This elite is often represented by famous individuals who “act as entrepreneurs of the practice” (Humphreys, 2010a, p.502). This is also emphasised by Scaraboto and Fischer (2010) who describe that minorities whose needs and wants are considered as appropriate can form new commercial opportunities for businesses. Therefore, it is crucial for institutions to

comprehend the different concepts of legitimacy within the respective market in order to understand consumption behaviour.

3.2 Individualisation

Another concept that appears to be relevant when examining health and communication trends is individualism. Modernisation has allowed Western society to become more individualised, since it is no longer faced with a struggle for survival but can focus on improving its life (Veenhoven, 1999). This has permitted individuals to increase the awareness of their preferences that they now seek to fulfil without compromise (Veenhoven, 1999). An “[...] individualistic society encourages the development of identity, self-esteem and self-actualization” (Waterman, 1984 in Veenhoven, 1999, pp. 2-3). Conservative theorists argue that the newly emerged focus on individualism causes an increase in self-containment and fosters competition between individuals. Veenhoven (1999) states that this will destroy the social structure and hence result in an alienation of society. It is proclaimed that extreme individualistic behaviour challenges conventional institutions such as family and religion, since it actively dismantles those traditional structures of society (Veenhoven, 1999).

It is argued that nowadays, liberal capitalism is entrenched into every aspect of human life, providing individuals with many options which further stimulate their individualistic attitude (Ray, 2005). The vast amount of options given, calls for many decision to be made and hence increases personal responsibility (Kelly, 2010). Consequently, many decide to create a distinctive sense of belonging by becoming part of a new community that substitutes the structure normally provided by traditional institutions. This is often done by choosing a very particular behaviour that is not practiced by the majority, but in the long-term evolves into a trend that is copied by the many. Here, the original behaviour aimed to create an individualistic identity turns into a mass phenomenon. (Veenhoven, 1999)

3.3 Reasons to Follow a Healthy Diet

It is important for supermarkets to comprehend, which individuals are participating in health trends. This is vital in order to create a more detailed picture of the customer who chooses healthy products. This thesis presents three reasons that influence consumption behaviour: social class, self-optimisation through restrictive eating patterns and positive psychological effects.

3.3.1 Social Class

Social class is defined by structural, economic or cultural factors that will result in an unnatural division of society (Crompton and Scott, 2006 in Roberts et al., 2013). Machin and Vignoles (2004) argue that the socio-economic status is evidently determined by education. Further, statistics demonstrate that the socio-economic status of an individual heavily influences his/her food habits (EASO, 2010). This indicates that social inequality has an effect on consumption behaviour (EASO, 2010). Eating is perceived as a socially constructed practice that takes place daily (Wills et al., 2011). Moreover, it shapes family identity since it helps to build a social order by creating and strengthening natural boundaries within families (Caplan, 1997 in Wills et al., 2011). Wills et al. (2011) argue that this influence is exerted by the way the family conducts its meals (together or separately) and by the kind of food that is chosen (healthy or unhealthy).

A child's behaviour is strongly affected by its close environment, particularly its family. Therefore, a family's socio-economic situation will heavily influence the child's eating pattern (Kutze, Eikemo and Kamphuis, 2012). Each family develops individual purchasing patterns that are very likely to be similar to its social reference group (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999). This shopping behaviour is transferred from the parents onto the children and hence results in similar buying patterns, affecting attitudes towards certain brands, products and suppliers (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999).

It is proven that human beings who grew up in a family with a higher socio-economic status are eating healthier than the ones who were born into a lower socio-economic

class (Fismen et al., 2015). This demonstrates that health inequality is determined from a young age onwards. Socio-economic factors determine well-being, health and the length of life of an individual (Roberts et al., 2013). Statistics demonstrate that health degrading behaviours such as smoking, drug and alcohol consumption are also more prevalent in lower socio-economic classes. These degrading behaviours in addition to the tendency to opt for unhealthy food choices, significantly reduce the health status of lower socio-economic classes (Roberts et al., 2013). Therefore, as shown throughout this paragraph, individuals who are situated within the higher socio-economic class are more likely to establish healthy eating patterns and hence purchase healthy food products.

3.3.2 Self-Optimisation through Eating Behaviour

The decline of traditional institutions such as family and religion has caused individuals to self-impose new structural forms that will regulate their everyday life. These new structures can be found in areas, which are subject to the individual's self-control (Nestlé Study, 2015). The literature indicates that following a particular diet is a new way to reconstruct personal order (Nestlé Study, 2015). Within an individualistic society, competition increases (Veenhoven, 1999) causing individuals to use constant personal control as a new form of structure (Nestlé Study, 2015). It is perceived that through choosing the 'right diet', one can optimise the psychological and physical condition of one's body (Azzurra and Paola, 2009).

Azzurra and Paola (2009) argue that health has become a vital component when it comes to an individual's self-perception. A healthy body represents safety and people who control their nutrition often assume that they can fully determine their future health status (Nestlé Study, 2015). This control is mainly expressed through sacrifice, causing individuals to define themselves by what they are not eating, rather than by what they are eating (Nestlé Study, 2015). Today's health trend is actively promoting products that are missing essential substances such as lactose and gluten (Thalheimer, 2015). Certain food groups are even severely stigmatised e.g. wheat products, if rightly so remains questionable (Thalheimer, 2015). Lactose- and gluten-free products have become increasingly popular since many people are currently experiencing

stomach problems that they assign to certain nutritional substances, although often no intolerances can be diagnosed (Thalheimer, 2015). This extreme commitment for sacrifice is also mirrored in the rise of veganism (Markus, 1998).

In a society that constantly thrives for optimisation, individuals have stopped buying food instinctively and are now more concerned with the health benefits of the purchased products (Pina, 2016). This behaviour can turn into a compulsive eating disorder where the person is obsessively occupied with choosing a healthy diet. A recently emerged eating disorder that goes hand in hand with the rise of health awareness is 'orthorexia nervosa' (Donini et al., 2004). People with this illness display an extreme health behaviour and exaggerate the dangers of alimentations such as sugar, meat or fat (Donini et al., 2004). They only eat food that they perceive to be high quality. This obsessive behaviour eventually results in a downward spiral as more restrictions are constantly added to the diet. This compulsive examination of food choices can become harmful for the physical and mental health of the individual (Donini et al., 2004).

Donini et al. (2004, p.151) further argue that this illness was "emphasised by the worrying level of excessive alarm towards food that the media has produced". Grabe, Hyde and Ward (2008) argue that especially social media further exacerbates current health trends since this particular form of communication is determined by pictures and hence causes the individual to associate healthy products with an ideal body image (Grabe, Hyde and Ward, 2008). The researchers further underline that the constant exposure to ideal body images circulated by the media shifts the consumer's perception and leads him/her to accept these unnatural portrayals as the representation of reality.

3.3.3 Positive Psychological Effects

Today's scientific research claims more and more often that an unhealthy diet is the cause for many severe illnesses (Bleich et al., 2015). This leads individuals to increasingly consider the impact of their food choices on their personal physical and mental well-being (Bleich et al., 2015). A study has shown that people who are more afraid of developing diseases (e.g. diabetes, cancer, heart diseases) or of putting on weight will alter their food choices and try to maintain a more healthy diet (Sun, 2007).

Azzurra and Paola (2009) argue that selecting a healthy food option instead of an unhealthy one has a positive psychological effect on the individual. Although the consumer might not immediately improve his/her physical condition, acting in line with society's perception of a healthy diet will immediately satisfy the individual. If a product is classified as healthy, consumers automatically assign additional value to this item, causing it to become the preferred food choice. This behaviour can further be stimulated by good brand management that reinforces the healthy image of the brand. Therefore, it is increasingly important for companies to understand the customer's perception of healthy food in order to be able to expand on this market opportunity. (Azzurra and Paola, 2009)

Selecting healthy food options can also occur due to peer pressure, which arises when the social environment causes an individual to change behaviour (Hamilton, 2016). It is argued that in some cases, individuals alter their eating pattern in order to become part of a subgroup (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999). This sub-group creates a sense of belonging where like-minded individuals attend social events together that lie within their value framework (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999), e.g. visiting vegan brunches.

3.4 Relevant Marketing Concepts

As stated above, this thesis seeks to evaluate how the new trends within communication can be used to help supermarkets adopt healthy products in their marketing strategies. Therefore, the following section will examine marketing concepts that appear to be relevant.

3.4.1 Market-driven and Market-driving Companies

As stated, institutional decline is shaping the market, demanding organisations to adapt easily to new surroundings in order to stay competitive (Bower and Christensen, 1995). Literature argues that there is a difference between market-driven and market-driving firms. The former are highly customer-oriented and seek to develop products that directly cater to the needs of their consumers (Kumar, Scheer and Kotler, 2000). The latter are innovative firms that offer the market a leap in customer value, which giving these firms a significant competitive advantage (Kumar, Scheer and Kotler, 2000).

Nevertheless, it is very difficult for a market-driven firm to become market-driving, since it is challenging to produce a ground-breaking innovation. Furthermore, this innovative process entails huge risks, because new ideas often fail (Kumar, Scheer and Kotler, 2000). Therefore, market-driving companies are mostly new entrants to the market; they have little to lose and are hence willing to take a higher risk of failure than entrenched companies (Tripsas, 1997 in Kumar, Scheer and Kotler, 2000). Consequently, established market players are less likely to engage in innovation, since they do not want to jeopardise their position in the market (Bower and Christensen, 1995).

Although innovation seems to be important in order to develop a competitive advantage (Grunert et al., 1997 in Anselmsson and Johansson, 2010), it is argued that supermarkets are mostly market-driven. Compared to other sectors that offer products not required for human survival, this thesis argues that supermarkets are able to claim an exceptional position since they cater to an individual's basic needs and therefore

possess a loyal customer base. This prevalence of basic needs causes success to be easily achieved through market-driven behaviour.

3.4.2 Push and Pull Strategy

As mentioned above, supermarkets are mostly market-driven organisations. However, regardless of being market-driven or market-driving, a push or pull policy can be implemented. The push approach originates from the company and seeks to force a new practice or product onto the market (Corniani, 2008). Contrary to this, the pull strategy emphasises a bottom-up approach, which originates from the demands of the market and pulls the company to fulfill the market's needs (Corniani, 2008).

The health trends within the food industry originated from customers who demanded healthier food options, claiming that the offer of conventional supermarkets was no longer fulfilling their needs. This pull effect led the organisations to adjust their product range accordingly (Corniani, 2008). However, this approach entails significant disadvantages for a company since „[it] is not able to develop comprehensive knowledge of the market and its players as they are characterized by the changeability and dynamism of their actions“ (Corniani, 2008, p.46). This causes the company to lose influence over customer behaviour, hence making it subjective to the arbitrary nature of the market (Corniani, 2008). Therefore, the push approach gives a better opportunity to shape customer behaviour by actively determining the preferences of the consumer.

3.4.3 Brand Management

The literature indicates that effective brand management is crucial in order to ensure customer loyalty. Mats Urde (2013) argues that a company should not purely focus on its products, but on building a strong corporate brand identity in order to become a successful player within the market. “When that corporate brand identity is communicated and interpreted, it will create an equivalent or more developed sign in the minds of customers and non-customer stakeholders“ (Urde, 2013, p.744). Only

this approach incorporates the crucial aspects that define corporate brand identity consisting of value, culture and mission (Urde, 2013). Here, communication is vital since brand identity is created by stories that seek to promote the company's core values (Urde and Koch, 2014).

Urde and Koch (2014) argue that customers actively help to construct a brand image through experiencing it over time. Therefore, "brand identity should provide a value proposition to the customer, constructed around functional, emotional and self-expressive benefits" (Aaker, 1996 in Urde and Koch, 2014, p.480). Consequently, a successful brand image is created through a continuous interaction with the target customer base. This will cause the company to gain a competitive advantage on the market.

3.4.4 Relationship Marketing

As mentioned above, it is important for an organisation to emphasise a dialogue with its customers. This form of interaction takes place on multiple levels (Corneliessen et al., 2015), reinforcing the core idea of relationship marketing where customers are perceived as active counterparts (Gönroos, 1994). Relationship marketing understands that the customer is actively contributing to the creation of the product (Grönroos, 1994). Therefore, this bond needs to be strengthened in order to directly meet the demands of the market. Gönroos (1994) states that these mutual exchanges between the firm and its customers lead to long-term relationships, which ensure brand loyalty. Once this unique relationship is created, the company possesses a competitive advantage since a personal bond is difficult to imitate by competitors (Gummesson, 1987).

With the omnipresence and vast reach of new media channels, it has become increasingly important for marketers to consider and understand the power of relationship marketing (Armstrong et al., 2009). Amelini and Villanueva (2011) argue that the communication with the customer has to occur offline as well as online, since only a mix of both disciplines will allow the desired outcome.

3.4.5 Online and Offline Communication

When shaping consumer behaviour through relationship marketing, one needs to incorporate the significant influence of new media channels. The rise of digitalisation has enabled new forms of media to emerge (Van Dijck, 2013). One distinctive communication channel that has to be analysed in depth is social media since it has allowed each individual to express opinions online and increase his/her public self-representation (Chua and Chang, 2015). Van Dijck (2013, p.7) argues that social media “[has] unquestionably altered the nature of private and public communication”. Online media channels are ambiguous and can be adjusted to the user’s response (Van Dijck, 2013). Nowadays, social media determined by electronic word of mouth (eWOM) challenges traditional media when it comes to capturing the attention of customers (Amelini and Villanueva, 2011). This change within communication has altered the rules of the game when creating a brand identity.

Traditionally, brand stories were formed by communicating with the masses through television, radio and print media. Brand managers were creating a brand story by sending a direct message to the consumer, which reached its audience without modification (Gensler et al., 2013). This direct advertisement has now been complemented by the increased use of online media channels. These new trends within communication allow for the consumer’s active participation in creating a brand image, resulting in an empowerment of the customer (Gensler et al., 2013). In today’s world, a brand that is not present on social media platforms, often fails to stay in the minds of the consumer (Amelini and Villanueva, 2011). Therefore, online marketing has become an important and rather essential tool to promote a company’s brand (Gensler et al., 2013).

The new way to voice opinions can no longer be ignored by brand managers who have to understand the power of digital media when successfully creating corporate identity (Gensler et al., 2013). The integrated marketing communication approach (IMC) underlines that it is vital for a company to engage in consistent brand communication on all platforms. This can only be realised through cross-functional

planning and monitoring of all information flow that is to be publicised (Ranchod and Gurau, 2007). Only then, a successful and coherent brand image can be created.

Traditional advertising through conventional media channels is perceived as intrusive since it forces its message upon the consumer. Online marketing on the other hand permits the company to become the consumer's ally, since they are welcomed into the customer's social life (Deighton and Kornfeld, 2009). The firm itself is able to become a cultural producer through increased online sharing. This new way of marketing is "an umbrella term for the mobilised power of the culture to pass on a marketer's message, an easy task in today's templated and networked environment in which rich media applications can be passed from person to person with extreme ease" (Deighton and Kornfeld, 2009, p.8).

Although it has been argued that social media might render traditional marketing practices obsolete, this thesis emphasises that traditional promotional activities should not be neglected, but rather complemented by social media (Amelini and Villanueva, 2011). Traditional marketing practices are vital because here, marketers have more control than in eWOM where everyone can publicly express dissatisfaction (VanMeter, Grisaffe and Chonko, 2015). The outcome of traditional advertising is often foreseeable, whereas in eWOM, it is hard to predict whether the online audience will influence the company's image positively or negatively (Amelini and Villanueva, 2011). Once the message enters the spheres of social media, the company loses control over the campaign's outcome. If perceived negatively, eWOM can easily destroy a company's reputation (VanMeter, Grisaffe and Chonko, 2015). Therefore, the authors argue that a mix of both online and offline promotional strategies is essential for a successful marketing campaign.

3.4.6 Promotion

Throughout the literature review, it has become obvious that communication is essential when formulating a long-lasting relationship with the customer. Therefore, this thesis focuses on promotion, which communicates the benefits of a certain product or brand through advertising and direct marketing (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999). Within the promotional mix, the authors concentrate on advertising and personal selling since these disciplines are seen as key when nudging customers into buying healthy products.

Advertising

Hill and O'Sullivan (1999) argue that advertising is conducted by sending a direct message to the audience or by subtly creating a brand identity through using emotional stories people respond to. The former is known as the hard sale approach, a more aggressive form of marketing that focuses on selling the product itself. The soft sale approach on the other hand seeks to build a long-lasting relationship with its customers, aimed at strengthening the brand identity of the firm rather than purely promoting the product (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999). Advertisement can only be successful if it is directed at the intended target group through the use of appropriate media channels (Sallot et al., 2003).

Personal Selling

Within promotion, personal selling is perceived to be an important tool in order to advertise products effectively (Heilman et al., 2004). Personal selling is an interaction that takes place between two individuals. This interaction is more likely to stay in the customer's mind than passive advertising campaigns, since the customer receives a personalised experience with the marketer and product itself (Heilman et al., 2004). Nowadays, customers are constantly overwhelmed by the amount of promotional messages they receive through various media channels. This has caused customers to block out many promotional messages, making them more selective when confronted with advertisement (Hill and Sullivan, 1999). The attributes of the personal

experience created through personal selling will most likely result in a positive response concerning the product, therefore increase the brand's awareness in the customer's mind (Xie and Kahle, 2014). Consequently, personal selling can be very beneficial as it creates direct contact with the customer.

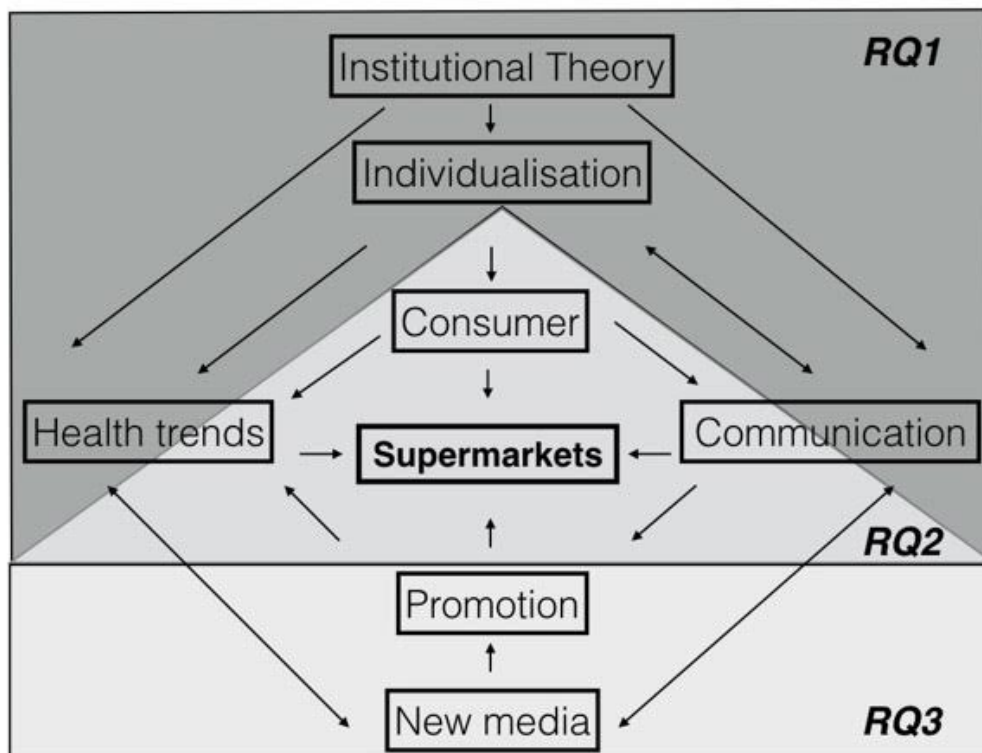
4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Analysis

This chapter merges the findings and the literature review in order to understand how the decline of traditional institutions is influencing the development of health trends and trends within communication in Swedish society. The empirical data and the literature have demonstrated that several different factors have to be considered in order to evaluate the purpose of this paper. During the research process, it has become obvious that consumers, supermarkets, institutional theory, individualisation, health trends, promotion and new media channels are interdependent.

This chapter gives a deeper analysis of how exactly the factors mentioned interlink. However, it is important to note that it is difficult to examine which phenomenon was directly caused or influenced by another. In order to conduct this analysis, the authors refer back to the diagram presented at the beginning of the literature review. In a new diagram, they indicate which factors they perceive as essential in order to answer the respective research questions. The altered diagram is presented below.

Visualisation of the factors at play



4.1.1 The Effect of Institutional Decline on Society

This section provides an answer to the first research question: *How is the decline of traditional institutions influencing the development of health trends and the trends within communication?* The authors examine in detail how the decline of traditional institutions has led to an increase in individualisation and how this has exacerbated the two trends mentioned above.

Institutional Theory

Through the interview with Sofia Ulver, an academic researcher specialised in consumer culture theory, it became apparent that new sociological institutionalism is an appropriate theory in order to explain the emergence of health trends. This approach emphasises society's great influence on organisations, hence its inevitable contribution when it comes to institutional change. Further, the literature on this approach underlines the power of culture and its undeniable effect on organisational structure (Koeble, 1995).

Koeble (1995) argues that alterations within society will be reflected within institutional change. This influence is especially visible when it comes to the free market economy, since companies will reposition according to the consumer's demand. When questioned about current health trends, the academic researcher Sofia Ulver indicated that minority groups intolerant to certain ingredients (e.g. gluten or dairy) were first stigmatised by society. However, once the market fulfilled the demand of this particular group, the new eating behaviour was accepted and hence developed into a trend. This process is known as a 'pull approach' where the demand expressed by society is adopted by organisations (Corniani, 2008). The authors agree with the statement that current health trends have originated from society. They argue that the customer's demand for products in line with these health trends has caused an alteration of organisational practices within supermarkets. According to new sociological institutionalism, it is important to understand that this process of organisational change can only occur if the trend promoting this change is legitimised by society.

Legitimation Process of Health Trends

The literature regarding new sociological institutionalism identifies three forms of legitimation: regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive legitimacy (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2012). By comprehending how health trends became legitimised, one is able to understand how consumer practice and perception functions. This allows to examine how institutions should respond to the consumer's changing needs (Humphreys, 2010a). When it comes to health trends, the authors claim that the alteration of organisational practices within supermarkets is determined by normative and cultural-cognitive legitimacy.

Normative legitimacy is heavily shaped by communicative activities that occur between individuals, since it is argued that society exists through communication (Cornelissen et al., 2015). Therefore, the new trends within communication have an important stance when it comes to normative legitimation since these new forms facilitate a “dynamic, interactive process of manipulating symbols towards the creation, maintenance, destruction, and/or transformation of meanings which are axial - not peripheral - to organizational existence and organizing phenomena” (Ashcraft et al., 2009 in Cornelissen et al., 2015, p.14).

When it comes to health trends, especially social media is seen as an important communication channel. Due to its vast reach, this new form of communication is able to accelerate health trends since they become more present in the minds of the consumers (Humphreys, 2010a). Social media is used by bloggers to publicly display their healthy food choices which increases awareness for this particular phenomenon. As Humphreys (2010a) points out, a cultural elite, in this case famous bloggers, is able to act as a pioneer group that can further accelerate a trend and turn it into a mass movement. This process has caused healthy food options to be legitimised by society as they have managed to establish themselves as an accepted norm.

Cultural-cognitive legitimacy is perceived to be the most distinctive form when it comes to health trends as food habits are heavily dependent on the cultural context. The academic researcher Erik Wengström, specialised in decision-making also stated

that there is a strong relation between food habits and culture, since the way people eat is heavily determined by their cultural background. Cultural-cognitive legitimacy examines the compatibility of organisational structures with their cultural environment and if these are accepted entities within the respective society (Humphreys, 2010b). The authors argue that the cultural significance of supermarkets is strong due to the fact that they cater to basic human needs.

When it comes to the consumer's collective movement advocating health trends, the institutional practice of supermarkets is required to adapt its product offerings. Humphreys (2010b) states that once a consumption practice has been socially accepted and even celebrated as an aspiring way of life, it allows for an identification with a cultural sub-group. The academic researcher Sofia Ulver emphasises that this has been the case with health trends which are now popular but were first advocated by a small minority that felt stigmatised by its 'special needs' for specific products e.g. vegetarian and vegan.

The academic researcher Peter Svensson specialised in marketing theory suggested that generally, subcultures often die once they are accepted by the masses. The authors however agree with the academic researcher Sofia Ulver that this is not the case when it comes to health trends, since the special demands of minority groups (e.g. veganism) have now translated into a mass practice. The previously stigmatised advocates of for example vegan/vegetarian food, have altered the market to their advantage so that many restaurants in Sweden now offer vegetarian options. This reinforces once again that it is crucial for Swedish supermarkets to carefully monitor and adapt the developments within their cultural environment in order to remain successful.

Humphreys (2010a) claims that collective cultural movements in society are also mirrored within the media. It is important to note that the media itself is embedded in a cultural context and hence is merely producing subjective truths (Humphreys, 2010a). Scaraboto and Fischer (2012) state that journalists play a significant role in shaping public opinions about certain social phenomena. However, in a time where any person can voice his/her opinion freely online, individuals have become journalists themselves. Every person can participate in the public discussion on social

media platforms, and hence is able to influence the development of trends (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2012). This claim was supported by Ola Hollerup, an ICA store manager from Lund, who agreed that media significantly shapes new health trends. This underlines that health trends and the new trends within communication are inevitably related and hence both influence the institutional practice of supermarkets.

The Impact of Individualisation on Health and Communication Trends

The Nestlé Study (2015) indicates that the decline of traditional institutions such as family and religion has caused individuals to self-impose new structural forms that regulate everyday life. This statement is supported by the academic researcher Sofia Ulver who claimed that human beings nowadays experience a lack of structure since they have too many options to choose from. Therefore, restricting oneself when it comes to consumption behaviour can be seen as one way to add structure to one's life. The authors argue that this lack of structure results in an individualisation process of society that shifts the power from traditional institutions onto other organisational forms. It is suggested that the emergence of health trends has been influenced by this rise of individualisation.

The decline of traditional institutions has also caused new trends within communication to become present in all parts of life. The new developments within communication have changed the way media is used, since it is possible to communicate in any situation and at any time. As mentioned above, the former structure provided by traditional institutions is nowadays replaced by other organisational forms such as the recently emerged online community. These new entities offer a sense of belonging, also known as "connectedness" (Van Dijck, 2013, p.4) and therefore manage to replace old traditional institutions such as religion or family. This combination of institutional decline and rise of interactive media further accelerates the individualisation process of society.

According to new sociological institutionalism, communication itself cannot be seen as an isomorphic process, since sender and receiver are both shaping this activity

(Corneliessen et al., 2015). Consumers have to be perceived as ‘active agents’ whose opinions can positively or negatively affect the perception of a trend (Corneliessen et al., 2015). As mentioned, the current health trends are extremely visible on social media platforms since many individuals officially display their food on e.g. Instagram and Facebook (Grabe, Hyde and Ward, 2008). By publicly displaying their food choices, people are able to actively influence food culture. Through the presence of healthy food options on social media platforms (Grabe, Hyde and Ward, 2008), health itself becomes a new status symbol that is now desired by society.

This new form of communication further allows for a constant comparison with other people, which helps to exacerbate trends (Grabe, Hyde and Ward, 2008). The endless flood of images causes reality and idealism to interlink, making it more difficult to distinguish between online and offline worlds (Nestlé Study, 2015). It causes individuals to form a perfect image of themselves that does not necessarily correlate with reality. Therefore, it is important to understand the power of publically displayed images on the subconscious of individuals. The constant visualisation of certain behaviours e.g. healthy eating, leads individuals to experience a sense of peer pressure, that causes some people to feel bad when eating unhealthy (Costa-Font and Jofre-Bonet, 2011). This argument is further emphasised by the academic researcher Erik Wengström, who suggests that the media’s huge influence can result in peer pressure, leading to conformity in consumption. As shown, the new developments within communication have become lifestyle choices and hence are entrenched into every aspect of society. The authors argue that supermarkets have to understand how to utilise the new trends within communication in order to effectively promote healthy products.

As demonstrated, the two trends at hand correlate significantly and both heavily influence institutional practice. The authors claim that the developments within communication would have also occurred without the emergence of health trends. However, this thesis argues that the health trends were reinforced by social media. Therefore, the trends within communication and the health trends stand in unilateral dependency to each other.

4.1.2 Successful Brand Management through Communication

The next paragraph evaluates the second research question: *How can supermarkets utilise the developments within communication in order to attract more customers?* This is done by examining how supermarkets are able to create a successful brand image.

As mentioned above, the authors argue that current health trends have originated from society. Therefore, offering products that are in line with current health trends would allow supermarkets to respond to the customers' new demands. This thesis claims that communication is an essential tool in order to benefit from the health trends, since it acts as a carrier that adequately captures the cultural and normative dynamics within society. Consequently, an open dialogue with the customer will allow for an increase in brand awareness and hence permit supermarkets to attract new customers.

This open dialogue can easiest be conducted via new forms of communication. Therefore, the authors claim that it is crucial for a company to be present on social media platforms. This permits organisations to communicate with their clients and allows them to reach out to individuals who are not yet part of their client base. As shown throughout the literature and from the data collected, social media is used by the majority of the population, and hence is a vital tool when increasing brand awareness.

This new form of interaction that takes place online further influences the consumer when evaluating whether an organisation is trustworthy or not. Through social media, consumers have become 'active agents' who are able to express their opinion publicly. Consequently, they can alter the image of a brand (Corneliessen et al., 2015). The academic researcher Christian Koch, specialised in the field of brand management, further confirmed the power of consumers. He indicated that they are actively taking part in online discussions concerning the brand and its products. This shows once again the significant impact of social media.

Urde and Koch (2014) argue that it is vital for organisations to establish trust with their consumers to ensure that their perception of the brand will remain positive. The academic researcher Peter Svensson claimed that this trust is reinforced by word of mouth (WOM), since people trust their neighbours more than big corporations. Therefore, the authors argue that WOM, which can be transmitted via social media platforms (eWOM), is able to attract new customers. Although the academic researcher Christian Koch suggested that pushing brand identity does not necessarily correlate with an increase in sales, he underlined that it can build a long-term competitive advantage by establishing a trusting relationship with the customer. Therefore, the authors claim that in the long run, a good social media presence, will allow supermarkets to attract more customers.

The academic researcher Peter Svensson underlined that nowadays, social media is more influential than conventional media (e.g. television, radio) when forming a brand image. He claimed that although this new way of communication offers immense opportunities for a firm, it also entails huge risks since social media has made it increasingly difficult to control a brand image. Peter Svensson emphasised that transferring brand messages via social media can go wrong and even cause the exact opposite of what was intended. However, despite this danger, the authors argue that social media, when used wisely, is an essential tool for promoting a healthy brand image.

The academic researcher Christian Koch stated that the core values of the brand have to be in line with the company's representation and activities. Therefore, it is claimed that a coherent brand image has to be transmitted offline and online. The authors indicate that this is especially important for supermarkets when implementing health trends, since the company needs to market these trends in combination with its core values. This will ensure a coherent brand image that appears trustworthy to the consumers.

4.1.3 Recommendations for an Effective Promotion of Healthy Products

The next section analyses the third research question: *How can supermarkets best adopt current health trends in their marketing strategies?* The authors argue that promotion is most effective for this undertaking.

Implementation of a Push Approach

This thesis suggests that it is very profitable for supermarkets to offer products that are in line with the current health trends since the market is witnessing a rising demand for those. Further, these products are often more expensive than others and hence provide the supermarkets with a profitable market opportunity (Jetta and Cassady, 2006).

It was previously claimed that health trends emerged when a minority of consumers ‘pulled’ supermarkets to fulfill their particular demands. However, the authors argue that the previous pull approach can now be transformed into a push approach that will allow to increase the sales of healthy products. Throughout the literature review, it became apparent that the push approach entails huge advantages for companies since it permits to actively dictate and accelerate trends on the market (Corniani, 2008). This awards great power to organisations since it enables them to determine customer behaviour. The authors claim that by using the push approach, supermarkets are able to further exacerbate the importance of existing health trends, which would allow them to sell more healthy products in the future.

The Advantages of Promotion

The literature and the findings both indicate that pushing health trends will best be carried out by using promotion. The authors argue that this discipline is the most promising for shaping consumer behaviour since it puts communication at its core. As mentioned above, communication is vital in order to build a long-lasting relationship with the customer and to improve the corporation’s brand identity. Therefore, this

thesis claims that the management of supermarkets needs to use a distinctive promotion strategy in order to nudge consumers into buying healthy products.

Instead of choosing a promotion strategy that seeks to appeal to anonymous masses, this authors emphasise the importance of a strategy that captures the complex social and cultural elements essential for influencing customer behaviour. Therefore, marketers have to understand the codes in which customers operate (Hill and Sullivan, 1999). As stated by new sociological institutionalism, the semiology of individuals is heavily shaped by their cultural surroundings (Koeble, 1995). The promotional messages are not forced upon customers, but altered to new meanings by the receivers themselves who express their opinion publicly through the new media channels. This evidently poses a new challenge for marketers (Hill and O'Sullivan, 1999).

The literature as well as the empirical data provide appropriate concepts and ideas on what to incorporate and consider when formulating such a strategy. Humphreys (2010b) argues that supermarkets will have to learn how to effectively use social and cultural norms to their advantage in order to successfully attract customers to their brand. The authors agree with the academic researcher Peter Svensson who indicated that these behavioural conducts are important to comprehend when using new communication channels e.g. social media. However, many marketers often fail to use these new forms of media appropriately since they did not grow up with those communication trends. Nevertheless, social media has to be included in promotion since the young generation can effectively be addressed through this medium.

The next section will provide recommendations that are perceived to be appropriate for supermarkets when adopting current health trends in their marketing strategies. This thesis argues that advertisement and personal selling have a large impact when it comes to shaping consumer behaviour. Therefore, the authors focus on these two categories when recommending a promotional strategy for supermarkets.

Advertising through external stakeholders

The academic researcher Christian Koch indicated that it can be very beneficial for a company to work together with an external stakeholder that actively promotes the brand, since ‘co-branding’ helps to improve a company's image. When it comes to supermarkets, it is argued that external stakeholders such as public figures and public institutions seem most appropriate. Christian Koch further emphasised that co-branding allows to transfer positive attributes of the external stakeholder onto the brand and its products and hence enhances the company's credibility. Further, the academic researcher Peter Svensson claimed that consumers always trust their neighbours more than big corporations, since they know that these firms might try to trick them into buying their products. Therefore, the authors argue that external stakeholders can enhance the company's reputation, since consumers are more likely to trust and listen to those. This thesis suggests that supermarkets should cooperate with famous food bloggers and schools in order to promote healthy eating.

Ulf Elg, an academic researcher within branding and marketing agreed with Grabe, Hyde and Ward (2008) that social media has become an important part of everyday life and is highly connected to the development of health trends. Supermarkets could actively utilise the new developments within communication by selecting food bloggers famous for their healthy lifestyle in order to promote the brand. Sending healthy products to the bloggers would allow supermarkets to promote those products on the blogger's social media platforms and let them benefit from the trust and credibility these bloggers have built with their followers. This indicates that food bloggers with a large follower base can influence the success of consumption trends and the product offering on the market (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2012). This type of external stakeholder would simultaneously allow supermarkets to expand their social media presence. This subtle and indirect approach would be more effective than supermarkets forcing direct advertising messages onto the customer, since the latter often remains unnoticed.

Furthermore, as described above, Swedish society is witnessing a paradox when it comes to food trends. The literature and the findings both indicate that one part of the

population is more and more focused on healthy eating, whereas the other part is becoming increasingly obese. Ulf Johansson, an academic researcher specialised in trend watching agreed with Fismen et al. (2015) that individuals who grew up in a family with a higher socio-economic status are eating healthier than the ones from a lower socio-economic class. The authors see eye to eye but indicate that although the socio-economic status might have an effect, it cannot be seen as the sole explanation for this phenomena. Nevertheless, Sweden's rise in obesity suggests that a large part of the population still follows an unhealthy diet. This supports the author's argument that there is a need for further education regarding healthy eating.

The two supermarket managers Ola Hollerup and Magnus Jönsson share the same opinion as Machin and Vignoles (2004) about the impact of social inequality on food consumption. Both agree that this disadvantage can be defeated by education. The authors also claim that education has proven to be vital when dismantling harmful behaviour patterns. Smoking is an example where educating people about the negative effects of cigarettes has caused this behaviour to significantly decline (Raji et al. 2014). Therefore, this thesis emphasises that providing education about healthy eating within schools will cultivate a health conscious generation and possibly diminish the impact of social inequality when it comes to food consumption.

Since school is mandatory in Sweden (Official website Sweden, 2016), this thesis indicates that promoting healthy products in schools would allow the supermarkets to reach children of all socio-economic classes. This early education would permit the supermarkets to shape the children's eating patterns. Literature notes that once those are established, they are difficult to change in later life (Kutze, Eikemo and Kamphuis, 2012). This is further supported by the ICA manager Ola Hollerup, who underlined that it takes time to change a generation's mindset. Therefore, Schwartz et al. (2011) emphasise that obtaining specific knowledge about healthy food will allow the children to develop a comprehensive understanding of what a balanced nutrition should contain and hence might help to reduce obesity on a larger scale.

The authors argue that the cooperation with schools as external stakeholders would not only educate the younger generation about maintaining a healthy diet, but it would also permit the supermarkets to shift their brand image towards a healthier one. This

way, supermarkets can become active players that contribute to the current health trends. Since consumers perceive health awareness to be a positive attribute, being part of this trend will improve the supermarkets reputation.

The ICA manager Ola Hollerup underlined that a collaboration with schools is done in the case of ICA, since the supermarket regularly invites classes to visit the store in order to teach them about healthy products. Further, a 'Paprika Club' was formed where children are able to receive more information about food. However, the authors argue that the collaboration with schools should be more elaborate. It is suggested that the respective supermarket should organise school events where it arranges fun activities around the subject of health. Around mid-day, the supermarket should hand out healthy lunch box with the supermarket's logo on them. These boxes could contain a healthy sandwich, a healthy muesli bar and a piece of fruit. These organised events will result in a positive association with the brand, not only in the minds of the children but also in the minds of the parents. Consequently, by reaching out to children, the respective supermarket might be able to influence the parent's buying behaviour and nudge them into purchasing these healthy products at their store.

Personal Selling

As discussed before, the recent developments within communication have allowed individuals to continuously interact and receive promotional messages through new media channels. This thesis argues that those new developments have to be understood and incorporated by supermarkets. However, ICA owner Stefan Billing supports the claim of the Nestlé study (2015) that the omnipresence of media has led the customer to be overwhelmed by a constant flood of images. Hill and O'Sullivan (1999) and Stefan Billing both agree that this causes the customer to block out a large amount of advertising and to carefully select which ones to remember. This owner of an ICA store in Lund indicated that personal contact is an essential counter-measurement in order to ensure that the customers actively notice the promotional messages. Therefore, the authors argue that personal selling is paramount when capturing the customer's attention for healthy products.

The ICA owner Stefan Billing further indicated that free trials, presented by a person in the store, allow customers to actively experience the products. He perceives personal selling as the most effective advertising tool in order to promote healthy products. This is supported by Heilman et al. (2004), stating that products advertised through free trials are more likely to make an impression on the customer than passive advertising campaigns. Whereas the latter only addresses the senses of hearing and vision, the former also incorporates the senses of scent and taste, offering a more complex experience for the customer. Evidently, this promotional strategy will remain more prominent in the customer's minds and hence might be able to convince them to buy the healthy product tasted.

As stated by Nicolova and Inman (2015), many people are unsure which exact products a healthy diet should contain. Therefore, the authors suggest to hire a dietitian who offers advice on healthy products within the store. As mentioned, unhealthy eating patterns are partly the result of media and industry misguidance and hence can best be resolved by direct personal consultation. The store owner of an ecological store, Anina Agesjö, further underlined that individuals visiting ecological shops do so partly because of the personal advice that they are given. Therefore, the authors suggest that supermarkets should adapt a similar concept in order to promote healthy products. This personal consultation will offer an additional service to the customers, which will most likely improve the supermarket's corporate image in the consumers' minds (Xie and Kahle, 2014).

4.2 Discussion

By using new sociological institutionalism as an overarching theory, the authors have managed to examine the development of health trends and the changes within communication from a new perspective. Whereas previous literature has analysed these developments individually, this thesis provides a comprehensive overview of how these phenomena interlink and how they affect the organisation practice of Swedish supermarkets. The authors' background in Social Sciences permits them to analyse organisational change from a less business-orientated angle and therefore this thesis provides a different approach on this subject.

The first research question *'How is the decline of traditional institutions influencing the development of health trends and the trends within communication?'* can be answered as followed. The decline of traditional institutions has caused society to become more individualised. This individualisation has resulted in an alteration of communicational practices, which has given rise to new forms of media. Here, the online community has managed to provide new structural forms through creating a sense of belonging. Further, individualisation has exacerbated the health trends since distinctive eating patterns allow to distinguish oneself from others and also present individuals with new forms of structures. Moreover, the health trends were exacerbated by the new forms of communication. Therefore, the authors claim that both phenomena stand in unilateral dependency to each other.

The second research question states *'How can supermarkets utilise the developments within communication in order to attract more customers?'*. The new trends within communication have become entrenched into every part of life. Therefore, it is crucial for supermarkets to understand this development in order to attract more customers. The authors perceive social media presence as vital in order to increase a company's brand image. It is argued that this will allow companies to attract more customers.

The authors emphasise that now, marketers can transform the previous pull approach of health trends into a push approach by effectively promoting healthy products. This leads to the third research question: *How can supermarkets best adopt current health*

trends in their marketing strategies?. This thesis claims that implementing healthy products would be profitable for supermarkets, since those products are often more expensive. Bearing the recent developments within communication in mind, the authors argue that a strong promotional strategy would be most useful in order to nudge the customer into buying healthy food products. Here, the data indicated that supermarkets should focus on using external stakeholders who are able to advertise the brand through their social media channels. Furthermore, the data perceived personal selling to be very effective, since customers can actively experience the product.

The authors argue that the conclusions drawn from the case study of Sweden allow for further generalisation regarding the two trends examined. It is claimed that current health trends and trends within communication are prevalent within most of the Western world. According to the authors, Sweden can be perceived as a pioneer country since those trends discussed are very predominant within Swedish society. It is claimed that other countries whose cultural and social values are alike will undergo a similar development.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Final Remarks

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how the decline of traditional institutions is influencing the development of health trends and the trends within communication in Swedish Society. It further aims to analyse how supermarkets can utilise the developments within communication in order to attract more customers. Moreover, the authors examine how supermarkets can best adopt current health trends in their marketing strategies.

Through using new sociological institutionalism, the authors have come to the conclusion that institutional change is heavily shaping the two phenomena mentioned above. The decline of traditional institutions has given rise to an individualisation of society, which is using new eating patterns as substitutes for traditional structures. Furthermore, the new forms of media exacerbate the health trends and have managed to create a new sense of belonging in a destructured society, through e.g. an online community.

Evidently, the free market economy has been affected by this process of individualisation. Therefore, the authors have examined in detail the effect of health trends and changes within communication on the institutional practice of supermarkets. Throughout the research process, it became apparent that supermarkets need to understand how to use the new trends within communication to their advantage. The authors have concluded that social media presence is vital when improving the brand image of a company. It is claimed that a positive brand image which is communicated offline and online will allow supermarkets to attract new customers.

This thesis gives suggestions for supermarkets on how to successfully adopt current health trends in their marketing strategies. The authors argue that a strong promotion strategy is necessary in order to advertise healthy products. Thereby, the authors perceived advertising through external stakeholders and personal selling to be most

effective. It is claimed that supermarkets should cooperate with schools and food bloggers as those external stakeholders can reach a large audience. This would allow supermarkets to shift their brand image towards a healthier one.

Although this thesis argues all along that online communication is crucial when promoting healthy products, it also became obvious that the omnipresence of social media has given rise to a counter trend. This trend emphasises the importance of personal contact. Therefore, the authors claim that personal selling is a vital tool for supermarkets in order to promote healthy products. It is emphasised that personal advice in supermarket stores is highly appreciated by consumers since individuals often do not know what a healthy diet contains.

Through the use of new sociological institutionalism, a theory which underlines the impact of society on institutional practice, this thesis offers a differentiated account on the development of health and communication trends. The authors provide a theoretical contribution since they examine how these phenomena interlink and have shaped the institutional practice of supermarkets.

5.2 Future Research

As mentioned in the methodology, this thesis' research process was restricted by time constraints. With more time at hand, future researchers could include quantitative data in terms of surveys in order to evaluate customer behaviour when it comes to choosing healthy products.

Health trends and trends within communication are phenomena that are constantly changing and hence are never fully completed. Therefore, a constant revision of existing research is necessary. Furthermore, this thesis is mainly concentrating on the two trends at hand. However, future research could evaluate additional questions such as how retail is adapting to current health trends and how political lobbyism is adding to this phenomenon. Additionally, this thesis did not cover in detail the impact of certificates that label healthy products. It would be interesting to examine how those certificates influence the consumer's decision-making process when shopping for healthy products. Moreover, it would be interesting to investigate how private labelling could be used by supermarkets in order to successfully launch their own healthy product line. Furthermore, future research could examine health trends in relation to other trends present in the food industry, e.g. the emerging e-commerce.

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Appendix I

Phase 1: Open Coding

INTERVIEW GROUP ONE

Statements from interviews with academic expert within the field of marketing, brand management, decision-making, trend watching (in total 6)

<p>Interview with Erik Wengström, expert in decision-making</p>	<p>Buying something that is unhealthy relates to self-control issues</p>	<p>Availability theory, e.g. cooking the same as last week because it is still „available“ in our head</p>	<p>The decision-making process depends on society, environment and psychology</p>	<p>The food choice depends on the subculture</p>	<p>The decision-making process is influenced by the assortment in the store</p>
<p>Interview with Sofia Ulver, expert in consumer culture theory</p>	<p>Media has a huge influence and might result in peer pressure, leading to conformity in consumption</p>	<p>Cultural differences between countries are also reflected in the consumption patterns</p>	<p>Institutional theory might be an adequate theory to use in order to explain the health trends</p>	<p>A stigmatisation that is later legitimised and accepted can cause these special demands to become a trend</p>	<p>In the beginning the market did not provide what was demanded, but when the gap was filled it became hip to eat glutenfree/lactosefree</p>
<p>Interview with Ulf Johansson, expert in marketing, trend watching and brand positioning</p>	<p>Human beings nowadays have a lack of structure and too many possibilities. Restricting themselves in their consumption pattern can add structure to their lives</p>	<p>People who are in a higher cultural class decide what happens on the market</p>	<p>There is a big divide in society since many people are getting increasingly fatter, e.g. Scotland, the most obese country in Europe, but others are very health conscious</p>	<p>Marketing: market-driven / market-driving, it is crucial to understand how the market works</p>	<p>Often, people do not know what they want and need. Therefore, companies want to convince them that they need certain products</p>

	There is a lack of market-driving companies in the grocery sector, only few food companies are innovative	The grocery industry does not want to take the risk to be more market-driving. Nevertheless, they do not need to be more innovative as they are making good money anyways	Customers need to be educated as they do not know what is healthy	Marketing needs to be conducted online and offline	
Interview with Peter Svensson, expert in Marketing theory	The discipline of marketing has changed: There has been a switch from stuff to non-stuff, from tangible goods to brand identity	Due to social media, it has become increasingly difficult to control a brand	Nowadays the consumers are shaping the brand image as everyone can be part of the discussion on social media platforms	Normally via TV, radio one message was transferred to the consumer, but with social media, transferring messages can go horribly wrong	Brand management is over optimistic and wishful thinking
	The generation doing marketing right now did not grow up with social media and that is visible in the way marketing is conducted	Maybe people should just stay away and should not interfere in the online discussion about brands in order to not create chaos in social media networks	Customers would always trust their neighbor more than big cooperations. Why should we trust companies who gain from us trusting them?	When subcultures are accepted as commercial they die	
Interview with Ulf Elg, expert in branding and marketing	Corporate branding has become more focussed. Therefore, a staff's awareness of brand values has to be present	Social media presence is really important, word of mouth as well	It is difficult to improve a brand image	The message transferred to the customer has to be supported by the impression of the stores	Having an adviser in the store could be helpful as personal contact is very important
Interview with Christian Koch, expert in brand management	The core values of a brand are very important - they have to be in line with everything the company is doing	It is difficult to connect the discounter image with the healthy image -> might lead to a mismatch between brand values and how costumers perceive the brand	There is a division in positioning: Companies can be brand oriented or market oriented. Supermarkets are mostly market-oriented	Market driving / market driving is also a very important distinction	Brand identity can be formed through promotion
	A good communication is crucial when it comes to improve the brand image	Promotion often only helps short-term	The positioning of a brand has to be in line with the core brand values	Collaboration with external and positively perceived stakeholders can influence the brand image positively (Co-branding)	Pushing brand identity does not necessarily mean an increase in sales, but can built in the long term a competitive advantage

Phase 1: Open Coding

INTERVIEW GROUP TWO

Interviews with several store managers of Swedish supermarkets and shops (in total 4)

<p>Interview with Magnus Jönsson, Store manager of Coop in Lund</p>	<p>Coop focusses on healthy products for almost 10 years. That was the time when the health trends emerged</p>	<p>Especially in Lund consumers want to buy healthy products, also in Malmö and Gothenburg the health trends is very dominant</p>	<p>The education of young people plays an important role</p>	<p>The people are getting fatter, but at the same time there is a demand for more healthy food</p>	<p>Often there is a lot of sugar in products that are promoted by the industry as healthy</p>
	<p>It is just a small part of the consumers who want to have healthy food. There is still a high demand for unhealthy products</p>	<p>Coop has a social responsibly and also an influence. However, they also need to offer unhealthy products in order to not loose their costumers</p>	<p>The current generation has so many possibilities as they can afford everything in the stores</p>	<p>Coop sells a lot of gluten- and lactose-free products, many children need those products because they have allergies</p>	
<p>Interview with Anina Agesjö, store manager of the organic store Tant Gurkan in Lund</p>	<p>In the beginning it was a small bunch of people who wanted to eat organic food, but in the last years there has been a higher demand for organic food</p>	<p>When the big supermarkets started to also offer organic food there was a decrease in sales in the smaller organic shops</p>	<p>Many people decided to not eat meat or other products anymore due to scandals, e.g. in mass production</p>	<p>The difference in buying healthy food in the organic shop instead of in the supermarket is that in the organic store people have a person to talk to and can get advice on products</p>	<p>People often come to Tant Gurkan in order to buy gluten-free products due to stomach problems. The customers want to have individual advice on certain products.</p>
<p>Tant Gurkan has also adopted the assortment towards vegan and vegetarian products</p>	<p>Often people are eating lactose-free, gluten-free or dairy-free products because they think it is healthier and cleaner (clean eating)</p>	<p>The awareness of eating healthy and doing sport has risen a lot in the last 10 years in Sweden</p>	<p>Eating healthy is not more expensive</p>	<p>There is a paradox, because people are getting more aware of their environment and their health but then they are still importing superfoods such as Chia see from South america</p>	

<p>Interview with Ola Hollerup, Store manager of ICA in Lund (center)</p>	<p>It takes time to change how a generation thinks. Therefore, it is important to educate kids in school about healthy food</p>	<p>Media influenced the whole health trend, as it discusses it more nowadays</p>	<p>Sale numbers of ecological products, lactose-free and gluten-free products were rising a lot in the last years at ICA. It is hard to say what is decreasing instead</p>	<p>ICA tries to implement those trends in the assortment, they see what stays and what leaves. The easy ones might stay, e.g. vegan. Therefore, they are now offering more ready-made products that are vegan</p>	<p>Even though there is the health trend, people are still getting fatter. This is due to a division in social class</p>
<p>Interview with Stefan Billing, Store manager of ICA in Lund (next to school)</p>	<p>How people eat depends on their education. How much sport do kids do in schools? What food is served in schools?</p>	<p>ICA does cooperations with schools: schools can book a time and come to the ICA store (year 2 and year 6). They tell them something about vegetables and fruits, further 12 and 13 year old kids can go to the "Paprica Club" where they learn something about food</p>	<p>Lund is very special as there are many young people, students, and many intellectuals. Those are people who like nature and are also more concerned with what they want to eat</p>	<p>When it comes to promotion, personal sells are the most efficient strategy.</p> <p>Personal sells promotion is better than advertisement</p> <p>Everyday people see about 3000 advertisements and they will not remember them. But when people come to the store and try a product they can taste and experience the product and will remember it</p>	<p>Word of mouth is very important: people recommend the stores</p>

	<p>The consumer choses their advertisement and they influence which advertisement they pay attention to, e.g. when someone wants to buy a car he/ she will remember much of the car advertisement</p>	<p>Advertisement for supermarkets should be very provocative or very different in order to achieve that people pay attention</p> <p>Supermarkets should forget about the product: they should talk about a story that is promoting the values of the supermarket</p>	<p>The health trends will stay in the future</p> <p>However, eating meat and eating french fries will still be there</p> <p>Many people want to eat healthy, but they also want to eat fries and crisps sometimes</p>	<p>ICA spends a lot of money on their best costumer. They have a loyalty card and send letters to the costumers with special offers /they are inviting them to concerts/ special events</p>	<p>You can do as much advertisement as you want, it does not matter. What matters is the store. People want to know their stores, otherwise they do not come back / are stressed when they are not finding the products they are looking for</p>
<p>Food consumption is a cultural thing, e.g. in New York they built apartment that do not have a kitchen, this would not be possible in Sweden</p>					

Appendix II

Phase 2: Axial Coding

INTERVIEW GROUP ONE AND TWO

The decision-making process	Buying something that is unhealthy relates to self-Control issues	Availability theory, e.g. cooking the same as last week because it is still „available“ in our head	The decision-making process depends on society, environment and psychology	The decision making process is influenced by the assortment in the store
Branding	Brand management is over optimistic and wishful thinking	Corporate branding has become more focussed. Therefore, a staff's awareness of brand values has to be present	The core values of a brand are very important - they have to be in line with everything the company is doing	It is difficult to connect the discounter image with the healthy image -> might lead to a mismatch between brand values and how costumers perceives the brand
	It is difficult to improve a brand image	There is a division in positioning: Companies can be brand oriented or market oriented. Supermarkets are mostly market-oriented	The positioning of a brand has to be in line with the core brand values	Collaboration with external and positively perceived stakeholders can influence the brand image positively (Co-branding)
	Pushing brand identity does not necessarily mean an increase in sales, but can built in the long term a competitive advantage			
Communication	A good communication is crucial when it comes to improve the brand image	Word of mouth is very important: people recommend the stores	Costumers would always trust their neighbor more than big cooperations. Why should we trust companies who gain from us trusting them?	

Marketing						
- Marketing development	The discipline of marketing has changed: There has been a switch from stuff to non-stuff, from tangible goods to brand identity					
- Online and Offline Marketing	Marketing needs to be conducted online and offline					
- Market-driven and market-driving	Marketing: market-driven / market-driving, it is crucial to understand how the market works	There is a lack of market-driving companies in the grocery sector, only few food companies are innovative	The grocery industry does not want to take the risk to be more market-driving. Nevertheless, they do not need to be more innovative as they are making good money anyways	Market driving / market driving is also a very important distinction		
- Push and Pull Strategy	Often people do not know what they want and need. Therefore, companies want to convince people that they need certain products					
	Push and Pull strategies play an important role within the health trend					
Promotion	Brand identity can be formed through promotion	Promotion often only helps short-term	Often there is a lot of sugar in products that are promoted as healthy by the industry			
Advertisement	You can do as much advertisement as you want, it does not matter. What matters is the store. People want to know their stores, Otherwise they do not come back / are stressed when they are not finding the products they are looking for	The consumer chooses their advertisement and they influence which advertisement they pay attention to, e.g. when someone wants to buy a car he/ she will remember much of the car advertisement	Advertisement for supermarkets should be very provocative or very different in order to achieve that people pay attention	Supermarkets should forget about the product: they should talk about a story that is promoting the values of the supermarket		

<p>Personal Selling</p>	<p>Having an adviser in the store could be helpful as personal contact is very important</p>	<p>When it comes to promotion, personal sells are the most efficient strategy.</p> <p>Personal sells promotion is better than advertisement</p> <p>Everyday people see about 3000 advertisements and they will not remember them. But when people come to the store and try a product they can taste and experience the product and will remember it</p>	
<p>The role of media</p>	<p>Media has a huge influence and might result in peer pressure, leading to conformity in consumption</p>	<p>Social media presence is really important, word of mouth as well</p>	<p>Media influenced the whole health trend, as it discusses it more nowadays</p>
<p>The role of media in relation to the brand image</p>	<p>Due to social media, it has become increasingly difficult to control a brand</p>	<p>Nowadays the consumers are shaping the brand image as everyone can be part of the discussion on social media platforms</p>	<p>Maybe people should just stay away and should not interfere in the online discussion about brands in order to not create chaos in social media networks</p>
<p>Health trends in general</p>	<p>The health trend is increasingly growing in Sweden</p>	<p>It is just a small part of the consumers who want to have healthy food. There is still a high demand for unhealthy products</p>	<p>The generation doing marketing right now did not grow up with social media and that is visible in the way marketing is conducted</p> <p>Normally via TV, radio one message was transferred to the consumer, but with social media, transferring messages can go horribly wrong</p> <p>A stigmatisation that is later legitimised and accepted can cause these special demands to become a trend</p>
	<p>The health trends will stay in the future</p> <p>However, eating meat and eating french fries will still be there</p> <p>Many people want to eat healthy, but they also want to eat fries and crisps sometimes</p>	<p>The people are getting fatter, but at the same time there is a demand for more healthy food</p>	<p>Often people are eating lactose-free, gluten-free or dairy-free products because they think it is healthier and cleaner (clean eating)</p> <p>Eating healthy is not more expensive</p>

	<p>There is a paradox, because people are getting more aware of their environment and their health but then they are still importing superfoods such as Chia see from South America</p>	<p>Many people decided to not eat meat or other products anymore due to scandals, e.g. in mass production</p>	<p>In the beginning it was a small bunch of people who wanted to eat organic food, but in the last years there has been a higher demand for organic food</p>	<p>The awareness of eating healthy and doing sport has risen a lot in the last 10 years in Sweden</p>
Costumers of health products in Lund	<p>Especially in Lund consumers want to buy healthy products, also in Malmö and Gothenburg the health trends is very dominant</p>	<p>Lund is very special as there are many young people, students, and many intellectuals. Those are people who like nature and are also more concerned with what they want to eat</p>		
Social inequality	<p>The health trends are a typical social class phenomena</p>	<p>People who are in a higher cultural class decide what happens on the market</p>	<p>There is a divide in society since many people are getting increasingly fatter, e.g. Scotland, the most obese country in Europe, but others are very health conscious</p>	<p>Social class matters, determines what we eat</p>
Education	<p>Even though there is the health trend, people are still getting fatter. This is due to a division in social class</p> <p>Costumers need to be educated as they do not know what is healthy</p>	<p>People who enjoyed a good education eat healthier</p>	<p>The education of young people plays an important role</p>	<p>How people eat depends on their education. How much sport do kids do in schools? What food is served in schools?</p>
Institutional theory	<p>It takes time to change how a generation thinks. Therefore, it is important to educate kids in school about healthy food</p> <p>Institutional theory might be an adequate theory to use in order to explain the health trends</p>	<p>Human beings nowadays have a lack of structure and too many possibilities. Restricting themselves in their consumption pattern can add structure to their lives</p>		
Subcultures	<p>The food choice depends on the subculture</p>	<p>When subcultures are accepted as commercial they die</p>		

The role of culture	Cultural differences between countries are also reflected in the consumption patterns	Food consumption is a cultural thing, e.g. in New York they built apartment that do not have a kitchen, this would not be possible in Sweden	
Supermarkets in Sweden- general information	Coop focusses on healthy products for almost 10 years. That was the time when the health trends emerged.	Coop has a social responsibly and also an influence. However, they also need to offer unhealthy products in order to not loose their costumers	The current generation has so many possibilities as they can afford everything in the stores Coop sells a lot of gluten- and lactose-free products, many children need those products because they have allergies
	When the big supermarkets started to also offer organic food there was a decrease in sales in the smaller organic shops	Tant Gurkan has also adopted the assortment towards vegan and vegetarian products	ICA spends a lot of money on their best costumer. They have a loyalty card and send letters to the costumers with special offers / they are inviting them to concerts/ special events
	ICA does cooperations with schools: schools can book a time and come to the ICA store (year 2 and year 6). They tell them something about vegetables and fruits, further 12 and 13 year old kids can go to the "Paprica Club" where they learn something about food	Sale numbers of ecological products, lactose-free and gluten-free products were rising a lot in the last years at ICA. It is hard to say what is decreasing instead	ICA is selling more healthy products (rise started in the last 10 years). There has been an increase in ecological food and meat consumption goes down in the last years. Nowadays, they offer more vegetarian options - veganism is also a big trend ICA tries to implement those trends in the assortment, they see what stays and what leaves. The easy ones might stay , e.g. vegan. Therefore, they are now offering more ready-made products that are vegan
	The difference in buying healthy food in the organic shop instead of in the supermarket is that in the organic store people have a person to talk to and can get advice on products		People often come to Tant Gurkan in order to buy gluten-free products due to stomach problems. The costumers want to have individual advice on certain products.

Appendix III

Phase 3: Selective coding (Diagrams)

