"Where are the chopsticks!?"

A study regarding the value of authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience

Authors:

Nils Hjalmarsson, Niklas Sjölund, Jonatan Sölve

Master of Science in Business and Economics and
Master of Science in Business and Economics, specialization Language and Culture
Spring 2016

Lund University
School of Economics and Management

Abstract

Title: **"**Where are the chopsticks!?**"**

Seminar date: 25th of May 2016

Course: FEKN90: Degree project for Master of Science in Business and Economics, Business management, Master level, 30 ECTS.

Authors: Nils Hjalmarsson, Niklas Sjölund, Jonatan Sölve

Advisor: Annette Cerne

Keywords: Authenticity, adaptation, service marketing, value creation, Chinese culture, consumer insight

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to explore how authenticity is perceived and valued by consumers in a decontextualized exotic restaurant setting.

Theoretical Perspectives: This thesis is built upon a theoretical framework created from previous research within the fields of service marketing, value creation, and authenticity.

Methodology: The thesis takes an interpretive approach to studying a socially constructed reality.

Empirical foundation: The conclusion of the thesis is built upon findings from three separate studies, focusing on Chinese restaurants in Sweden, a netnographic study, semi-structured interviews with professionals and an opinion leader, and ethnographic interviews with consumers.

Conclusion: The authors found that authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience is viewed differently depending on if the consumer has a reference point with the original culture or not. Consumers who do not have such a reference point tend to perceive authenticity primarily through physical evidence and the product of the exotic restaurant experience. If these consumers assume that their non-original reference point is authentic, and then perceive an experience to be authentic, they tend to primarily experience functional value. Consumers with a reference point in the original tend to focus on comparing the product to the one experienced in the original setting. They also tend to put emphasis on processes directly relating to the product. When they perceive an experience as authentic they tend to experience emotional value. After they have deemed an experience to be authentic they also tend to search for epistemic value in the experience.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

T A B L E   O F   C O N T E N T

LIST OF FIGURES

C H A P T E R 1
I N T R O D U C T I O N

1.1 Background

During the past century the consumption of goods and services related to foreign cultures has drastically increased. Due to advancements in infrastructure, transport, information technology, as well as an increased individual wealth and numerous other factors, an ever rising number of people are able to consume that which would have been limited to a certain geographic region or culture no more than a century ago. As this consumption has risen, so has the process of exoticization. Exoticism arises when a custom, tradition or behavior is taken from one context and put into another context (Hirose & Kei-Ho Pih, 2011). Exotic goods and services are by their very nature seen as out of place, since they do no longer fit the context of their current market. This process of removing a certain aspect of a culture from its context and presenting it in a context where it does not naturally fit in can be called decontextualization (Hirose & Kei-Ho Pih, 2011). This decontextualization of goods and services is the reason that terms such as "Swiss watches", "Belgian chocolate", "Italian pasta" and "Swedish meatballs" exist. When decontextualized the origin of these goods become a focal point in understanding them, while when these goods are found within their cultural context they are simply called watches, chocolate, pasta and meatballs.

When considering culturally charged goods and services feelings of exotism often go hand in hand with an evaluation of authenticity. Authenticity is for the consumer a form of experienced "genuineness" or "realness" (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). In this context authenticity becomes to which degree an exotic service or good is perceived as being decontextualized from the original context without having gone through any adaptations to the current context. Authentic cultural experiences have proven to provide value for some consumers, for example through the works of Dean MacCannell (1973) and his description of the authenticity-seeking tourist.

In management literature there are countless discussions on how much you should adapt your product when exporting it and presenting it in a new context. Adaptation in this context is the process of changing the good or service to fit a new setting or market better (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014). In the process, the subject can lose some of its originality and cultural aspects, in order to create a higher demand in the new environment. The discussion about

adapting goods is more simplistic than the discussion about adapting services, since making no adjustments when exporting goods would result in an unadapted, or authentic, product. On the contrary, services are by their very nature a combination of the consumer's and company's interaction with each other and the consumers are a part of creating the experience themselves. They are thereby co-creators of the value in the service marketing setting (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2007). The service is therefore affected by whom the customer is and also the interaction between staff and customer. When studying authenticity in the context of exotic services it is therefore important to see to whom the consumer is and what relation he/she has to the exotic setting. Previous experiences, personal interactions, preconceived notions, previous experiences of the culture from which the exoticism in a service derives are all factors that therefore may affect how the service is performed and the value that the consumer can derive from an authentic service (Vargo & Lusch, 2007).

This thesis aims to explore this contradiction between authenticity and adaptation in culturally charged consumption. The thesis focuses on the consumption of services due to it being a relatively unexplored field of research, as well as the intricate complexity of understanding how an authentic service is perceived by consumers. To explore the concept of authenticity in an exotic service setting the authors chose to look at the restaurant industry as a field of study, due to the richness of exotic restaurants that have different cultural contexts from which they have been decontextualized. To narrow the scope the authors decided to explore Chinese restaurants in a Swedish context. The decision to explore Chinese restaurants derived from the authors' interest and knowledge of Chinese culture as well as the fact that Chinese restaurants had been established in Sweden for several decennia (Kinesiska Muren, 2016) and therefore expected to have restaurants on a full spectrum of authenticity. The Chinese restaurant industry was also especially relevant to explore due to its size, both in Sweden and internationally. In fact, the number of Chinese restaurants in the US exceeded 41.000 in 2007 (Life in the USA, 2010). Even though it is only one type of exotic restaurant among many it still outnumbered the number of McDonald's locations in the US (Life in the USA, 2010).

One of the purposes of a restaurant is serving food to consumers. Food is something that is constantly in the spotlight with new trends emerging every day from different corners of the world. Every part of the world has their own food culture and a heritage that they contribute with, and throughout time cultures have created food that is connected to their culture and

geographical location. Different food cultures have developed because of geographically available resources, history, and social factors, among other things. To seek cultural experiences in food and exploring food cultures from the world has become easy in any western society today. There are lots of ways to experience food from different cultures, but to experience it without having any prior knowledge on how to create culturally correct food yourself is easiest done in restaurants. The internationalization of cultural restaurants has made it possible to experience food from cultures, distant from the current market. Heldke (2003, p. 3) refers to consumers who are actively seeking exotic food as "food adventurers". Food adventurers are seeking exotic food in the pursuit of something strange with the motivation to experience a different culture and context than what they are currently in.

In a restaurant setting, there are many contributing attributes, which together create the experience for the consumer. Aspects such as environment, food and interaction with the staff are three examples of these attributes (Booms & Bitner, 1981). The better these different attributes are perceived by the customer, the more likely it is that the restaurant experience is valued highly. In the value creation of a restaurant experience, all of these different attributes have a role individually but also in the aspect of a more holistic value context. This thesis proposes that one of the considerations that consumers make when evaluating an exotic restaurant is the one of authenticity. In the restaurant industry, there is for every type of exotic restaurant a spectrum of more or less adapted restaurants and authentic restaurants. All over the spectrum exotic restaurants are popular, both the types at the highly authentic part of the spectrum and the ones that are more locally adapted. Jang and Liu (2009) state key examples of the two ends of this authenticity spectrum in exotic restaurants the US. Chinese food chain P.F Chang's or Chang's China Bistro as the less authentic and more adapted types in comparison to an individually family owned Chinese restaurant. Since the market of both services is so vast, it proposes a question of how, and if, authenticity is important in an exotic restaurant setting. Mills (2000) states that there might be more than just authentic food that is needed to convince a customer and that attributes such as service and atmosphere might also have a direct impact on the evaluation.

1.2 Problem

Authenticity is today used as an attribute to create value for customers in an exotic restaurant service setting (Bell & Meiselman, 1994; Lu & Fine, 1995). However, the reason why and

how value is experienced by consumers that experience authenticity in an exotic restaurant service is still a rather unexplored field. Similarly, it has been shown that there are consumers actively pursuing an authentic experience through exotic restaurants (Lu & Fine, 1995: Hirose & Kei-Ho Pih, 2011). However what these consumers seek to experience by pursuing authenticity is not a well-researched topic. Previous studies on authenticity in a restaurant setting have also neglected to explore how authenticity is perceived by consumers with differing experience with the underlying culture. Exploring how specific attributes of a restaurant experience affect different types of value has primarily been done in the non-exotic restaurant industry, and as such with little to no regard for authenticity.

This thesis aims to rectify these shortcomings in the current state of research. This was done by focusing on answering the two questions:
- How different type of consumers perceive authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience.
- How their perceived authenticity affects the value in the exotic restaurant experience.

By answering these questions this thesis aims to provide a more holistic picture of how consumers experience authenticity in an exotic restaurant, the effect of authenticity on value creation in the exotic restaurant industry.

1.3 Purpose

By viewing the restaurant experience as a co-creation between restaurant and consumer this thesis aims to explore how authenticity is created in an exotic restaurant setting. With a basis in the consumer, the purpose of this thesis is also to create an understanding how authenticity is experienced and what type value the consumers gain from an authentic experience. Finally, thesis also aims to create an understanding of the relevance of authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience for the consumers. This was accomplished by studying consumers in a Chinese restaurant setting in order to facilitate an analysis and discussion of the research subject.

With this in focus, the authors wanted to learn more and contribute to the understanding of consumer's ideas of value creation through the use of exotic cultures. Therefore, this study gives a greater understanding of consumers' ideas of value creation and the implication authenticity have on the value they experience. For practitioners the information is valuable

since it can be of benefit for businesses in the service marketing industry, especially the ones that focus on an exotic and cultural experiences that are decontextualized.

1.4 Delimitations

The study and theoretical framework includes three key aspects: authenticity, the restaurant experience and value creation, hence excluding other applicable themes. In these three areas, established theory and literature will be used to form the basis of the theoretical framework. Limiting the theoretical framework to these three aspects affects the perspective of the study, but gives a more focused and rich analysis. More perspectives could have been used in the different concepts, but would then have lowered value of the findings, in terms of practical applicability and theoretical contribution to specific theoretical fields. Example of theoretical aspects that the study could have adopted are brand image and customer loyalty. While these could be interesting areas to develop when researching authenticity, they are not accounted for in this thesis. Keeping to the three areas created a more focused research and by extension a grander understanding of how the three are connected.

C H A P T E R   2
L I T T E R A T U R E   R E V I E W

2.1 Authenticity

2.1.1 Definition and approaches of authenticity

There are a two generally accepted, unified approaches to authenticity, namely the objectivist approach and the constructivist approach (Jang, Liu & Namkung, 2011). The objectivist approach argues that authenticity derives from the originality of an object and that authenticity can be defined based on objective criteria. Authenticity is therefore based on an original version of something and to what degree an object or experience resembles the original. According to this approach an authentic ethnic restaurant would be a restaurant where the food had been prepared and served in a traditional way without being adapted to local preferences (Lu & Fine, 1995). The constructivist approach however, denies that there are any objective criteria by which authenticity can be measured, and instead claims that authenticity depends on subjective ideas regarding what individuals perceive as authentic. In line with the constructivist approach, authenticity is based on the context and perspectives of observers and therefore becomes subject to the eye of the beholder (Taylor 1991; Cohen 1988). This thesis takes a constructivist approach to authenticity, putting the focus of the research on how authenticity is perceived by the consumers. This also adheres to the constructivist approach to social entities that is used throughout the thesis (see "3.1 Scientific Approach").

Baudrillard (1994) discusses how we are often presented with an objectively inauthentic, copied version of something, what is referred to as a simulacra, without actually knowing what the original is like. This makes the simulacra a reference point for what is authentic and the beholder's concept of authenticity becomes based on their interaction with the simulacra rather than the original. In accordance with the constructivist approach to authenticity the simulacra becomes authentic if it is interpreted as such, even though it may be quite inauthentic from an objectivistic point of view (Baudrillard, 1994; Cohen 1988).

Marketers are encouraged to be locally responsive and adapt offers to foreign markets (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014). This includes the adaptation of ethnic restaurants serving a western clientele. In the case of authenticity this becomes a dilemma since adaptation directly contradicts the preservation of the authentic experience (Lu & Fine, 1995; Lego, Wodo, McFee & Solomon, 2002). In a case where subjects have only ever been presented with a simulacra

representing a cultural experience, the objectively authentic experience is not necessarily perceived as more authentic than the simulacra. However when observers have experienced the cultural experience firsthand in its original form, the simulacra becomes seemingly inauthentic and their perceived authenticity becomes much closer to the objectively authentic version (Baudrillard, 1994).

2.1.2 Authenticity and value

It is argued that globalization, standardization and mass production are factors that have in a short period of time taken authenticity out of our lives by detaching the consumer from the production and making regional identities that used to be very distinct, more fluent, causing traditional sources of self-identity to be lost (Arnould & Price, 2000). Many researchers further claim that the search for authenticity is rooted in a desire to escape from the commercialization and the mass consumption society (Beverland, 2006; Holt, 2002; Botterill, 2007) Furthermore it is argued that people consume products that they perceive as authentic representations of certain things to regain this self-image, thereby creating consumers' needs to consume authentic products (Arnould & Price, 2000). This makes authenticity an increasing source of value to consumers in a post-modern economy (Grayson & Martinec, 2004: Holt, 2002)

In the case of restaurants authenticity is generally not important when local cuisine is concerned, but becomes a significant factor when this cuisine is taken out of its original cultural environment (Hirose & Kei-Ho Pih, 2011). The search for authenticity signifies that there is some sort of doubt regarding the pureness of the service or experience at hand (Trilling, 1972). Culturally themed restaurants tend to market themselves as representative of a certain culture, implying that ethnic restaurant owners believe that perceived cultural authenticity carries value. A study by Bell and Meiselman (1994) indicates that there is truth to this assumption, showing that restaurants can increase the sale of foods associated with an ethnicity by simply decorating the restaurant to match its ethnical theme. Authenticity has been shown to be sought after when experiencing new cultures (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). Tourism research provides clear indications that high perceived authenticity can bring value to foreign cultural experiences. Tourists are often willing to give up certain comforts and even endure hardship in order to increase their perceived authenticity when experiencing a new culture (Phipps, 1999).

2.1.3 Staged authenticity

The search for genuine yet fascinating and positive experiences, creates an incentive for marketers to try to make an experience come off as more appealing than it actually is while still having customers believe that it is authentic. Staging experiences for this purpose is referred to as staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973).

Goffman (1972) makes a distinction between what he refers to as the front and back regions in a public setting. Because of social pressure and norms in society we are forced to put on an act whenever we are observed by others. The act we put on when being observed is what Goffman (1972) refers to as the front region. As opposed to the front region, the back region is where we can relax and are free from the pressures of being observed and judged, this is also where we prepare ourselves to put on the best possible performance for the front region. It is in this backstage where we see people as they really are. The front and back regions can be compared to the front stage and the backstage in a theatrical performance, where the performer gives their best possible performance to the audience in the front stage and hides props and prepares the performance in the backstage (Goffman, 1972).

MacCannell (1973) develops this further and adapts Goffman's theory and applies it to a cultural touristic setting. In terms of cultural experiences, the front region represents what is shown to the visitors, while the back region includes everything that is going on when no one is looking. MacCannell (1973) argues that tourists travel to seek authentic cultural experiences. However since the plain truth is not always the most satisfying image to visitors, an attempt is made to present an adapted view of reality that will appeal more to visitors, yet still comes off as authentic. This is referred to as staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973). Staged authenticity is divided into six stages, where stage one is a front region (Goffman, 1972). Stage two is a front region that has been dressed up, to partially symbolize the back region, e.g. a fish net used to decorate a seafood restaurant. Stage three is a front region that is staged in order to come off as a back region. Stage four is a back region that has been opened up to front region visitors, in this case the back region is partly displayed to give visitors a taste of authenticity while hiding certain things. Stage five is an open back region that has been tidied up in order to be presentable to visitors. Finally stage six is Goffman's back region, uncensored just as it is when nobody from the front region is observing it (MacCannell, 1973). In terms of staged authenticity in ethnic restaurants, Lu and Fine (1995, p. 541) found that res-

taurant owners often would opt for an "illusion of authenticity" rather than aspiring for a completely authentic experience.

2.1.4 Authenticity through ethnic food experience

Though seeking authenticity when experiencing foreign cultures is a genuine concern for certain people, the perception of what authenticity actually is, is not always clear, it depends on the observer's experience with the culture and their relation with either the simulacra or original version (Baudrillard, 1994). In the case of ethnic restaurants in western countries authenticity is based on consumers' relations to the ethnic culture, dining and cuisine. This is true even if these consumers have only experienced said culture through a simulacra, in this case a western based ethnic restaurant (Lego et al., 2002; Lu & Fine, 1995).

A study by Ebster and Guist (2004) indicates that there is a difference in the perception of authenticity in ethnic-themed restaurants between consumers with experience and without experience of the underlying culture. While consumers with experience of the underlying culture could more easily identify authentic elements they also considered the authenticity of the ethnic-themed restaurant of less importance. This indicates that factors affecting experienced authenticity may vary for those with high respectively low experience of the culture in question.

2.2 Service marketing

2.2.1 What is service marketing?

The area of marketing products and services has long been studied and has resulted in theories and models for how a marketing concept is built. The product marketing mix (Kotler, 1976) has been found to include the four parts necessary in relation to product marketing efforts. The four parts of the product marketing mix is famous amongst marketing scholars as the 4P, *Product*, *Price*, *Place* and *Promotion* (Kotler, 1976). However, for a service marketing purpose, there is a lack of accuracy in only tending to those four aspects. Since, in the marketing process of a service there are more factors in play. Similar to the traditional marketing mix concept for products built by Kotler (1976), there are three more attributes that need to be tended to regarding services (Booms & Bitner, 1981). The three aspects that complement the lack of Kotler's (1976) model has in services are: *Participants*, *Physical evidence* and *Process* (Booms & Bitner, 1981), creating 7P altogether. The three added once are

needed to get the model fit for service marketing and are then all together parts that make up a service (Booms & Bitner, 1981).

2.2.2 Attributes in the service experience

As discussed above, there are seven contributing attributes in the service marketing mix. These are discussed in further detail and elaborated upon below. Figure 2.1 below summarizes the service marketing mix (Booms & Bitner, 1981) and its major practical implications in a service setting.

Participants		Physical Evidence		Process	
Personnel		Environment		- Course of action	
- Education		- Furniture		- Procedures	
- Engagement		- Decor		- Mechanical	
- Initiative		- Coloring		- The personnel's interaction	
- Performance		- Planning		- Consumer's participant	
- Relationship to other personnel		- Loudness		- Consumer management	
- Attitude		- Tools		- Activity flow	
Customer					
- Behavior					
- Engagement					
Product	**Price**		**Place**	**Promotion**	
- Quality	- Price level		- Geographical location	- Ads	
- Brand	- Discounts		- Availability	- Personal sales	
- Warranty	- Payment conditions		- Distribution channels	- Sales actions	
- Knowledge	- The consumer price awareness			- Publicity	
- Price	- The relationship between the price and the perceived service quality			- Personnel	
- Personnel				- Environment	
- Environment					
- The delivered service					

Figure 2.1: Service marketing mix

Physical evidence

Physical evidence in a restaurant setting refers to that which is a man-made physical setting and environment, which has been created by the restaurateurs (Ryu & Jang, 2007). The phys-

ical setting has been seen to have significant effect on the service perception and value of the service according to Chang and Shin (2004). Just like the customer has different experiences in a retail store, they will be affected by the environment in all services. How the customer experiences and perceives the environment has not only been connected to their perceived value, but also studied to have impact on their behavior (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Consumers have been shown to have two kinds of behavioral changes after evaluating the physical evidence of an environment, avoidance and approach. The first response is when the environment is unfavorable to the customer and linked to a negative behavior, where the latter is a favorable response linked to positive behaviors (Ryu & Han 2010; Ryu & Jang, 2007). When a customer enters a restaurant they immediately start to judge and evaluate the environment of the restaurant, both consciously and subconsciously (Ryu & Zhong, 2012). Ryu and Zhong (2012) state that if the customer perceives the quality of the environment as favorable, they are more likely to trust in the restaurant's service, food etc. Visa versa, if the environment is perceived as unfavorable. It has also been confirmed by using Mehrabian and Russel's (1974) model that the physical environment will have an influence on human behavior, because of emotional responses to the environment (Jang & Namkung, 2009). Jang, Liu and Namkung's (2011) studies in the area of Chinese ethnicity showed that environmental attributes such as Chinese furnishing, Chinese menu presentation and Chinese music significantly influence consumers' positive emotions during the experience. But the same attributes also lead to a more negative experience if these attributes were not experienced in a positive way.

Participants

Nguyen and LeBlanc (2002) state that participants and physical environment are the two major elements in the value perception of the consumer. One side of the participants, the personnel, therefore has a lot of influence on how the service is perceived by the customer and the outcome of the service. The personnel in a service setting are often the first part of the service that the customer encounters and gets influenced by, often until the delivery of the service is complete (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2002). The service quality and value can therefore vary depending on the skills of the personnel (Glynn & Barns, 1995). The ability of the personnel to understand consumers' requests, wants and expectations can therefore be of importance to secure a high perceived consumer value.

16

Place

Place is important in services since services cannot, unlike products, be shipped or sent to a customer (Booms & Bitner, 1981). It is therefore more bound to a location and more appropriate to have at easy reach for consumers. Different industries within service marketing will have different locations and therefore the value that the consumers experience from the place might change (Booms & Bitner, 1981). For example, eating at a restaurant or ordering take out will have a lot of similarities, but the place where the service is consumed will differ and thereby affect the consumer's experience.

Promotion

Between services and products the promotion part of the marketing mix is similar in some ways. However, the fact that what the consumer experiences in a service varies a lot makes it more difficult to promote a service in the same sense. It can therefore be difficult to promote the value in a service offering to a customer, compared to a product offering (Booms & Bitner, 1981). What can be done is to for example promote the service with sales personnel, or in a restaurant setting use the food (that is defined as the product in the service) to promote the restaurant experience. Therefore, promotion as a part of the marketing mix can be utilized to a higher degree by managers after the consumer arrives at the place for the service, for example through the use of the *Physical environment, Place, Personnel* and *Product* (Booms & Bitner, 1981).

Price

Price in service marketing mix is not only a way to manipulate demand, but also an indicator for the consumer of what quality he/she can expect from a service (Booms & Bitner, 1981). It is therefore an important aspect to thread with carefully since it affects the consumer's expectations of the service before they have experienced it (Booms & Bitner, 1981). For managers it is therefore important to know whom the customer is, in order to match the price to their idea of perceived quality.

Product

It is easier for a company to display a product offering before purchase in comparison to a service offering (Booms & Bitner, 1981). This makes the marketing efforts for services more strained. However, service offerings often come with a product bundled as a part of the service or as an additional purchase available to the consumer. Functions such as visible quali-

ties and accessories are therefore product dimensions of a service setting (Booms & Bitner, 1981). In the service marketing mix the *Product* aspect is tightly connected with some of the other attribute. The attribute *Participants* encompasses the consumer's interaction with the product, *Physical evidence* includes the physical setting of the product and the *Process* incorporates how the product is created. The *Product* attribute in service marketing is therefore limited to the core of the service that can be perceived as a product.

Process

Process in service marketing is described as the creation of the service, where the consumer can also be a participant (Booms & Bitner, 1981). Therefore the process is in some regards an interaction between participants and service provider, as they will create the value of the service experience together for the customer (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2007). For a consumer it is the process that creates the timeframe for the service (Booms & Bitner, 1981), which relates to the perceived quality of the service experience.

2.2.3 Other terms of importance in the exotic service setting

Cultural implications

Culture can be defined as a system of traditions and values, the places where members practice these, and their belief of what is and is not desirable (Lillis & Guang Tian, 2010). This culture acts as a guideline for everyday behavior and therefore distinguishes its members from other cultures (Hofstede, 1984). In relation to the restaurant industry, cultural differences are what create exoticism and what becomes interesting for a non-cultural member to experience. Bennis, Berlew, Schein and Steel (1973) suggest that learning about another culture makes it possible to more easily enjoy the cultural experience. They infer that the more one learns about culture, the more one understands, and therefore enjoys. These cultural factors that are in play are therefore of great importance for the experience. Guang Tian and Hong Wang (2010) conclude that in an ethnic restaurant setting cultural factors play an important role when it comes to consuming food, as well as the overall satisfaction of the experience.

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is important in service marketing since it is the core of a customer's positive experience. In service marketing the objective is to maximize customer satisfaction

as much as possible (Rust, Lemon, Zeithaml, 2004). This is not always easy to do when the environment and the customers have different cultural backgrounds. Customer satisfaction therefore becomes a more complex area in a cross-cultural setting.

Disconfirmation between the expected and perceived service

The theory of disconfirmation in service management is examined through customer satisfaction (Oh, 1999). Disconfirmation is the outcome from the difference and mismatch in expected and perceived outcome of a product or service (Oliver, 1980). So in a restaurant setting, the disconfirmation refers to the discrepancy between the expected experience and the actual experience the consumer receives. The disconfirmation theory has three outcomes. The perceived experience is better than the expected one which then results in a positive disconfirmation. A negative one occurs when the perceived experience fails to meet the expectations of the customer (Oliver, 1980). The third outcome is if the perceived service matches the expected service, resulting in a zero disconfirmation outcome (Oliver, 1980).

2.3 Value

2.3.1 Value in a service marketing context

While there is no academic consensus on what constitutes value, how it is created or how it can be captured, a common concept that is applied to the theory of value in a service setting is the service dominant logic of marketing. The service dominant logic views a service as the basis for all exchange (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). This perspective views all consumption as a consumption of services, meaning that goods are only a means of delivering service through their use. In a restaurant setting, this has the practical implication that attributes such as environment or food would in fact also be perceived as services, despite their tangible nature. In this perspective, value for the consumer is created through a complex series of exchanges where both parts are co-creators of the value perceived by the consumer (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2007). Following this logic an enterprise presents its resources and a value proposition, through interaction the resources of the company can then be applied and value can be both be *created* and be *captured* by the consumer. A distinction is made between the two because of the different processes of creating value and capturing it (Lepak, Smith & Taylor, 2007). Value *creation* can be viewed as a process of increasing the perceived value, while value *capturing* can be viewed as the process of converting created value into monetary value (Lepak, Smith & Taylor, 2007). This means that it is not necessarily the

same party who creates the value that captures said value. The value in the service setting is co-created, where the consumer is a participant in both the value creation and capturing and the service provider only in the value creation. The perceived value of the service will therefore differ between consumers (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2007).

2.3.2 Value dimensions

Value is often measured in terms of financial amount or quality (Mathwick, Naresh, & Rigdon, 2001). However, value can also be measured with regards to specific types of value that the consumer experiences, depending on the context they are in and in what way the value is beneficial to the subject. According to Sinha and DeSarbo (1998) value is constructed by perceptions of quality, quantity, price, benefits and sacrifices. A concept of different kinds of value was designed by Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991) to conceptualize value. From their research they propose five different perceptions of value: Functional-, Social-, Emotional-, Epistemic- and Conditional Value. These are described and elaborated upon in the appropriate subheading below.

Functional Value

The functional value refers to the ability the performance of the product or service to fulfill the function it was created to do, and thereby relates to the perceived economic utility and performance from a consumer perspective (Chen, P. L. Chang, & H. S. Chang, 2005). The functional value is therefore a consideration of price, durability and reliability in the offering (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). The expectations that consumers have of these attributes are affected by past experiences as well as environmental aspects. For example, by observing the environment of a restaurant the customers are more or less likely to expect high and low price, food quality and service (Andaleeb & Conway, 2006). Physical environment and other attributes that affect the perception of price, reliability and durability of an offering can therefore be a significant determinant of consumer's perception of the functional value (Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal & Voss, 2002).

Social Value

Social value is the ability of an offering to affect a person's self-concept (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). By the offerings association to a particular culture, demographic or social group, and depending on its connection to the consumer, the social value of the offering will

shift. It can in that sense be referred to as a type of symbolic value. Social value can be seen as the value offerings ability to resonate with the consumer, and thereby affect the consumer's own identity and social status (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). Social value is thereby a subjective symbol of social status rather than a tangible offering (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). .

Emotional Value

The emotional value is defined as an offering's ability to trigger emotional responses, change the emotional status, or arouse the consumer. Attributes in a service setting such as scent, music and interaction with personnel have been found to have implications on emotional value, because of the awakening of emotions and consumer's stance to the experience (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2002).

Epistemic Value

Epistemic value is created when an offering increases the consumer's knowledge. It can be seen as the offerings ability to create and arouse curiosity, provide novelty and satisfy a desire for knowledge in the consumer (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). It is a value that is especially important when it comes to consumers experiencing new offerings and can also trigger a desire because of the curiosity it evokes (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). Since it is an attribute that is connected to new experiences and thereby knowledge, it affects the feeling of personal growth and self-development in a consumer (Kahn, 1995).

Conditional Value

This value refers to the perceived utility acquired by an alternative in situations where the consumer is confronted with a choice between actions. Conditional value is derived from a temporary functional and social value and is only valuable under a limited period of time (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). Conditional value is for example what makes an umbrella more valuable on a rainy day than on a sunny day.

2.4 Theoretical summary

For references to theoretical concepts further in the study, a framework has been developed that will be used as a base for the collection of empirical data, the analysis of said data and thereby also contribute to the findings and conclusion. The framework will touch upon the

base concepts of authenticity, service marketing and values. A summary of the main concepts from the theoretical framework is illustrated in figure 2.2 below.

Authenticity	Service Marketing	Value
Adaptation (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014: Lu & Fine, 1995)	Service marketing mix (Booms & Bitner, 1981) - Physical environment - Personnel	Value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2007) - Value co-creation
Staged authenticity, six stages (MacCannell, 1973)	- Place - Promotion - Price	Value dimensions (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991)
Simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994)	- Product - Process	- Functional value - Social value
		- Emotional value
	Disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980)	- Epistemic value - Conditional value

Figure 2.2: Theoretical framework summary

C H A P T E R 3
M E T H O D

3.1 Scientific Approach

This thesis closely follows a constructivist approach to social entities. A constructivist approach makes the assumption that social entities are constructed and continuously revisioned by social actors in a social setting. Furthermore it argues that the reality is subjectively constructed by the individual experiencing it. This ontological approach places emphasis on the importance of understanding how the researched subjects interpret their reality (Bryman, 2012). To understand how people interpret the world the context of the researched subjects needs to be taken into account (Thompson, 1997). That is to say that authors accept that reality is not a fixed concept that can be observed, but rather that every individual constructs their own subjective reality that they experience. An alternative ontological consideration would be that of objectivism, the school of thought that social phenomenons exist independently from social entities (Bryman, 2012). As such this thesis considers the world to be devoid of objective truths, and that an understanding of the world can only be achieved by studying how people perceive it. The field of study of this thesis builds upon concepts that can be seen as socially constructed concepts, such as authenticity and value. Therefore an objectivist approach, and a strict definition of these concepts, would limit the applicability and generalizability of the thesis for further research if another definition or way of measurement would be used by another author. Furthermore the meaning of these terms fluctuate with time, geographical area and context, which would also affect the applicability of the research.

Regarding epistemological issues this thesis closely adheres to the position known as interpretivism. Interpretivism is based on the logic that social studies are more complex than the axiom of cause and effect implies, and that subjective considerations have to be made to understand human behavior and thoughts (Bryman, 2012). Therefore it is only possible to draw knowledge from social studies by interpretation of collected data. This interpretation is built on an understanding of the context of the social subject as well as prior knowledge. This approach also assumes that the researcher is a participant in the study through the role of an interpreter of the researched material. Undoubtedly, the knowledge, experience and expertise in the subject that the researcher carries will therefore influence the findings of the research (Thompson, 1997). Positions with regards to epistemological issues that authors considered

adhering to were the positions of positivism and realism. These positions are both built on the idea that there is an objective reality that social entities can experience and then describe. Positivism considers knowledge to something that can only be acquired through the senses (Bryman, 2012). Since authenticity and value are two terms that, when taking a constructivist approach, are not observable this position was disregarded. Similarly, the use of realism with its two major forms: empirical realism and critical realism, were disregarded for their assumption that there is an objective reality that can be experienced and explained by social entities (Bryman, 2012). Due to the highly variable degrees of authenticity that people experience when having the same encounter an interpretive position has led to a higher practicality of the thesis.

3.2 Research design

The research design was an exploratory qualitative study based on gathered empirical primary data. The study most closely followed the design of an ethnographic study. In the primary study of the thesis the authors investigated how a group of people that have had extensive contact with Chinese culture view the phenomenon of foreign Chinese restaurants. The purpose of investigating the perception of people that have experienced Chinese Culture lied in the assumption that these people will have not solely have built their view of authentic Chinese culture and cuisine on the staged environment and simulacra off the foreign Chinese restaurant. By studying people whose sense of authenticity lies closer to the ideal authenticity viewed from the perspective of the objectivist approach to authenticity, this thesis aimed to achieve a higher degree of generalizability. Furthermore as the trend of globalization continues, and the knowledge of foreign culture increased, it is likely that the general consumer will have a higher degree of understanding of authenticity in foreign culture (Statista, 2016). As such these people that have had a high degree of contact with a foreign culture can be viewed as lead users of the consumption of foreign culture (Von Hippel, 1986). A lead user can be defined as a consumer that faces the needs of the marketplace before the general populace, due to experience and intensity of usage. By viewing people with experience of Chinese culture as cultural lead users of the consumption of a Chinese cultural experience the findings of the thesis might reflect the needs of the future general populace. To increase the scope and applicability of the research consumers with low or no direct contact with Chinese culture were also included in the studies.

An ethnographic study design was appropriate due to the undefined nature of the concepts of authenticity, the highly subjective nature of value creation through services and the not clearly categorical research objects (Backman, 2009; Bryman, 2012). An exploratory approach to the ethnographic research design allowed the authors to familiarize themselves with how these concepts take shape in the subjective reality of the study's participants. In addition the authors were able to acquire insights into the field and incorporate them into the further construction and interpretation of the research (Backman, 2009). A cross-sectional design focusing the collection of data from several cases for quantification and analysis of patterns (Bryman, 2012) was considered but disregarded. The main reason being that the explorative nature of the study and the indistinct nature of the main concepts of the thesis makes the concepts difficult to define and quantify as variables. Similarly, an experimental design was considered but disfavored. In capturing a service setting there are too many factors to consider to set up a laboratory experiment that would have a high external validity, and therefore generalizability. An experimental design in a live setting was also disfavored due to the wide variety of Chinese restaurants that exist today. Using a single one or a few as the basis for an experiment would impact the generalizability of the study in negative way.

3.3 Empirical Study

When performing the empirical research, three distinct methods were combined. In chronological order, the first part was to perform a netnographic study. Later on, two qualitative semi-structured interviews with one professional and one opinion leader within the foreign restaurant industry were conducted. The last method, that could be considered the primary method of the thesis, was a set of in-depth ethnographic interviews with consumers. The purpose of combining these three parts was to gather rich data in the field of study. All three studies were therefore influenced by the current areas of interest at the time of their execution. The authors aimed through the initial method to first gain consumer insight and an understanding of the researched problem. The primary aim for the netnographic study was therefore to explore what authenticity is in an exotic service setting from a consumer point of view. The semi-structured interviews aimed to provide both more information about the area, but also another perspective to the study, namely a professional one. The ethnographic interviews aimed to get rich consumer data to give insight into the thesis fundamental themes. The final method also served the purpose of confirming and augmenting upon the findings of the first two studies. By combining a professional and consumer perspective these studies

aimed to explore how authenticity is realized and its importance in an exotic service setting. All three studies took place within Sweden, and while the thesis is written in English the studies were conducted in English, Swedish and Chinese. Therefore, for the research to be conducted, knowledge in English, Swedish and Chinese was of value. Since knowledge of these three languages were held by the authors all translation was done and reviewed by the authors.

3.4 Netnographic study

Netnography (or Online Ethnography) is a type of study where the Internet is viewed as a space, where people and entities leave trails that can be studied (Bryman, 2012). By viewing Internet as a space, ethnographic methods can be applied (Bryman, 2012). The focus of the netnographic study was to acquire a broad understanding of the relation between consumers and the Chinese restaurant industry, and the role of authenticity in this relation. The method consisted of studying submitted stories, recommendations and how consumers express themselves, with regards to authenticity. The netnography was performed by studying users created content in Chinese online communities in Sweden, posts on restaurant forums and blogs about Chinese restaurants as well as consumer review sites. Through this method the authors aimed to find, interpret and understand clear, subtle and implicit signs that would indicate the role of authenticity in the relationship between consumer and restaurant.

The purpose of this netnographic study was to increase the authors' understanding of the research area, to gather consumer data and to thereby give consumer insight before conducting further interviews. The main assumption was that it would be possible for the authors to construct better interview guides and interviews with greater knowledge of the field and a general understanding of some of the consumers' viewpoints. Furthermore it helped to identify individuals to include in the further interviews. Finally the purpose was also to identify restaurants that consumers experience as generally authentic or inauthentic. These restaurants would then, in a later stage, be approached as candidates for the setting of the ethnographic consumer interviews.

3.4.1 Conducting the netnographic study

The netnography was conducted during six, five hour long sessions, resulting in over 50 pages of raw data. The netnographic study was conducted during the course of one week. All of

the collected data was created within the last five years, and can be considered recent (Kozinets, 2014). However, none of the data was collected from ongoing discussions or was younger than one week of age. The focus of the netnography was to capture attitudes towards Chinese food and Chinese restaurants, as well as how people express themselves when discussing these topics and what aspects and values that are emphasized in these discussions. To find these attitudes, expressions and discussions the search engine Google was used to search for relevant keywords. The keywords used were Chinese, Swedish, China, restaurant, food, genuine, culture, as well as various synonyms of these words. The keywords were combined in several different patterns that the authors determined would yield relevant results. A comprehensive list of sites visited can be found in appendix 4.

3.4.2 Criteria for choosing the sites

Sites from the search results were evaluated on seven criteria established by Kozinets (2014) to determine if the data could be used for data collection for this study. The seven criteria set by Kozinets (2014) were that the site should have activity and contain recent contributions or updates. It should also be interactive and have a flow of communication between participants. The third criteria was that it should primarily contain user-submitted content. Also offer a way for similar users to socially interact with each other regarding a specific theme. The fifth was that the focus of the site should have relevance to the author's research topic and geographical chosen area. The sixth is that the website should be rich in data, providing the researchers with, as Kozinets (2014, p. 169) describes, "well-crafted posts, blog entries, podcasts or videos". The last criteria refers to the experience of the site used. It should be experimental, and thereby offering the viewer a particular kind of experience (Kozinets, 2014).

The criteria of activity, recent contributions and the ability to socially interact served to ensure that the viewpoints expressed by the users are not highly deviant from other people with similar social backgrounds. By researching sites with a high amount of user-submitted content the authors aimed to capture the viewpoints of consumers, rather than professionals within the field. Finally the criteria of relevance further served the purpose of ensuring that the visibility of the discussions among consumers interested in the topic had been relatively high and that the discussion was not colored by a few individuals. It also served the purpose of

limiting the geographical area of the research to better represent the social setting that the future interview participants live in.

3.5 Interviews with a professional and an opinion leader

The interview with professionals and opinion leaders was focused on acquiring an understanding of their view of the relationship that consumers have to the Chinese restaurant market and the role that authenticity plays in that relationship. Through these interviews the authors aimed to capture how restaurants in the category regard authenticity, and if and how they work to create an authentic experience for the consumer. Due to the criteria of high relevance to the research topic the interview participants were selected using purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012), by approaching individuals with a high relevance to the research topic. Therefore, the interviews were conducted with people that work in, have an influence on, or knowledge of the Chinese restaurant industry. This group of people was initially defined to include restaurant owners, chefs in Chinese restaurants and food critics/bloggers. Since there can also be non-professionals with a great understanding of the cultural rituals involved (Sato & Parry, 2015), it also included consumers with a high degree of understanding of Chinese culture and Chinese dining rituals and habits. In total two interviews were conducted. One interview was conducted with an opinion leader on Chinese culture in Sweden. The other interview was conducted with a professional from the Chinese restaurant industry, an owner/chef of a Chinese restaurant that has put emphasis in its marketing on the authenticity of the restaurant.

The purpose of these interviews was to further the understanding of the phenomenon of Chinese restaurants from other perspectives than the consumers. A more professional and critical perspective was gained, giving the authors the Chinese restaurant's point of view. The interviews also served as preparation for the ethnographic consumer interviews. The nature of the phenomenon is complex, and when a service is delivered there are always two or more interacting parties. Therefore, to only focus on the consumer perspective, a one sided view of these parties, would lead to important insights and conclusions going unnoticed or be missed. For this reason, the perspectives of both parties, the restaurant's and the customers', were included in the study.

Since this thesis views a service as a co-creation between the service provider and the customer, the interview with the chef/owner at a Chinese restaurant was of importance to the thesis. Due to his position as a chef he has been part of creating several thousand service experiences, making his views on how authenticity in a service is created and perceived hold much weight. The opinion leader is in a similar position of power with regards to how authenticity is perceived. With basis in his online blog he has interacted with a lot of people on the topic of authenticity and had a broader and more complete perspective than the average consumer. While the perspectives of two individuals are of limited nature, the extensive contact these two particular individuals have had with authenticity, Chinese culture and Chinese restaurants in Sweden made them valuable to the findings of the thesis.

The interviews closely adhered to the semi-structured interview presented by Bryman (2012). Each interview was conducted using a unique interview guide as a basis, touching upon the themes of the thesis. However, the participants were encouraged to talk about subjects not present in the guide, and follow-up questions that were not prepared beforehand were frequently used. This approach was chosen due to the assumption that the participants could have insights and a worldview not predictable with the authors' then current knowledge. The interview guides were prepared with Charmaz (2006) three types of interview questions as a general guideline, starting with initial open-ended questions meant to introduce the participant to the subject and give them room to talk about the themes without direction, following up with intermediate questions designed to probe the participants for more in-depth insights about the themes, and finishing with ending questions aiming to round off the interview and give the participant room to express thoughts not previously brought up. After each interview notations about the interview were made, such as how the interview went, what the participant focused on when discussing certain topics and the general mood. These notes were then considered jointly during the later stage of coding (see "3.9 Presenting and analyzing the empirical data").

3.5.1 Interview with an opinion leader

Through the netnography, one blog was found that had a lot of content regarding Chinese food and culture. The owner of the blog was approached and asked to participate in an interview regarding the common field of interest. The person that was asked to participate in the interview as an opinion leader was chosen on the basis that he would have what can be con-

sidered great knowledge and experience from Chinese food, restaurant, and dining culture. His interest in the field and profession was supported by his interactive blog about Chinese food and culture. The opinion leader also has an international enterprise that focused on providing consultation for companies with relationships between Sweden and China and importing products from China to Sweden with a focus on Chinese authenticity. This was not an applicable criteria when selecting the participant, but rather a statement of his interest in the Chinese culture.

An interview guide was created based on the findings in the netnography and the theoretical concepts in the literature review, constructed in this thesis. The interview guide for the opinion leader can be found in appendix 1 and a motivation for the structure of the main questions, also covering sub questions, can be found below in figure 3.1.

Question	Connection to netnography and/or theoretical concept
1. What is your relation to China?	- Introduction questions regarding his background - Motivation for being an opinion leader
2. On your blog you say that it is difficult to find "real" Chinese food, can you elaborate on that?	- About Chinese culture in Sweden - The adaptation vs staying authentic of a foreign concept to a local market (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014; Lu & Fine, 1995) - The perceived value of authentic food vs adapted (Vargo & Lusch, 2004)
3. What is a Chinese restaurant experience to you?	- The different aspects of service marketing (7p) (Booms & Bitner, 1981) - Concepts from netnography
4. In what way do you think that your opinions regarding a Chinese restaurant differ from the general population's opinions?	- Perceived authenticity, simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) - Concepts from netnography - To get an idea of a Swedish consumers mindset

Figure 3.1: Structure of interview guide with opinion leader

3.5.2 Interview with a professional

Through the netnography, different restaurants were identified as possible settings for the ethnographic consumer interviews. After identifying a restaurant that had put emphasis on its authenticity, the owner/chef of that restaurant was requested to take part in the interview as a professional.

The semi-structured interview with a professional was conducted through the same process as the interview with the opinion leader. An interview guide was created based on the insights made during the netnographic study and the theoretical framework. The outline for the interview guide and the connection between the questions and the netnographic study and the theoretical framework can be found below in figure 3.2.

Question	Connection to netnography and theoretical concept
1. Please tell me a bit about yourself.	- Introduction questions regarding his background - Motivation for being a professional
2. Please tell me about your restaurant.	- Insight in the environment for further study - The adaptation vs staying authentic of a foreign concept to a local market (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014; Lu & Fine, 1995)
3. About the menu/food and relation to Swedish customers.	- The origin of the food theme for Mui Gong - The perceived value of authentic food (Vargo & Lusch, 2004)
4. About the decor and its Chinese influence.	- The origin of the decor theme - The perceived value of authentic vs adapted (Vargo & Lusch, 2004)
5. You are communicating that you can find "real" Chinese food in your restaurant, what is it that makes it "real"?	- The idea of authentic Chinese food - The different aspects of service marketing (7p) (Booms & Bitner, 1981) - Perceived authenticity, simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994)
6. What is a Chinese restaurant experience for you?	- The different aspects of service marketing (7p) (Booms & Bitner, 1981) - Perceived authenticity, simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994)

Figure 3.2: Structure of interview guide with restaurant owners

3.5.3 Conducting the interviews

The owner/chef was approached about participating in an interview during a visit to the restaurant. The approach to the opinion leader was done through contact information found on his blog. The interviews with the professional and opinion leader were conducted chronologically a week after the conclusion of the netnographic study. The different interviews did not only serve the purpose to make a further consumer study possible, but also to confirm that the findings in the netnography could be seen as trustworthy and reliable. The insights gained from the semi-structured interviews also served as a guidance to the construction of the ethnographic consumer interviews. Both semi-structured interviews led to the authors gaining a grander understanding of the area and more reflective idea's about the construct of the Chinese restaurant industry.

The opinion leader and professional that were interviewed during the study were both selected due to their knowledge and relevance to the construct of the Chinese restaurant industry in a the Swedish market. To be able to generate the best results from the interviews, they were held in the native language of the respondent. The interview with the opinion leader was therefore held in Swedish and the interview with the restaurant owner was held in Chinese (specifically the dialect Mandarin). Both interviews were audio recorded. Translation was done by the authors and both the original and translated version of the interview conducted in Chinese can be found in appendix 2. Figure 3.3 contains a table displaying information about the two interviews. Due to the requested anonymity of the two respondents, only their profession will be stated.

Profession	Date & time	Duration	Location/media	Language	Motivation for interview
Opinion leader/ Import service	2016-04-07 08:00-08:30	30 min	Skype	Swedish	Founder of: kristeribeijing.blogspot.com
Chef/owner	2016-04-10 15:00-15:45	45 min	Mui Gong, Kyrkogatan 21, Lund, Sweden	Chinese	Chef/Owner of Mui Gong Restaurant.

Figure 3.3: Chart of interviewed professionals and opinion leaders

3.6 Ethnographic consumer study

In order to gain insights into consumer behavior, experiences and attitudes towards Chinese restaurants, an ethnographic study combining the different elements was conducted. The outline of the consumer study was to participate in a Chinese restaurant dining experience with the respondent, to get direct interaction and first hand data, and then conduct an ethnographic interview. Because of the nature of the study, an ethnographic method was used to gather all important aspects of the consumer's experience of the Chinese restaurant experience. The essence of an ethnographic study is the observation of the participant (Agar, 1996). However, interviewing the participant, the use of field notes, and studying a given diary for the informant can be used as complements (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). The three initial methods of study will be used in the ethnographic consumer study. Since the observational part of the ethnographic interview with a respondent only took place during the duration of one restaurant experience, and they were observed during that duration, there was no need to have the participants use informant diaries over time. Instead, more focus was laid on the observation, the interview and the field notes. The observations and in-depth interviews functioned as the main empirical consumer data source for this thesis. The ethnographic consumer study, through the observation, interviews, and field notes complemented each other well and thereby created rich and versatile data. All ethnographic interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

3.6.1 Observing the participant

As a part of an ethnographic study, the observational part plays a significant role. The observation is a method where the researcher is immersing himself/herself in the context of the participants to study behavior, beliefs, and attitudes. It is explained by Agar (1996, p. 163) as *"Being involved in community life, observing and talking with people as you learn from them their view of reality"*. The ambition was for the consumer observation to offer a more relaxed environment and atmosphere, to make the participant act in a natural way. The observation is therefore a crucial part of the ethnographic interview and for the data collection. In regards to Gold (1958) there are four distinct models when observing participants, the complete participant, the participant-as-observer, the observer-as-participant and lastly the complete observer. Because of the setting of the study, an observation method where the observer is acting as a participant in the study was chosen. The models of Gold (1958) have been criticized by their limitations of gathering data and the risk of the observer overextending the interaction

with the participant and thereby affecting the behavior of the participant (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). Therefore, great care was taken whilst conducting the consumer studies, to not affect the consumer's natural behavior in the restaurant setting. During the observation, one author was following the participant along and sharing the restaurant experience with them, in order to be more perceived as a participant than a researcher from the participants' point of view (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). The goal of the observation in commercial ethnography is to be able to understand the participant fully through living with them as a member of their family or social group (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). It is therefore important for a researcher to interact with the participant and not just simply observe them. In order to not cause a reversal of roles, and make the participant adapt to the authors, only one author conducted each interview. This was also done to minimize the effect of the author's presence on the participant and minimize the participant's feeling of being observed. A feeling of being observed could have affected and disturbed the participant's natural behavior. The complete participant approach to the observation also created a setting where the participant was more comfortable with the researcher, and thereby put more trust in the researcher, which enabled better data collection during the interviews that followed the observation. By including the element of observation in the ethnographic study, the researchers had an opportunity to study behaviors that the consumer was unwilling or unable to report (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). Furthermore it gave the consumer an opportunity to express themselves during the restaurant experience, leading to collection of otherwise unnoticed material. It also put a naturalistic emphasis on the collected material due to the non-disruptive nature of the observation (Bryman, 2012).

3.6.2 Interviewing the participant

While conducting an ethnographic study, just one method is rarely used (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). The observation is therefore often accompanied by other data gathering methods, and interviews have been proven compatible (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). As interview strategies, either a formal or an informal way of interviewing can be used (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). For the consumer interview, a more informal interview was conducted-. The informal interview does not necessarily have a set of questions that need to be answered, but rather fields of interest that should be discussed throughout the ethnographic interview (Agar, 1996). This informal approach was combined with some formal elements, to be more precise, the final part of the interview was somewhat formal and consisted of more direct

questions to complement the non-direct and open ended questions. The classification of the interviews as informal is also strengthened by them having taken place in a social situation with the participant (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003), e.g. sharing a restaurant experience, with the objective to get as near the true experience as possible (Geertz, 1973). A key aspect to the ethnographic interview is the use of non-direct questions (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). These are to be used to minimize the researchers' effect on the answers given by the participant, and are "designed as triggers to stimulate the interviewee into talking about a particularly broad area" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 113). Therefore, broad questions were used to make the participants share information about their life and experiences in regards to the field of study. Agar (1996) states that a lot of the rich data in ethnographic research are collected through informal talk between the researcher and the participant. This is described by Agar (1996, p. 158) as "*Hanging out*" with the participant. There are however also questions of more non-directive forms that can be used more direct and to fill specific information gaps. These are to be used in the end of the interview to not affect the participant's answers in the more open questions (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). The interview guide for the study was designed with this in regard. The interview guide started with more open ended questions to get insight into the participant's life and experiences. These questions were mostly covered throughout the observational restaurant experience, but then further complemented. The next set of questions started to focus more on the field of study, starting with a broad perspective and gradually getting more narrowed down to the point of interest. The main questions, their contribution to the study and their connection to the theoretical framework and are presented below in figure 3.4. A full review of the interview guide, including sub-questions, can be found in appendix 3.

Interview guide - ethnographic interview		
Applicable for HCA	**Applicable for LCA**	
Open questions to discuss during dinner		**Connection to study and theoretical concept**
1. What is your experience of, and relation to, Chinese culture		- Introduction question to the area of study
2. What is your experience with China?	-	- Question regarding the background of the participant
3. Tell me about a Chinese restaurant in China you visited	-	- Question regarding the background of the participant
4. What types of restaurants do you prefer?		- Orientation about the preferred restaurant service setting
5. Have you been to this restaurant before?		- Previous experience of the setting
Focused interview questions		**Connection to study and theoretical concept**
1. What is a Chinese restaurant for you?		- Insight into the perception of the exotic restaurant - Adaptation/authenticity (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014; Lu & Fine, 1995)
2. What is Chinese culture to you?		- The perception of the exotic culture
3. Tell me about the Chinese restaurant experience we just had		- Service marketing aspects (Booms & Bitner, 1981)
4. If you were going to eat Chinese food, where would you go?		- The perception of most valued exotic restaurant

5. What similarities and differences are there between this restaurant and the one in China you told me about?	6. What similarities and differences do you think there are between this restaurant and a restaurant in China?	- The different aspects of service marketing (7p) (Booms & Bitner, 1981) - Perceived authenticity, simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) - Staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973)
7. Did you like the restaurant experience we just had?		- Expected vs perceived service - Value dimensions (Sheth, - Newman & Gross, 1991)
8. How did the environment affect your experience?		- The different aspects of service marketing (7p) (Booms & Bitner, 1981)
9. How Chinese do you find the restaurant experience to be here?		- Perceived authenticity, Simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) - Staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973)
10. Will a high cultural aspect be important for you when you choose a Chinese restaurant in the future?		- Perceived authenticity, simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) - Value dimensions (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991)

Figure 3.4 Structure of interview guide with consumers

3.6.3 Field notes

An important aspect of the ethnographic interview method is the use of field notes. These are written records that the researcher writes down during and after each interview, to provide a reflection of the event that transpired (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). These are personal reflections from the researcher that can be of value when analyzing the collected data and for other researchers to gain more insight in the situation. They are also important since the researcher can record changes in behavior or significant interpretations that cannot be discovered during a voice recording. The variation of categorical information that is typically used for conducting field notes (Spradley, 1980), and that was used for this study are listed below. The form and full version used when conducting the interviews can be found in appendix 3.

Space: the physical place or places.

Actors: people involved.

Activity: a set of related acts actors did.

Object: the physical things that are present.

Act: single actions that actors do.

Event: a set of related activities that people carry out.

Time: the sequencing that takes place over time.

Goal: the things people are trying to accomplish.

Feeling: The emotions felt and expressed.

3.6.4 Selecting participants for the study

Since the thesis aimed to explore in the Swedish market place, the population that the selection of participants was taken from was current residents in Sweden. For the selection of participants from population a combination of purposive sampling methods and snowball sampling methods were used. In order to find deep and meaningful data the authors chose to conduct purposive sampling, since the participants' knowledge of Chinese culture was of interest. Purposive sampling is the method of strategically selecting respondents based on how relevant their answers are expected to be to the purpose of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The authors chose to include consumers with an understanding and interest in Chinese culture, but also consumers with less interest and understanding for Chinese culture. This meant that the subjects for the observation and interview were chosen based on the criteria that they would have different ways of evaluating authenticity in Chinese food, culture, and restaurants. As such the authors included participants in the study based on their self-expressed understanding for themed restaurants, an interest in Chinese culture, and an interest in Chinese food or cultural experiences. To categorize possible respondents different criteria was used.

The categorization of the respondents was done with the consumers expected level of knowledge, experience and interest in Chinese culture were evaluated. The categorization did not aim to quantify cultural awareness, but rather act as a tool to incorporate consumers whose perception of authenticity is based on different sources into the thesis. Therefore, the purpose of the classification was to ensure that the scope of the study encapsulates more than one perspective on authenticity. In total 12 ethnographic interviews were conducted, each

with a different participant. These participants were evenly split into two categories based on their self-expressed experiences with Chinese culture. The two categories were defined as "High Culture Aware (HCA)" and "Low Cultural Aware (LCA)". The age of the respondents varied between 20-40 year old and the gender diversity was five women and seven men. The sampling method used is not considered a probability sampling method because the participants were not selected randomly out of the population (Bryman & Bell, 2013). As such the sampling method limits the generalizability on a larger population, especially since the criteria for the HCA respondents did match the majority of the population. The aim of this study was therefore not to generalize any conclusions made with the collected data, but rather to give insights and understanding of the studies areas. While the classifications were initially created as a part of the sampling process, all participants considered themselves part of the assigned group. This grouping of participants could therefore be used in the later stage of analysis (see "4. Empirical data and analysis"). The criteria set for the two different groups of respondents are described below.

High Culture Awareness (HCA)

The criteria set for consumers with high cultural awareness serve to ensure that the consumer has an adequate degree of experience with the culture in question to form opinions and be able to reflect upon the culture. They were meant to serve as a minimum requirement for the purpose of finding respondents who consider themselves to have a high cultural awareness. As such these criteria were created in order to select which respondents to approach, rather than as a categorization in the later analysis. These criteria therefore served as a limiter to the applicability of the thesis, due to having excluded consumers who consider themselves to have a high cultural awareness, but do not meet these criteria.

The first criteria for consumers with high cultural awareness was that they have lived in the geographical area associated with the culture. The stay had have resided there during an extended time period of at least six months. This criteria served the purpose of identifying consumers who had had an extensive contact with the culture, and therefore were likely to experience a high knowledge of the culture. It stands to reason that to have a deeper understanding of a culture, immersion within that culture is necessary. While communities outside of the country of origin that are built on the same cultural principles exist, the authors have chosen to exclude these to not risk to mix in other origins of culture. An example of consumers who have experienced such communities would be someone who has lived in a China Town

community in the US. In order to be immersed within the culture the aspect of time becomes relevant as well. Many cultural traditions and rituals take place throughout a year and therefore a minimum stay of six months was chosen, in order to give the participants the opportunity to experience these traditions and rituals. The second criteria was that the consumer had an interest in the culture or food of that culture. This criteria aimed to ensure that an interview with the consumer had a greater possibility of providing rich data for analysis. Having had the consumer reflect on the themes of the study without any general interest would have risked shallow responses and actions. Another criteria for these participants was that they should have the self-expressed ability to distinguish authentic Chinese food and related rituals from inauthentic ones. This relates to the studies of Hirose and Kei-Ho Pih (2011, p. 26), where they state that: "For one to be a competent cultural consumer, a certain vocabulary of taste and knowledge is useful in order to differentiate 'real' exotic food from food that is inauthentic".

The HCA respondents were selected using a combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is conducted by choosing, contacting and interviewing a small set of individuals and letting them provide recommendations for further interview subjects (Bryman 2012). The starting point was to search forums and interest groups that expressed an interest in Chinese culture, which was found during the netnographic study. Additionally, members of local interest groups for Chinese culture were contacted via email and also by approached at the local Centre for languages and literature.

Low Culture Awareness (LCA)
The purpose of the criteria for low cultural awareness participants was to identify consumers who are expected to see themselves as having low cultural knowledge, and having built their knowledge on the culture in question on indirect contact with the culture. The criteria for consumers with a low cultural awareness was that they had had scarce or no direct contact with the culture in question. This criteria aimed to ensure that the consumer had built their perception and understanding of the culture in question on indirect sources. Direct contact includes having extended visits or having lived in areas where the culture is prevalent or cultures that are closely related to the culture in question.

To find the participants defined as LCA, the same type of snowball sampling method was used as for the HCA. The initial participants were acquainted with an authors, but then lead

to more participants unfamiliar to the researchers. The initial participants were however not interviewed by an author that they had a prior relationship with. By doing so, the authors could be sure to know that the participant fitted the criteria for LCA participant, while still keeping the participant from being interviewed by someone familiar to them. This ensured that it would be more difficult for the researcher to overlook behaviors and actions by the participant, which could have more easily been the case if the two were familiar with each other.

3.6.5 Selecting restaurants for the study

The ethnographic interviews took place in a live setting at a Chinese restaurant. The restaurants were chosen with the intent of gathering varied data and minimizing the risk that a particular attribute of the restaurant evoked certain responses that would not be applicable to other restaurants. The ethnographic interviews were therefore conducted at a restaurant that the researchers expected to evoke the feeling of authenticity in the participants, as well as a restaurant that the researchers expected to not evoke those same feelings. This varied approach was chosen in order to gather more nuanced data and increasing the different possible topics of discussion during the observation.

During the netnographic study the authors evaluated the expected experienced authenticity of restaurants that were possible locations for the ethnographic interviews. This was done through using consumer comments and reviews gathered during the netnographic study. Furthermore the considered restaurants were limited to a geographical area in order to ensure that the restaurants were operating in a similar social, geographical and cultural context. Restaurants that were considered authentic and inauthentic could both be found in the same geographical area, namely Lund Sweden, which kept the width of the study to a smaller geographical area. Two restaurants were chosen for the ethnographic study based on the netnographic study, one that was expected to generally evoke an authentic experience among participants with a high cultural awareness, and one that was expected to not evoke the same experience.

Mui Gong and Tatung
The restaurant Mui Gong was chosen as the restaurant that was expected to evoke an authentic experience among participants with a high cultural awareness. In addition to the consumer

opinions found during the netnographic study, promotional material from the restaurant was reviewed, the owner was contacted, and a visit was made to the restaurant by the authors. In their promotional material the authenticity of the restaurant was highlighted as one of its main selling points. This was confirmed by the owner of the restaurant who puts great effort into creating and maintaining authenticity in the restaurant. He highlighted his 20 years of experience as a chef in China, as well as the ingredients of the food, and recipes he uses as attributes contributing to the authenticity of the restaurant. Finally, this was confirmed by a visit to the restaurant by the authors, where the attributes of the restaurant were evaluated.

The chosen restaurant Tatung was expected to not evoke an authentic experience among participants with a high cultural awareness. Consumer reviews, comments and opinions found in the netnographic study stressed attributes of the restaurant, such as the types of food served at the restaurant and the decoration in the restaurant, as attributes that highlighted the lack of authenticity in the restaurant. In addition a visit to the restaurant was made by the authors, confirming that the opinions found during the netnographic study had a basis in reality.

3.6.6 Execution structure for the consumer input study

For the study to gather varied and broad material to the analysis, the two types of respondents and two types of restaurants were mixed. This created four different study combinations with the two different types of respondents and two different types of restaurants. Therefore, three ethnographic interviews of HCA participants, and three of LCA participants were conducted at each restaurant. The number of ethnographic interviews conducted was 12, keeping to the principle of saturation. That is to say that, initially a small number of ethnographic interviews were conducted. Afterwards, more were conducted until the point where another interview was not expected to yield significant new information was reached. The length of the interviews varied between one and two hours, due to the semi-structured nature and unpredictability of the restaurant visit.

Each study with a respondent began with the respondent and author meeting at and entering a Chinese restaurant together. The ethnographic interview started as the two parties met and proceeded until the author decided to end it. This way the author could make sure that all questions and areas of interest were covered. After the dining experience, a more direct interview was conducted. The setting of these direct interviews were either in the same restaurant

setting, or alternatively outside of the restaurant, depending on the participant's ability to provide honest information at that location. The respondent could, for example, feel uneasy to comment negatively on the restaurant setting which they were in. It was therefore of value to sometimes leave the restaurant before the more direct interview.

3.6.7 Conducting the ethnographic interviews

The ethnographic interviews were conducted throughout two weeks, chronologically following the previous two studies. A table illustrating the interviews is shown in figure 3.5. Due to the many criteria for HCA participants, the motivation for choosing these participants and their background is presented in short below. This is not an all-compassing description of the participants, and all participants met the minimum criteria for HCA participants.

Date	Name	HCA/ LCA	Age	M/F	Occupation	Lunch/ Dinner	Duration	Restaurant	Location
2016-04-15	Andreas	HCA	25	M	Student	Lunch	1h 22min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-17	Sara	HCA	24	F	Student	Lunch	1h 19min	Tatung	Lund
2016-04-18	Edvin	HCA	25	M	Student	Lunch	1h 43min	Tatung	Lund
2016-04-19	Oskar	LCA	23	M	Student	Lunch	1h 46min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-19	Albin	LCA	24	M	Waiter	Dinner	1h 58min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-20	Markus	HCA	23	M	Student	Lunch	1h 15min	Tatung	Lund
2016-04-21	Hanna	LCA	23	F	Waitress	Lunch	1h 30min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-21	Pontus	LCA	23	M	Student	Lunch	1h 5min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-21	Fanny	HCA	27	F	HR work	Dinner	1h 10min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-22	Peter	HCA	40	M	Counselor	Lunch	1h 45min	Mui Gong	Lund
2016-04-22	Erika	LCA	23	F	Retail	Lunch	1h 11min	Tatung	Lund
2016-04-24	Anna	LCA	23	F	Student	Dinner	1h 10min	Tatung	Lund

Figure 3.5: Chart of interviewed consumers

2016-04-15 - Andreas

Andreas has studied Chinese in Shanghai for three months, travelled around China for three months and studied two terms of Chinese at the University of Xiamen (China). He is passionate about China and loves interacting with the locals and trying different types of Chinese food.

2016-04-17 - Sara

Sara is a Swedish student that has spent eight months in Shanghai between August 2014 and May 2015. There she studied Chinese and actively explored Chinese culture and traditions. She remains fascinated by China and is still trying to learn more about the country, its food and culture.

2016-04-18 - Edvin

Edvin has been to China on three separate occasions, two of which he studied Chinese during three and four month periods in Shanghai and Xian, and a month which he spent backpacking around the country. During his time in China he enjoyed nothing more than going out to try local restaurants and cuisine. He describes China as the most fun place he has ever visited and longs to go back.

2016-04-20 - Markus

Markus is a Swedish student with a Swedish dad and a mother from Singapore, who originated from China. He has lived a year in Singapore which has Chinese influences. He also spent five months in Beijing, China as an exchange student recently. He traveled through China for three weeks before his return to Sweden, and therefore considers himself well experienced in the Chinese culture and cuisine.

2016-04-21 - Fanny

Fanny has Chinese parents and was born in China where she lived until the age of two. After that she has been back to China multiple times and has resided in the cities of Xiamen and Shanghai for a total period of one and a half year. She loves Chinese food and considers that she has a good understanding of Chinese food, culture and customs.

Peter is a study coach at Lund University in Chinese and Japanese. He started studying Chinese in 1997 and has since traveled to and from China a lot. He has spent a total of five years in China and is married to a Chinese woman. He holds a Master's degree in Chinese studies and speaks Chinese fluently.

3.7 Summary of empirical data gathering

The empirical data gathering consisted of three different studies that were conducted chronologically after each other, over the course of several weeks. The first study in the empirical data collection was a netnographic study. The netnographic study was conducted through 30 hours of research over the course of one week. It was conducted to give an initial understanding and initial insights to consumers understanding of Chinese culture, consumers' ideas of the exotic restaurant, and how this relates to the concept of authenticity. The primary aim of the study was to explore authenticity in an exotic service setting from a consumer point of view.

The second study consisted of two semi-structured interviews and was conducted to further explore the Chinese restaurant industry, this time from the viewpoint of the service provider. These interviews were conducted not only to gain more perspectives and insight on the concept of Chinese restaurants, but also to gain insights into how restaurants work to create a feeling of authenticity with its customers.

By utilizing the understanding and insights from the two previous studies, an ethnographic consumer study was developed. The interview guide used in the study was created from the insight gathered in the previous studies, as well as with a connection to the theoretical framework of the thesis. A total of 12 interviews were conducted with two groups of consumers with a high-, respective low-, knowledge of Chinese culture and traditions. These interviews aimed to gather rich consumer data, as well as confirming and augmenting the findings of the previous studies.

3.8 Method discussion

3.8.1 The reliability of the study

The reliability of a study refers to the extent that the study can be replicated, by using the same method and finding the same results (LeCompte & Preissle-Goetz, 1982). For qualitative studies, and especially ethnographic studies, this poses a problem, because of the uniqueness and natural behavior of the participants studied. To discuss this problem all three studies, the netnographic study, the two semi-structured interviews and the ethnographic consumer interviews are addressed under the appropriate subheading below. The main point of discussion is the ethnographic interviews, because of their role as a main data point, and because of the difficulty in reproducing them. This is because ethnographic studies are often complicated in their data gathering process and replicated studies can be affected by external events (LeCompte & Preissle-Goetz, 1982).

Netnography and Interviews with professional and opinion leader

One aim of this thesis is to present the method of the netnography and the semi-structured interviews in detail, in order to increase the ability to reproduce these studies. Regarding the netnography, the keywords used to orientate on the web and also appendix 4, that is containing a list of the main websites that have been used, have all been illustrated. The reliability of the netnography is therefore probable and a recreation of the study, reaching the same results, is possible. The two interviews that have been conducted have also been accounted for in the methodology where the nature and experience of the participants affect the data that has been collected. Interviews with the same persons would therefore give the same results, i.e. resulting in a high reliability. If however different participants with similar professions were selected, other data would certainly have been collected.

Ethnographic consumer interviews

Ethnographic studies are often undertaken to study a process of change or behavior under a certain time, which poses the problem of reconstructing the study precisely. It is argued by LeCompte and Preissle-Goetz (1982) that since human behavior is never static, no qualitative study can ever be replicated identically. To account for the reliability of an ethnography study, certain norms have been validated. The first is a description of the population that has been studied, as well as the different methods and instruments that have been used (LeCompte & Preissle-Goetz, 1982). Also a presentation of the analysis of the gathered data

is necessary as a means of enforcing reliability. Previous parts in this chapter describe the criteria used for the participants, with a more detailed description for those who were more categorically selected. The instruments that have been used to conduct the study refer to the setting that was chosen to conduct the study in. These are also described earlier in the chapter. Under the subheading "3.9 Presenting and analyzing the empirical data" a description of the analysis is presented. Within ethnographic studies, reliability is discussed from two point of views. There are *internal* and *external* parts in the method of the study that need to be accounted for.

Internal reliability

LeCompte and Preissle-Goetz (1982) argue that no ethnographic researcher is alike and that results will differ due to the researchers place in the study. To account for the fact of three authors within the study conducted in this thesis, a great deal of preparation was done to make sure that all authors conducted the three different studies in similar ways. The process of data gathering is also described in great extent in this chapter, giving it a greater chance to be reproduced. Success in delivering such a data collection design is crucial for the reproduction of the ethnographic study (Kaplan & Manners, 1972). The internal reliability in ethnographic studies also depends on the different researchers agreeing on the collected data. An important aspect has therefore been a mutual discussion throughout the study with regard to different opinions. LeCompte and Preissle-Goetz (1982) recommend that ethnographic researchers use a research strategy that reduces the threat to the internal reliability. During the ethnographic study the method *mechanically recorded data*, as presented by LeCompte and Preissle-Goetz (1982), was used. *Mechanically recorded data* is a research strategy where the researchers record the studies to make sure the other researchers can take part of them. This was the method used in this study because of the benefit of each researcher reliving the study that another researcher did. It gave all researchers the chance to take part in all interviews after their completion and therefore the chance to share the collected data.

External reliability

The external reliability of the study refers to five different problems: the researcher's status position, the choice of participants, social situations and conditions, analytic constructs and premises and lastly the methods of data collection and analysis (LeCompte & Preissle-Goetz, 1982). The first part being the status of the researcher in relation to the participant. This has previously been described as the researcher in the study not being acquainted with the partic-

ipant. All researchers have therefore held the same status position towards the participant in the study. The second problem is due to the type of informants in the study. These were selected with care and base criteria was set for the participants. All participants fit their respective group in the study and the selection of participants for the HCA group was motivated individually. The third problem facing researchers is the social situation and condition, e.g. the setting of the study. The settings where the study was conducted have been accounted for, for the means of reconstruction. The setting is also important since participants' willingness to share information varies depending on the setting. To counter the problem, the participants were asked where they wanted to conduct the interview after the restaurant experience, to give them a relaxed environment. Some therefore chose to leave the restaurant setting before revealing the answers to some of the researcher's questions. The fourth part to the external reliability is what data from the study is chosen as element of analysis. The data that is used is essential to reach the same result in the reproduction of a study. For this, a description of the utilized data will be delivered in the following chapters of the thesis. Lastly comes the problem of accounting for the precise way of collecting and analyzing the data. To be able to reconstruct a study, this is a crucial part where the authors have to account for the process. Because of this, great care has been taken while providing further researchers with details and description of the process involved in this study, a transparent guide with all its major components.

3.8.2 The validity of the study

The validity of the research refers to the means of which the researchers are able to create a real and authentic picture of the field of study (Nurani, 2008). Regarding the validation of a study there are two parts to consider. The first one is the internal validity, where triangulation is used (Burns, 1994). Triangulation refers to the use of multiple data sources within the study, and is typically not a problem when using an ethnographic method of study (LeCompte & Preissle-Goetz, 1982). This is due to the high variation of methods within the study, which in regards to this study are interviews, observations and field notes. The triangulation is also more justified because of the two other methods of data collection that were used in the study. The netnography and the interviews with the opinion leader and professional. The results and findings from the study are therefore taken from several types of data collection and make the triangulation of data collection valid.

The external validity refers to the generalization of the study that has been conducted (Nurani, 2008). This is therefore applicable to the three studies conducted within this thesis. Since the result from an ethnographic study often lies in the context of the study (Nurani, 2008), there are some important aspects to keep in mind. It is important to specify the conditions of the study and the setting it took place in. This is accounted for in the elaboration of the method. To strengthen the generalizability of the study, researchers can use multi-site studies (Wiersma, 1986). Multi-site studies refers to studying the phenomenon in different geographical locations and gathering data from multiple sites (Wiersma, 1986). Collecting data from multiple sources, and where there is a consistency in the data that is being collected, will increase the generalizability of the study. If inconsistent material is collected and a there are differences in the collected data from different sites, it will limit the generalizability of the study. In regards to this study, the generalizability is limited to the area where the study has been conducted. A larger extent of generalizability can be made to the findings regarding the LCA participants of the study, since they are more representative of the population in the area where the study was conducted. Since the study was conducted in one geographical location, but at two different sites, it limits the generalization and therefore the external validity. The netnographic study and the interviews that were conducted, were all consistent in data in regards to each other and to the ethnographic consumer interviews. This strengthens the generalizability of the study, but still limits the generalizability of the ethnographic study.

3.9 Presenting and analyzing the empirical data

In order to analyze the empirical data a framework based on grounded theory was used. Grounded theory can be seen as "an approach to the generation of theory out of data" (Bryman, 2012, p. 541). The main feature of a grounded theory approach to analyzing empirical data is that it is a continuous process that is ongoing during and after the gathering of empirical data, rather than a single instance of analysis (Bryman, 2012). The analysis was conducted keeping the theoretical concepts of authenticity, value and service marketing close in mind. During and after the initial netnographic study the gathered empirical data was initially coded systematically to provide an overview of common themes. The data was then recoded to focus on commonly found themes that the authors deemed reveal the most about the theoretical concepts. This process is in line with the two phases of coding, initial coding and focused coding, which are recommended by Charmaz (2006).

The found themes were then used to create an interview guide to the semi-structured interviews with the professional and the opinion leader. The gathered empirical data from these interviews were also coded using the initial coding described by Charmaz (2006). The initial concepts were then examined together with the gathered data from the netnographic study, re-evaluating the concepts found during the initial study. At the same time the concepts were expanded upon until some of them reached the status of category, a concept that has been expanded upon to the degree that it could represent a real-world phenomenon (Bryman, 2012). The authors identified the categories with the highest relevance to the research topic that also had enough empirical data supporting them to be considered a common occurrence. These categories could be seen as core-categories (Bryman, 2012) from which ideas about their relationship were formed. The insights that the authors gained were used as a basis for the sampling of participants for the ethnographic consumer interviews.

During the ethnographic consumer interviews, constant comparison, which is a commonly used tool in grounded theory (Bryman, 2012), was used. Constant comparison refers to the practice of maintaining a close relationship between the gathered empirical data and the concepts that they generate (Bryman, 2012). After each ethnographic consumer interview, the interview was transcribed and coded using the initial coding method. Periodically, the gathered empirical data from the interviews were evaluated jointly with the empirical data from the two first studies, re-imagining the ideas and constantly re-evaluating the relevance of the gathered data for the theoretical concepts relating to the thesis. The relevance to the theoretical concepts of the study was primarily evaluated considering their relevance to authenticity, value and service marketing. After conducting the interviews a final evaluation and re-reviewing of all the gathered empirical data was conducted in order to confirm that all relevant gathered empirical data was present. These data were then expanded upon until substantive theories, theories relevant to the area studied (Bryman, 2012), could be formed.

The empirical data that was collected through the study is outlined and presented with a clear connection to the analysis in the next chapter (see "4. Empirical Data and Analysis"). There is no clear distinction between empirical presentation and analysis, but both are presented with clear directives. In the following review of the collected empirical data, four major themes are presented in relation to the analysis of said theme. Each theme brings up a major point of data from the study, in relation to the theoretical framework that adapts to it. The

theoretical framework used in the analysis can be found in the second chapter of the thesis. A figure illustrating a summary of the theoretical framework can be found below in figure 3.6.

Authenticity	Service Marketing	Value
Adaptation (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014; Lu & Fine, 1995)	Service marketing mix (Booms & Bitner, 1981) - Physical environment - Price	Value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2007) - Value co-creation
Staged authenticity, six stages (MacCannell, 1973)	- Product - Process	Value dimensions (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991) - Functional value
Simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994)	Disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980)	- Emotional value - Epistemic value

Figure 3.6: Unadorned theoretical framework summary

In the summary only theoretical concepts that have high relevance to the material presented in the analysis are found. Theoretical concepts whose relevance to the study could not be established through analysis are omitted from the summary. Notably, three out of seven attributes of service marketing mix (Booms & Bitner, 1981), namely *Participants*, *Promotion* and *Place*, two value dimensions (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991), the *Social value* and *Conditional value*, were omitted. These parts were removed due to that analysis of the gathered empirical data revealed it to have limited relevance to the research.

C H A P T E R 4
E M P I R I C A L D A T A A N D A N A L Y S I S

4.1 The McDonaldization of Chinese restaurants

The struggle between adaptation and authenticity and how it relates to the functional value experienced by the consumer.

In the studies performed a common sentiment was that Chinese restaurants in Sweden are homogenous and that there is an expected standard Chinese restaurant. The consumers studied tended to view this standard Chinese restaurant as the basis for their expected restaurant experience when visiting Chinese restaurants in Sweden. Due to the LCA participants limited contact with Chinese culture there is a tendency that their view of Chinese culture is built partly upon this image of a standard Chinese restaurant. The HCA participants on the other hand described this type of restaurant as an inauthentic version of a restaurant from China adapted to fit the Swedish market.

When evaluating a Chinese restaurant in Sweden the main consideration was the food served at the restaurant, the furnishing and the décor. Some characteristics of the dining process were also considered to be typical of a Chinese restaurant. One interviewed participant described a Chinese restaurant in the following way:

> "They have solid tables that are heavy with real wood. They have real paintings on the walls. Maybe some heavy drapes, often with large windows facing the street. They often have simple tables, often with no tablecloths and squiggles. Pretty simple, pretty clean. It is common as well with some kind of buffet as well." – Albin

This quote illustrates the importance of the furnishing and décor when evaluating a standard Chinese restaurant. Another visual theme that was associated with Chinese restaurants were the colors red and gold. The size of the restaurant was also expressed as having an effect on the perception of the Chinese restaurant. Chinese restaurants were also expected to have grand premises. This was highlighted by some participants as a selling point of Chinese restaurants due to the expectation to always find space in the restaurant when dining with large

companies. Symbols associated with Chinese culture were also expected to be present. Some of the symbols that the interviewed participants mentioned as being common in Chinese restaurants were decors depicting dragons, koi fishes, guardian lions and Buddha. Other decorations that were mentioned were glass, mirrors, Chinese style music and paintings in Chinese style. The description of a Chinese restaurant continued with:

> "I spontaneously think of deep-fried banana. I also think of, you know, four small dishes, a mix of food. I expect that I will be eating rice, which is standard. ... I expect [the food at Chinese restaurants] to be average. I will walk away full and will have paid a decent [price] for the food." – Albin

The continuation of the quotation highlights the expectation to be served certain types of food when visiting a Chinese restaurant. The quote also highlights the sentiment that the food served at Chinese restaurants is good, but seldom better than expected. Another common sentiment that the quote highlights is that when describing the restaurant the price of the restaurant experience is compared to the amount of food received or the fullness experienced. Buffets at Chinese restaurants were generally considered to be a positive part of the experience due to the cost to fullness ratio. Individual participants also expressed certain quirks that they had come to associate with Chinese restaurants. One respondent commented on how he perceived payment to be handled at Chinese restaurants:

> "You often pay at the register. For some reason, I don't know why. They don't ask for the money, but you walk up to the register and pay. It has been like that at many Chinese restaurants I've been to." – Oskar

The standard Chinese restaurant can be seen as a simulacra for the LCA participants, a representation of something authentic that has come to be viewed as authentic by consumers with limited experience of the original, that some of the participants has used as the basis for their view of Chinese culture (Baudrillard, 1994).

A common sentiment with regards to the standard Chinese restaurant in Sweden was that its primary purpose was as a provider of functional value (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991) due to the reliability and low price of the service. It was emphasized during the studies that the food served at Chinese restaurants generally tastes good and that the restaurant experience is

priced at a low or reasonable price. The price of the restaurant experience was commonly evaluated upon the quality of the food and amount of food received. Chinese restaurants were expected to provide a high amount of food when compared to the price paid for the restaurant experience. In addition there was an expectation on Chinese restaurants that the performance of the service was to be of an adequate level. One participant described it in the following manner:

"A Chinese restaurant experience is for me nothing special. I arrive, I get a nice evening. Everything just works. I don't expect anything bad to happen, but I also don't expect spectacular service and that the interaction with the waiter will be very enjoyable." – Albin

There was a sentiment among some of the LCA participants that a Chinese restaurant experience had elements of excitement and fun. When describing the feeling of excitement that occurred when visiting Chinese restaurants the LCA participants emphasized how the expected environment contrasted with the environment of other types of restaurants and the environment found in their everyday life. When citing specific elements that attributed to the feeling of excitement the participants mentioned eating with chopsticks, the way the food was presented and the unique decorations. The participants who did not find Chinese restaurants exciting and fun instead shared a contradictory sentiment. These participants had the perception of Chinese restaurants in Sweden to be uninteresting and trite, because of their predictability. During the observational study the reliability of Chinese restaurants was compared to that of the international fast food franchise McDonalds:

"In a Chinese restaurant [in China] I feel quite at home. There is a familiarity since it's such a large part of my life and everyday life. In Sweden Chinese restaurants feel more like McDonalds. You know what you'll get and what is offered." – Peter

"I think [Chinese restaurants] survive on their reputation. They are like McDonalds. If you go to a McDonalds you know what you'll get. There are no surprises and if you just want food it might be the best alternative." – Erika

The standard Chinese restaurant is a clear concept in the mind of the studied consumers that lead to them having a certain expected value when visiting a Chinese restaurant. If a restaurant deviates from the expected standard it will create a gap between the consumers perceived service and expected service (Oliver, 1980). The main advantage of the standard Chinese restaurant from the consumers' point of view lies in the reliability of its offering and such in its ability to provide a functional value to the consumer (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). Changing this concept through the introduction of authenticity in the offering would have a negative impact on the perception of the reliability that the consumers expect from a Chinese restaurant. As such a restaurant providing a service with higher authenticity will generally provide a lower functional value and the gap between expected and perceived service will create a negative disconfirmation (Oliver, 1980). For the consumer to experience a positive disconfirmation the value that the authenticity adds to the experience must be greater than the loss in functional value. The restaurant owner at Mui Gong expressed that the food he serves at his restaurant has a higher degree of authenticity than what consumers expect from Chinese restaurants. Because of this he has been confronted several times by consumers who had had a negative disconfirmation due to a loss of functional value. A dissatisfied reviewer shared his side of such an experience in an online review of Mui Gong titled "Maybe the worst Chinese restaurant I've visited in the last 50 years". In the following excerpt the reviewer expresses his disdain for the food at Mui Gong, declaring it to be inedible. When confronting the owner he is told that it tastes different because it is an authentic representation of a dish, rather than one adapted to Swedish tastes. However, in this instance it is reasonable to assume that the reviewer would have preferred a more adapted version of the dish.

> "I ate my first Chinese dish at the age of 12 at the first Swedish Chinese restaurant. … My wife and I, hungry and seduced by the pictures of delicious dishes outside Mui Gong, slipped inside. … [The food] was completely terrible. The vegetarian dish: vegetables etc. turned out to mean some rice, a pile of warm broccoli in a strange sauce and a tiny sliced carrot – and that was it. When asked where the rest of the vegetables disappeared the owner pointed to the carrot. How it tasted? Well, warm broccoli in indefinable slush. Dish number two, their most expensive: sautéed lamb in garlic turned out to be a distasteful served heap of fat-peppered meat in inedible dripping grease and a small raw carrot. … We gave up and left the food uneaten. When we confronted the owner he became slightly aggressive and claimed that we didn't

know anything about Chinese food and passed us the card-reader demonstratively. I guess he was afraid we wouldn't pay. A culinary experience of the dullest kind." – Online reviewer

4.2 A Chinese masquerade

The acceptance of staged authenticity in Chinese restaurants.

There was an understanding amongst the participants in the ethnographic study that the Chinese restaurants experience in Sweden differ to the restaurant experience in China. This was especially expressed by the HCA participants that could relate their own experience of restaurants visits in China to their experience with Chinese restaurants in Sweden. Among the LCA participants the authors could also see a tendency that they understood that differences exist. A distinction in perception between the two groups of participants was the amount of difference they saw between a Chinese restaurants in Sweden and a restaurant in China. The HCA participants were adamant that the dining experience between a Chinese restaurant in Sweden and a restaurant in China are separate experiences and expressed the sentiment that the dining experience was almost entirely different. The LCA participants' view of what the restaurants had adapted to meet the needs of the Swedish market were more varied and specific. When listing examples the LCA participants mentioned the flavor of the food, the spiciness of the food, the degree to which the restaurant was decorated, the particular kinds of decorations found in the restaurant, the way the food is presented and the tableware. One LCA participant went even further and questioned the entirety of the restaurant:

"I think that [restaurants in China] are very different [from Chinese restaurants in Sweden]. I think in some way they are more genuine. The standard is probably not as high in the restaurant itself. Maybe they have simpler tables and chairs. The food is simple but good. The food is more like it was made in China. [In Sweden] it is more sterilized. If you visit an Italian restaurant in Italy they serve more than pizza. Here they serve the classic fried shrimp, beef and bamboo and so on. If you go to China I think they serve a lot of different dishes you can't find here." – Pontus

However, both groups of participants showed an awareness that some kind of adaptation had taken place to make the Chinese restaurant experience better fit to a Swedish market. There was an awareness that standard Chinese restaurants in Sweden attempt to make the restaurant resemble what consumers believe to be an exotic rendition of a restaurant in China.

The consumers viewed the standard Chinese restaurants as a representation of a restaurant in China, rather than an authentic version of them. In the theory of MacCannell's (1973) six stages of authenticity, which is based on Goffman's (1972) idea of front and backstage, a representation of the authentic is categorized as stage one, two or three. Stages four, five and six represent experiences that are less adapted and provide actual authenticity. The opinion leader interviewed shared a personal anecdote that shows that the level of authenticity can in some cases be purposely chosen by a restaurant:

> "I have many Chinese friends [who works at Chinese restaurants] here in Sweden and when they cook food themselves, it is something completely different to what you see in Chinese restaurants in Sweden. ... They have a concept of food that they serve to the Swedish restaurant customer, but it is not what they would eat themselves."
> – Opinion leader

The restaurant owner at Mui Gong echoed this sentiment when discussing his thoughts on authenticity and how he has opted to try to reach a higher stage of authenticity in the mind of his customers:

> "Here in Sweden you need to adapt to Swedish preferences. … During the previous owners time it was slightly more adapted to Swedish tastes, deep fried foods etc. Now the food that you can order on the menu is all authentic, we have very strict demands when it comes to the ingredients and raw materials we choose. … When it comes to meat we order it from Swedish companies, seasoning and other ingredients is sent here from China. Things like the Sichuan pepper and the chili are all sent here directly from Chongqing in China." – Owner at Mui Gong

The standard Chinese restaurant in Sweden was expected by the LCA participants to reach stage three, a front region staged to come off as a back region, on MacCannell's (1973) concept of staged authenticity in certain areas that the consumers perceive as important to the experience, such as décor and food. Other areas that were not considered to be an integral part of the distinct Chinese restaurant experience expected to reach a level of three or below. The HCA participants' expectations deviated from this concept during the interviews conducted at the restaurant that they generally perceived as more authentic, Mui Gong. A recognition of the dishes as authentic made HCA participants regard the restaurant experience as altogether more authentic. When the food was considered authentic the HCA participants perceived the authenticity of the entire experience as a level of four or higher in MacCannell's (1973) six stages of authenticity. The LCA participants interviewed in the same restaurant did not experience the same level of authenticity, resulting in the idea that both restaurants where LCA participants were interviewed shared similar numbers on MacCannell's stages of staged authenticity.

During the interviews members of both groups of participants expressed that the restaurant generally perceived as more adapted, Tatung, had emphasized the Chinese cultural aspect to the degree that it was considered exaggerated. The perception of the physical evidence in the service experience (Booms & Bitner, 1981) was seen as an attempt to be perceived as Chinese to its customers. This led these participants to consider the restaurant to be inauthentic. One participant commented on the overuse of decorations in the Chinese restaurant and likened it with a person dressing up for a masquerade:

> "It felt like they tried a little too much [with the décor]. It made me feel like it wasn't Chinese. A little bit like dressing up for something and then exaggerating a bit so that people will really get what you're dressed up as. But then you can see that it might not actually be Batman, or whoever you tried to dress up as. It feels exaggerated in that way." – Erika

Participants from both target groups considered the restaurant to try to implement the idea of being Chinese, rather than genuinely being Chinese. Some participants were because of that realization fully aware of the fact that the adapted restaurant did not represent a Chinese restaurant found in China, but was more adapted to the Swedish concept of a Chinese restaurant. This consideration was not done by the participants interviewed at Mui Gong. Some of the

respondents made a differentiation between a Chinese restaurant and what they dubbed as a "restaurant inspired by China". A restaurant inspired by China was seen as a restaurant that was not as adapted to fit the Swedish market as Chinese restaurants. One participant described a disappointing moment when a restaurant she believed to be a restaurant inspired by China did not meet her expectations, showing the differentiation between the two she had made in her mind:

> "[The restaurant] looks kind of small from the outside. I have walked past before and I have always thought that it was a smaller restaurant and a little more… It was like any other Chinese restaurant. I had probably expected that it would be more niche, that it would have actual Chinese food. That the restaurant would be like everyone who has been to China says [a Chinese restaurant] is like. A little bit more different"
> – Erika

The participants showed a realization of staged authenticity, but also accepted it as a part of the experience. LCA participants realized that there was of a level of staged authenticity that would represent a number below three in MacCannell's (1973) six stages of staged authenticity. However, they did not object to the fact, rather they greeted it. In this matter there was a difference between the LCA and HCA participants in the study. While LCA participants chose to accept the staged authenticity, the HCA participants did not accept it to the same extent.

4.3 Food and furnishing

How consumers evaluate the authenticity in a Chinese restaurant.

For LCA respondents, authenticity was evaluated to a large degree by considering the layout and decoration of the restaurant. They had an image of what a Chinese restaurant should look like. They admitted to themselves however that this image stemmed at least partly from having been to Chinese restaurants in Sweden, indicating that their reference for what was Chinese came from a simulacra representing an original version of something (Baudrillard, 1994). In this case, Sweden based Chinese restaurants representing Chinese restaurants in China. LCA respondents did however admit to mixing up China with other Asian countries

such as Thailand and Japan indicating that a restaurant perceived as authentic by these respondents may include elements that originally derive from all three of these countries.

HCA respondents considered what they had seen and experienced in China to be authentic. The most emphasis was placed on the authenticity of the food, and unlike the LCA respondents, the HCA respondents put minimal emphasis on authenticity in physical evidence. HCA respondents agreed that authentic Chinese restaurants often put little effort on decoration and instead focused on the culinary experience. The following quote highlights and summarizes the HCA respondents' priorities in their search for authenticity:

> "The decoration consisted of a red things everywhere. It didn't look that nice. Which is pretty normal for the Chinese. They don't put a lot of time on that in the south, instead they focus on the food, which I think is good. You go to different restaurants for different experiences. You don't go there for candles and a romantic night, you go there for the food, and that's what they focus on."
> – Fanny

Another HCA participant described the importance they placed on the food by explaining that they would often go to what they described as "very trashy" restaurants when they were in China, where "a rat might run between your legs" but that this didn't bother him because the food was so good. The way the food had been prepared was also pointed out, one HCA respondent commented on how the chicken was served with skin on it when dining at Mui Gong. She found this to be authentic, explaining that in China they eat every part of the animal except the bone. She went on to say that a typical Sweden based Chinese restaurant probably would have used a chicken fillet to prepare their food, and that it would have been in sweet and sour sauce instead. HCA respondents repeatedly pointed out that authentic Chinese restaurants served less sweet and sour sauce and deep fried foods than the typical Sweden based Chinese restaurant. There was also a general opinion among this group of respondents that an authentic Chinese restaurant has a wide variety of dishes compared to what is typically offered in Sweden.

Although LCA respondents had an opinion on what a Chinese restaurant layout should be like and agreed that it should give a genuine feeling of a Chinese restaurant, more emphasis

was put on the atmosphere being cozy than providing an authentic feeling. This showed that the two groups sought after different things in their experiences.

When evaluating the restaurant Mui Gong LCA respondents didn't show any tendency that they experienced the restaurant's food as more authentic than an average Chinese restaurant, whereas HCA respondents perceived the food as very authentic compared to other Chinese restaurants in Sweden. Furthermore, most LCA respondents acknowledged that Chinese restaurants in Sweden most likely did make several adaptations to the Swedish market, indicating that they did not perceive the Chinese restaurants in Sweden as entirely authentic. However, unlike HCA respondents they did not have an original to compare with and therefore did not have as clear of an idea as the HCA respondents of what specifically would be authentic. As Jang, Liu and Namkung's (2011) study showed positive emotions were associated with environmental attributes for LCA respondents, hence explaining why LCA respondents put strong emphasis on physical environment. However, for HCA respondents authenticity in food seemed to outweigh the positive emotions associated with a favorable physical environment.

HCA respondents also highlighted the authenticity of the process in which the service was created and consumed. One who dined at the Tatung commented that he would have appreciated more handcrafted food, and went onto say that this was common in China, hence referring the authenticity in the process in which the food was made. Another pointed out the importance of authenticity in the chef:

> "The chef matters. He has worked as a chef for 20 years in China. Compare that to a chef who might be from Vietnam, Thailand or another Asian country that isn't China. Of course they learn how to make the food, but not in an authentic way." – Fanny

In this case the remark shows that value is placed in that the chef has long experience working in China, implying that the respondent believes this enables the chef to prepare the food in an authentic way. This shows that the way the food is prepared was also a source of authenticity for this HCA respondent. The authenticity in ingredients at Mui Gong was also mentioned in a positive light. Special spices at the table that they perceived as Chinese such

as Sichuan pepper evoked positive emotions. An HCA respondent commented that he had not tasted that taste since he was in China and that it was nice to have it at the restaurant.

Several service aspects were also noted by LCA respondents, for example that the food did not come in at the same time at Mui Gong. HCA respondents were under the opinion that in an authentic Chinese restaurant experience, everyone is meant to share all the dishes that are ordered and therefore it did not matter for them that dishes did not arrive at the same time. For LCA respondents however this was perceived as negative. In this case LCA respondents were unified in the opinion that it is commonplace for everyone to receive their food simultaneously when dining at a restaurant, and unlike HCA respondents did not link this to authenticity in the dining experience in any way.

When it came to HCA respondents they tended to prefer procedures to be as authentic as possible. This was reflected in the types of physical objects that they expressed they wanted to be a part of their Chinese restaurant experience. One HCA respondents described his appreciation for round tables with turnable glass plate in the middle. The respondent described this type of table as an authentic element of a Chinese restaurant experience, in the following way:

> "And these round glass tables, I appreciate them, I like the concept that you order many small plates and can try a little bit of everything, when you've tried that it becomes a bit boring, this thing where everybody orders one dish and then you eat your own, it's a lot more fun to pick 10 things on the list and then we all try them, some dishes are well-liked and others not." – Edvin

The respondent emphasizes his appreciation for the glass tables because of how they make sharing the food easier. He saw the practice of ordering dishes for the table and sharing them as an important part of an authentic Chinese restaurant experience. General preferences for chopsticks also showed that HCA consumers found authenticity in the way the service was consumed. Other things relating to the consumption of the food that HCA respondents considered to be authentic were small plates, and that everyone should have their own small bowl of rice.

When discussing the authenticity of a Chinese restaurant experience on point that was common for both LCA and HCA respondents was the pricing of the restaurant experience. All participants were in agreement that an authentic Chinese restaurant was relatively cheap.

4.4 Nostalgia and curiosity

The values consumers find in an authentic Chinese restaurant.

The HCA participants in the study were generally more concerned with the authenticity of a restaurant compared to the other consumers in the studies. They showed a tendency to become authentic food consumers, consumers that seek to experience cultures through the consumption of authentic ethnic food and are able to distinguish authentic ethnic food from inauthentic ethnic food, with regards to Chinese restaurants as they gained knowledge, awareness and experience with Chinese culture. The HCA participants spoke of how they wanted their Chinese restaurant experience to feel as Chinese as possible. It was also expressed that if they heard of a restaurant that aimed to provide a genuine Chinese experience they would be likely to visit it. In contrast, when speaking of restaurants visited in China an emphasis was put on the functional aspects of the restaurant, such as the price and reliability of the service offering. This echoes the conclusions of Hirose and Kei-Ho Pih (2011) who determined that authenticity becomes more important for the authenticity seeking consumer when the restaurant is decontextualized.

The HCA participants expressed that as they gained more experience with Chinese culture and food their perception of the authenticity of Chinese restaurants in Sweden changed. One participant said that she had mixed up Thai and Chinese food before going to China. Another said that certain things that he saw as Chinese before he had been there, such as deep fried foods and sweet and sour sauce, he no longer associated with China but still associated with Chinese restaurants in Sweden. As this perception changed so did their appreciation for the service offering of Chinese restaurants in Sweden. One participant described this change in the following way:

> "Before I went [to China] the first time I liked Chinese restaurants here. I remember that when we were about to go I said that I love Chinese food. I loved going to Chinese restaurants in Sweden but after coming home I rarely have.

This is the second or third time since I went to China the first time. I don't know what happened. Maybe I'm dissatisfied with it or something... I don't know, I lost interest" – Edvin

The HCA participants tended to compare the Chinese restaurant in Sweden with the restaurants they had visited in China. This comparison tended to lead to negative emotional value among the participants when visiting inauthentic restaurants. The participants emphasized that their feelings of longing and yearning tended to be the cause of the negative emotional value. One respondent describes the dissatisfaction against a restaurant he perceived as inauthentic by expressing that it felt like a worse version of his experience in China, and made him miss what he had experienced there.

In contrast, when perceiving a Chinese restaurant as authentic the HCA participants experienced positive emotional value. A part of the experienced emotional value was related to nostalgia. The HCA participants showed appreciation for aspects of the restaurant that they could relate to their earlier experience. In the quote below one participant speaks of how he appreciates the presence of a certain spice:

" [The restaurant] have a special kind of pepper called Mala. It's very popular in China. When I saw it I thought "This was nice. It's been a long time since I tasted this taste". It's probably the first time I've tasted this taste in Sweden, so I thought it was nice." – Andreas

Another part of the emotional value was related to the ability to share their experience in China with family and friends. It was expressed that the participants would like to take their LCA friends to a restaurant that they perceived as representative of an authentic Chinese restaurant experience in order to show them what it's like to dine in China. One respondent expressed it in the following way:

"I think that people that have never been to China, they most likely don't have an accurate image of China, so it would be a lot of fun to be able to show them that this is how it was. [To say] "this the kind of restaurant I ate at in Shanghai", that would be a lot of fun." – Sara

Another participant made a similar statement that he would like to make people realize what a Chinese restaurant is really like, since the participant himself expressed that he didn't expect the difference between Chinese restaurants in Sweden and China to be so big before he went there. He went on to express that if the restaurant was not representative of what he experienced in China he did not see any point in bringing anyone there.

When the HCA participants identified a restaurant as an authentic Chinese restaurant they also showed a tendency to search for epistemic value in the restaurant experience. After their expected experience had shifted to that of an authentic experience the participants became prone to trying to experience something new by making a point of ordering food they had not eaten before. During the observational study one participant initiated a four minute long conversation in Chinese with the personnel where they co-designed a new dish for the participant to eat. Another participant had made prior research on the internet and in social circles. She had done research about the chef of the restaurant and what type of food the restaurant could serve that she had not experienced before. This tendency could not be observed when the HCA participants perceived a restaurant experience as inauthentic. It has been shown that consumers with higher experience with the source of the authenticity tend to more easily recognize and evaluate the authentic aspects of a service (Baudrillard, 1994; Bennis et al, 1973). Therefore it stands to reason that consumers with a higher knowledge of Chinese culture tend to value authentic aspects introduced in Chinese restaurants and experience a positive disconfirmation.

The interviewed LCA participants who based their perception of authentic Chinese restaurant on simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) created from their previous experiences with Chinese restaurants in Sweden tended to associate authenticity with functional value (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). These consumers viewed the standard Chinese restaurant as an authentic representation of a restaurant in China. To these participants an authentic Chinese restaurant experience was therefore equivalent to the experience found at the standard Chinese restaurant. While they found the experience more authentic than the other participants they still associated the authentic experience with a reliability in the service offering and if they searched for authenticity it was because of the functional value that this reliability brought them.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

This chapter returns to the initial purpose of the study, to answer how consumers perceive authenticity in exotic services, and how authenticity influences the value they experience from the service. To answer these questions the authors assumed a constructivist approach to authenticity. A constructivist approach dictates that authenticity is experienced by the consumer and cannot be objectively measured. From the problematization in the introduction of the thesis, two illustrating questions were raised. These are presented below, as a reminder for the reader.

- How different types of consumers perceive authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience.
- How their perceived authenticity affects the value of the exotic restaurant experience.

By discussing these two questions, this chapter aims to provide a clear picture of how consumers experience authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience and the effect of authenticity on value creation in the exotic restaurant industry.

5.1.1 Two types of dining – The McChina

By conducting and analyzing three studies the authors have found tendencies that consumers distinguish between two different types of Chinese restaurants. One type was dubbed "standard Chinese restaurant". This type of exotic restaurant is perceived as a staged setting, meant to represent China and Chinese culture. While the authors found tendencies that it is seen as a Chinese restaurant adapted to fit the local market it also seemed to be accepted as such. It was generally seen as a common restaurant concept with a Chinese theme, rather than a restaurant with a base in genuine Chinese culture. This restaurant was largely identified based on physical evidence, such as the décor and type food, as well as price, namely that the service was relatively cheap. It has been indicated that the existence and recognition of this type of restaurant might have historical roots in the establishment of Chinese restaurants in Sweden several decades ago (Kinesiska Muren, 2016). Because of the restaurants unchanging nature over the years it might have created a deeply rooted expected reliability in the mind of the Swedish consumer.

While showing awareness that the standard Chinese restaurant was not an entirely genuine representation of a restaurant in China, consumers with no direct experience with Chinese culture tended to evaluate the authenticity of a Chinese restaurant based on the same attributes that they evaluated the standard Chinese restaurant on, physical evidence and price. This is in line with Baudrillard's (1994) theory of simulacra, that when people with no experience with a culture are subjected to an inauthentic replica of that culture they tend to build their view of authenticity based on that replica. When these consumers also had a low engagement in the authenticity of the restaurant they tended to expect the same type of functional value (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991) from an authentic Chinese restaurant experience as they did from the standard Chinese restaurant. They primary placed value on the reliability of the service, expecting it to contain elements such as a certain type of furnishing, certain types of food and provide the same general feeling as similar Chinese restaurants.

5.1.2 Two types of dining – Authentic eating

The other type of restaurant that the consumers in the studies identified was dubbed "restaurant inspired by China" by one of the participants. This was a restaurant characterized by its lack of adaptation to the local market, where the consumers with a high engagement in Chinese culture could have an authentic service experience. Consumers who had had prior extended direct experience with Chinese culture tended to show high appreciation for a restaurant inspired by China because of its authenticity. To evaluate the authenticity of a restaurant this group of consumers focused on the authenticity of the core product of the service, namely the food served at the restaurant. They also evaluated the process of the service when it was directly related to the way the food was consumed or prepared. When they deemed the restaurant to be authentic they tended to gain emotional value (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991) by relating the current experience to ones they had when experiencing Chinese culture. After having identified a restaurant as authentic this group of consumers also tended to experience epistemic value (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991), curiously searching for new things to try and to make the experience unique. It is likely that this behavior stems from the consumers' emotional connection with Chinese culture that consumers with no prior experience of Chinese culture lack.

Consumers without prior extensive contact with Chinese culture, tended to not be able to distinguish a restaurant inspired by China from a standard Chinese restaurant by themselves. This can be explained by that the perception of authenticity among this group of consumers differs greatly from those with prior experience of the culture, as indicated by the research of Ebster and Guist (2004). Because of the failure to distinguish the two types of restaurants the group of consumers with no prior contact did not evaluate them differently. This led to restaurants inspired by China tending to be rated negatively by this group of consumers, due to the inherent lack of perceived reliability which led to a lower functional value (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991). While not being able to distinguish restaurants inspired by China, this group of consumers tended to recognize that these types of restaurants do exist. This recognition can be most likely be attributed to the consumers own self-realization that they lack the ability to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic Chinese culture and that they would not recognize authenticity even if they experienced something that they believe should feel authentic.

5.2 Conclusion

The authors found that authenticity in an exotic restaurant experience is viewed differently depending on if the consumer has a reference point with the original culture or not. Consumers who do not have such a reference point tend to perceive authenticity primarily through physical evidence and the product of the exotic restaurant experience. If these consumers assume that their non-original reference point is authentic, and then perceive an experience to be authentic, they tend to primarily experience functional value.

Consumers with a reference point in the original tend to focus on comparing the product to the one experienced in the original setting. They also tend to put emphasis on processes directly relating to the product. When they perceive an experience as authentic they tend to experience emotional value. After they have deemed an experience to be authentic they also tend to search for epistemic value in the experience.

5.3 Shortcomings and limitations

The ethnographic study was conducted in a limited geographical area, both with regards to the participants and the restaurants. This might have affected the results if, for example, there are common conceptions about Chinese restaurants that are limited to the same geographical

area. The selection of restaurants was also made with geographical proximity in mind. Therefore excluding restaurants that might have been more fitting for this study, but are located in more remote areas. The qualitative nature of the research, coupled with that there were exceptions to most sentiments, makes the results of the study limited in generalizability. The findings can therefore mostly be seen as tendencies to behavior or opinions, rather than facts.

The netnographic study was conducted primarily with the use of a single search engine and using specific keywords. The sorting algorithm of the search engine therefore greatly influenced the information that was accessed and might have led to a shortcoming in the findings of the netnographic study. Similarly, by using specific keywords discussions and reviews using other expressions to describe a Chinese restaurant or authenticity might have been excluded from the study.

During the ethnographic interviews, the authors generally did not inform the participants about the purpose of the study until after the interview was concluded. The fact that the observational part took place in a Chinese restaurant and that the respondents were inquired about their experience with China prior to the study, may have led respondents to believe that the authors were investigating Chinese restaurants. Their uncertainty of the purpose of the study might have led to a change in behavior that the author's then observed.

Neither did the authors inform the participants about the expected level of authenticity at the restaurants. This might have given the participants preconceived notions about what to expect from the restaurants. This did most likely not have an effect on the HCA participants. Due to the HCA participants strong sense of authenticity they quickly distinguished their perceived level of authenticity of the restaurant, if they not visited it before. However, the LCA participants might have been more affected by this withholding of information. The words "Chinese restaurant" turned out to evoke preconceived ideas about what the visit would entail. Incidental evidence to this having affected the study is that the authors did not find that any of the LCA participants who considered the standard Chinese restaurant to be inauthentic, to have, or have had, an authentic experience at a Chinese restaurant. While the authors found that the LCA participants would not be able to distinguish a restaurant inspired by China, it is possible that they could have an authentic experience if told prior to the visit that the restaurant is considered authentic by people who have been to China.

The combination of ethnographic observation and interview might also have affected the results of the study. The ethnographic observation took place in a Chinese restaurant. This facilitated the interview by giving the participants and the interviewer a common point of reference, which the participants could use to describe their perspective on Chinese restaurants. However, due to recency-bias that restaurant experience might have had a great influence on the participants view on Chinese restaurants in general.

The use of a snowball sampling method led to a certain demographic homogeneity among the participants in the ethnographic interviews. By focusing on the cultural awareness of the participants, factors such as age and occupation that could possibly influence the participants' view of authenticity and experience with Chinese restaurants were, while reported, not controlled for during the sampling process.

CHAPTER 6
CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1 Theoretical contributions

Unlike earlier research where connections between authenticity and value have been linked, the thesis further develops what type of value can be linked to authenticity. By taking a constructivist approach to authenticity this thesis enabled respondents to evaluate a holistic experience and therefore define authenticity in a range of service marketing aspects. By doing so this thesis also opposes some earlier conclusions in the field by placing them in a larger context. The findings by Ebster and Guist (2004) concluded that authenticity, when decontextualized, was of greater importance to those with low cultural awareness rather than high cultural awareness. However, they did not measure the whole experience and were only able to capture the importance of authenticity within atmosphere and physical evidence. This thesis enabled respondents to evaluate a holistic experience and therefore define authenticity in a range of service marketing aspects. In doing so the results indicated that although authenticity in physical evidence was evaluated higher with by LCA consumers, in line with the finding of Ebster and Guist (2004), HCA consumers had a higher appreciation for overall authenticity regarding the experience as a whole, notably regarding the product and process in which it was consumed.

Furthermore the thesis contributes to the discussion of how authenticity is valued in comparison to adaptation. The need for adaption to different cultural markets is highlighted in international marketing literature. The search for and value related to authenticity has also been highlighted. However the two have not been weighed against one another directly as is done in the thesis. By introducing a theoretical framework for how consumers evaluate authenticity, this thesis has been able to weigh these two opposites against each other in an empirical study. The findings of the thesis illustrates that adaptation and authenticity can be seen as opposing ends of a bipolar scale and consumers with varying degrees of experience with a culture might prefer different levels on the scale.

6.2 Practical contributions

The conclusions of this thesis can be seen as a managerial aid when segmenting restaurant markets, based on cultural awareness. The insights of the thesis imply that authentic exotic restaurants need to emphasize the authenticity of their food as a unique selling point in their marketing, to attract consumers with high cultural awareness who seek an authentic exotic experience. The insight that Chinese restaurants in Sweden are viewed as standardized with similar offers makes it extra important for exotic restaurant focusing on authenticity to clearly differentiate themselves from other exotic restaurants. Since consumers are likely to assume that they belong to the standardized category, if the focus of the restaurant to be authentic is not made clear to them. By clarifying that they do not belong to the standardized category of restaurants they can change expectations of the restaurant experience for low cultural awareness consumers. This way low cultural awareness consumers do not experience negative disconfirmation (Oh, 1999). In order to attract more low culture awareness consumers, while keeping high cultural awareness one, authentic food restaurants should also adapt the restaurant's environment to reflect a simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) to increase perceived authenticity among low cultural awareness consumers. Restaurants focusing on high cultural awareness consumers should also try to provide things that high cultural awareness consumers perceive as authentic, having chopsticks as standard cutlery would provide value, as well as introducing other objects related to an authentic Chinese dining experience such as tables with a turnable glass plate in the middle in order to increase perceived authenticity and emotional value for culturally aware customers.

6.3 Recommendations for further research

While this thesis has taken a first step to increasing the understanding on how consumers with different level of cultural awareness perceive authenticity, the authors believe that the concept can be explored further. Further research is needed to study what type of value that low cultural awareness consumers get out when perceiving an experience as highly authentic. During the empirical data gathering the authors observed consumers with low cultural awareness that had not perceived any restaurant as particularly authentic. If these consumers can have an authentic experience and what type of value that these consumers draw from an authentic experience is therefore a recommendation to further research. While the authors concluded that consumers with low cultural awareness have difficulty distinguishing between

inauthentic and authentic, an authentic experience can possibly be instigated by describing to the respondents that a restaurant is considered authentic before a visit.

While the findings made are applicable on other types of exotic restaurants further research has to be conducted to determine if the findings of the study are applicable to other restaurants, which are not considered exotic. Similarly, the consumers examined with a high cultural awareness evaluated the authenticity of the restaurant by comparing it to their past experiences. Therefore, it would be interesting to conduct a similar study on another industry, where authenticity are evaluated in a different context.

Though the findings of the study are interesting, they serve as indicators of behavior among consumers, rather than a description of the consumers in the marketplace and their behavior. It would therefore be of value to verify the findings of this study and to see to what degree they are represented among all consumers. This would increase the usefulness of the findings for practitioners in areas of marketing such as segmentation. It would therefore also be of value to conduct a similar study on another market, especially somewhere with a larger ethnic community and a wider range of the same exotic restaurants, to find the scope of the international applicability of the findings.

CHAPTER 7
REFERENCES

7.1 Literature based references

Agar, M. (1996). The Professional Stranger, London: Academic Press

Andaleeb, S. & Conway, C. (2006). Customer Satisfaction in the Restaurant Industry: An Examination of the Transaction-specific Model. *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 20, pp.3-11

Arnould, E. J. & Price, L. L. (2000). Authenticating Acts and Authoritative Performance, *The why of consumption: Contemporary perspectives on consumers' motives, goals, and desires*, London and New York: Routledge Press, pp.144-163

Backman, J. (2009). Rapporter och uppsatser. 2nd ed. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Baker, J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D., & Voss, G. B. (2002). The Influence of Multiple Store Environment Cues on Perceived Merchandise Value and Patronage Intentions, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 66, pp.120–141

Baudrillard, J. (1994). Simulacra and Simulation, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press

Bell, R. & Meiselman, H. L. (1994). Effects of Adding an Italian Theme to a Restaurant on the Perceived Ethnicity, Acceptability, and Selection of Foods, *Appetite*, vol. 22. No. 1, pp.11-24

Bennis, W., Berlew, D., Schein, E., & Steel, F. I. (1973). Interpersonal Dynamics, 3rd ed, Chicago: Dorsey Press

Beverland, M. (2006). The "real thing": Branding authenticity in the luxury wine trade, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 59, no. 2, pp.251-258

Booms, B. H. & Bittner, M. J. (1981). Marketing Strategies and Organization Structures for Service Firms, AMA

Botterill, J. (2007). Cowboys, Outlaws and Artists: The rhetoric of authenticity and contemporary jeans and sneaker advertisements, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp.105-125

Bryman, A. (2012). Social Research Methods, 4th ed. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2013). Företagsekonomiska forskningsmetoder, Johanneshov: MTM.

Burns, R. B. (1994). Introduction to Research Methods, Melbourne: Longman Cheshire

Charmaz, K. (2006). Constructing Grounded Theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis. London: Sage

Chen, T. Y., Chang, P. L., & Chang, H. S. (2005). Price, Brand Cues, and Banking Customer Value. *The International Journal of Bank Marketing*, vol. 23, pp.273–291

Chang, K. H. & Shin, J. L. (2004). The Relationship Between Destination Cues of Asian Countries and Korean Tourist Image, *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, vol. 16, pp.82–100

Cohen, E. (1988). Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism, *Annals of tourism research*, vol. 15, pp.371-386

Ebster, C. & Guist, I. (2004). The Role of Authenticity in Ethnic Theme Restaurants, *Journal of Foodservice Business Research,* vol. 7 No. 2, pp.41-52

Elliott, R., Jankel-Elliott, N. (2003). Using Ethnography in Strategic Consumer Research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal.* vol. 6, nr. 4, pp.215-223

Ghauri, P. N. & Cateora, P. (2014). International Marketing, 4th ed, Singapore: McGraw-Hill Education

Glynn, W. & Barnes, J. G. (1995). Understanding Services Management, New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons

Geertz, C. (1973). The Interpretation of Cultures, Fontana Press: London.

Goffman, E. (1972 [1959]). The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Gold, R. (1958). "Roles in Sociological Field Observation", *Social Forces,* vol. 36, pp.20-25

Grayson, K. & Martinec, R. (2004). Consumer Perceptions of Iconicity and Indexicality and Their Influence on Assessments of Authentic Market Offerings, *The Journal of consumer Research,* vol. 31, no. 2, pp.296-312

Guang Tian, R. & Hong Wang, C. (2010). Cross-Cultural Customer Satisfaction at a Chinese Restaurant: The implications to China foodservice marketing, *International Journal of China Marketing*, vol. 1, pp.60-72

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1983). Ethnography: Principles and practice, London: Routledge

Heldke, L. M. (2003). Exotic Appetites: Ruminations of a food adventurer, New York: Routledge

Hirose, A. & Kei-Ho Pih, K. (2011). 'No Asians Working Here': racialized otherness and authenticity in gastronomical orientalism, *Ethnic and Racial studies*, vol 34, no 9. pp.1482-1501

Hirschman, E. & Holbrook, M. (1982). Hedonic Consumption, Emerging Concepts, Methods and Prepositions. *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 46, pp.92–101

Hofstede, G. (1984). "The Cultural Relativity of the Quality of Life Concept", *Academy of Management Review*, vol 9, pp.381-393

Holt, D. (2002). Why Do Brands Cause Trouble? A Dialectical Theory of Consumer Culture and Branding, *The Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp.70-90

Jang, S., Liu, Y. & Namkung, Y. (2011). Effects of authentic atmospherics investigating in ethnic restaurants: Chinese restaurants. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, vol. 23 no. 5, pp. 62-80

Jang, S. & Namkung, Y. (2009). "Perceived quality, Emotions, and Behavioral intentions: application of an extended Mehrabian-Russell model to restaurants", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 62 no. 4, pp.451-460

Kahn, B. E. (1995). Consumer Variety-seeking Among Goods and Services: An integrative review, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, vol. 2, pp.139–148

Kaplan, D. & Manners, R. A. (1972). Culture theory, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Kotler, P. (1976). Marketing Management, 3d edition, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc

Kozinets, V. R. (2014). Netnography: Redefined, 2nd ed, London: SAGE publications Ltd

LeCompte, M. D. & Preissle-Goetz, J. (1982). Problem of Reliability and Validity in Ethnographic Research, *Review of Educational Research*, vol 52, no. 1, pp.31-60

Lego, C. K., Wodo, N. T., McFee, S. L. & Solomon, M. R. (2002). "A Thirst for the Real Thing in Themed Retail Environments", *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, vol. 5 no. 2, pp.61-74

Lepak, D., Smith, K. & Taylor, M. (2007). "Value Creation and value capture: A multilevel perspective". *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 32, nr. 1, pp.180-194

Lillis, M. & Guang Tian, R. (2010). "Cultural Issues in Business World: An anthropological perspective", *Journal of Social Science*, vol. 6, pp.99-112

Liu, Y. & Jang, S. (2009). Perceptions of Chinese restaurants in the US: what affects customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions?, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp.338-348

Lu, S. & Fine, G. A. (1995). "The Presentation of Ethnic Authenticity: Chinese food as a social accomplishment", *Sociological Quarterly (Summer)*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp.535-554

MacCannell D. (1973). "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings", *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 79, no. 3, pp.589-603

Mathwick, C., Naresh, M., & Rigdon, E. (2001). Experiential value: Conceptualization, measurement and application in the catalogue and internet shopping environment, *Journal of Retailing*, vol. 77, pp.39–56

Mehrabian, A. & Russell, J. A. (1974). An Approach to Environmental Psychology, Cambridge, MA: MI Press

Nguyen, N. & LeBlanc, G. (2002). Contact Personnel, Physical Environment and the Perceived Corporate Image of Intangible Services by New Clients, *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 13, pp.242–262

Nurani, L. M. (2008). Critical Review of Ethnographic Approach, *Jurnal sosioteknologi*, vol. 14, pp.441-447

Oh, H. (1999). Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Customer value: A holistic perspective, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, vol. 18, pp.67-82

Oliver, R. L. (1980). A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol 17, pp.460-469

Phipps, P. (1999). Tourists, Terrorists, Death and Value, London: Zed Books Ltd

Rust, R. T., Lemon, K. N., & Zeithaml, V. A. (2004). Return on Marketing: Using customer equity to focus marketing strategy. *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 68, pp.109-127

Ryu, K. & Han, H. (2010). Influence of the Quality of Food, Service, and Physical Environment on Customer Satisfaction in Quick-casual Restaurants: Moderating role of perceived price, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, vol 34, pp.310–329

Ryu, K. & Jang. S. (2007). The Effect of Environmental Perceptions on Behavioral Intentions through Emotions: The case of upscale restaurants, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, vol 31, pp.56–72

Ryu, K. & Zhong, Y. (2012). Antecedents and Consequences of Customers' Menu Choice in an Authentic Chinese Restaurant Context, *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, vol. 21, pp.852-871

Sato, Y. & Parry, M. E. (2015). "The Influence of the Japanese Tea Ceremony on Japanese Restaurant Hospitality", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 32, nr. 7, pp.520-529

Schiffman, L. G. & Kanuk, L. L. (2000). Consumer behavior, 7th ed, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Sheth, J. N., Newman, B. I. & Gross, B. L. (1991). 'Why We Buy What We Buy: At theory of consumption values', *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 22, pp.159–70

Sinha, I. & DeSarbo, W. S. (1998). An Integrated Approach Toward the Spatial Modeling of Perceived Customer Value, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 23, pp.236–249

Spradley, J. (1980). Participant Observation, Holt, Rinehart & Winston: New York, NY

Taylor, C. (1991). The Ethics of Authenticity, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA

Thompson, C. J. & Tambyah S. K. (1999). Trying to Be Cosmopolitan, *Joumal of Consumer Research*, vol 26, pp.214-241

Thompson, C. J. (1997). Interpreting Consumers: A hermeneutical framework for deriving marketing insights from the texts of consumers' consumption stories, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 34, nr. 4, pp.438-446

Trilling, L. (1972). Sincerity and authenticity, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press

Vargo, S. & Lusch, R. (2004). Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 68, nr. 1, pp.1-17

Vargo, S. & Lusch, R. (2007). Service-dominant logic: continuing the evolution. *Journal of the Academic Marketing Science,* vol. 36, nr. 1, pp.1-10

Von Hippel, E. (1986). Lead Users: A source of novel product concepts. *Management Science,* vol. 32, nr. 7, pp.791-805

Wiersma, W. (1986). Research Methods in Education: An introduction, Newton: Allyn and Bacon

7.2 Web based references

Kinesiska Muren (2016). Välkommen till Kinesiska Muren! Available Online: http://www.kinesiskamuren.se/ [Accessed 13 May 2016]

Life in the USA (2010). Chinese cuisine in the United States. Available online: http://www.lifeintheusa.com/food/Chinese.htm [Accessed 26 of February 2016]

Mills, S. (2000). Cultural Melting Pot, National Restaurant Association. *Washington DC*, Available online: www.restaurant.org/rusa/magArticle.cfm?ArticleID1⁄4398 [Accessed 26 of February 2016]

Statista, S. (2016). Number of international tourist arrivals worldwide. Available online: http://www.statista.com/statistics/209334/total-number-of-international-tourist-arrivals/ [Accessed 6 of May 2016]

A p p e n d i x

Appendix 1 - Interview guide for the opinion leader

Interview guide for interview with blogger and opinion leader
Date: 8 April 2016

Introduction
My name is Jonatan and my experience of China is....
Right now studying Master's in marketing on Lund University.
We are interested in Chinese culture and Chinese restaurants in Sweden.

Questions
1. What is your relation to China?
    a. How many years have you lived in China?
    b. For how long have you been interested of China?
    c. Why are you a Swedish opinion leader in regards to China?

2. On your blog you are talking about that it is difficult to find "real" Chinese food, can you elaborate on that?
    a. What does "real" Chinese food mean to you?
    b. Why can't you find "real" Chinese food in Sweden?
    c. What value is there in eating "real" Chinese food, compared to a more Swedish version of Chinese food?
    d. What is it that makes Chinese "Chinese food" just Chinese and Swedish "Chinese food" Swedish?

3. What is a Chinese restaurant experience to you?
    a. How do you think that your view on Chinese food and Chinese restaurants have changed after that you have lived in China and learnt more about their culture?
    b. How have you learned about Chinese food and restaurant culture?
    c. More than the food, are there other aspects of what defines a Chinese restaurant experience?
        i. In a Chinese restaurant, where do you think that one should see the Chinese culture affecting factors?
        ii. In regards to the service and environment in the restaurant, what do you think defines a "real" Chinese restaurant experience?

4. In what way do you think that your opinions regarding a Chinese restaurant differ from the general population's opinions?
    a. Why aren't all restaurants in Sweden what you call "real" Chinese restaurants?

Appendix 2 - Interview guide for restaurant owner/chef

Interview guide for interview with owner/chef of Mui Gong
Datum: 10 April 2016

Introduction
Hi, my name is Jonatan.
Right now studying Master's in marketing on Lund University.
Writing the thesis now with two friends.
We are interested in Chinese culture and Chinese restaurants in Sweden.
Would it be ok with you if we record this interview?

Questions
1. Please tell me a bit about yourself.
   a. What is your name?
   b. Where are you from?
   c. When did you move to Sweden?
   d. Tell me about your experiences as a chef.
      i. Where and when did you start?
      ii. What have you accomplished as a chef?

2. Please tell me about your restaurant.
   a. When did you start working here?
   b. Why did you want to do that?
   c. What inspired you to take over this restaurant, and why in Lund?
   d. Do you think that your restaurant differs from a normal Chinese restaurant in Sweden?
   e. What do your customers like the most with the restaurant?

3. About the menu/food and relation to Swedish customers.
   a. When you created the menu for Mui Gong, what did inspire you?
   b. Are the dishes derived from different parts of China?
   c. How is your menu different from other Chinese restaurants here in Lund and Skania?
   d. When you cook for your family or friends, are you cooking dishes from the menu or other type of dishes?
   e. What would you normally cook to your family and how is that different from what swedes would eat at a China restaurant in Sweden?

4. About the decor and its Chinese influence.
   a. When you created Mui Gong and the decor, what inspired you?
   b. What Chinese influences have you chosen to have in your restaurant?
   c. How is your decor different from others in Lund and Skania
   d. What is important for you regarding the decor in a Chinese restaurant?

e. What makes the decor be perceived as very Chinese?

5. You are communicating that you can find "real" Chinese food in your restaurant, what is it that makes it "real"?
   a. What is "real" Chinese food for you?
   b. Why don't you find "real" Chinese food in usual Chinese restaurants in Sweden?
   c. What value do you see in eating "real" Chinese food?
   d. What type of customer do you think you attract with that type of marketing?
   e. How important is it for you that you have the right raw resources to cook with?

6. What is a Chinese restaurant experience for you?
   a. Other than food, what more aspects are there that signifies a Chinese restaurant experience?
   b. In your restaurant, where do you think a Swedish customer can see the Chinese cultural aspect?
   c. Regarding the service/decor, what do you think signifies a "real" Chinese restaurant experience?

1. 介绍一下你自己
   d. 你叫什么名字？
   e. 你是哪里人？
   f. 你什么时候来到瑞典？
   g. 能不能给我们分享你作为厨师的经历？
      i. 你最开始做厨师是什么时候？
      ii. 你是在哪里成为厨师？
      iii. 作为一名厨师你有得到什么成就感吗？

2. 给我们介绍一下你们的餐厅.
   h. 你什么时候开始在这家餐厅工作？
   i. 你为什么想开始在这里工作呢？
   j. 这家餐厅跟其他的瑞典中餐厅有什么区别？
   k. 你们的客人最喜欢你的餐厅的哪个方面？

3. 关于菜单
   l. 当你做了梅江新的菜单，什么激励了你？
   m. 你们餐厅的菜来自很多不同的地方吗？
   n. 你们餐厅的菜跟这里别的中餐厅有什么不一样的？
   o. 当你给家人亲戚做菜，你做你们菜单里面的菜还是别的菜？

p. 你如果给家人亲戚做菜你一般会给他们做什么，你给他们做的菜跟瑞典一般中餐厅的菜有什么区别？

4. 关于装修
q. 当你们装修了梅江，你们的灵感是什么？
r. 在你们专修餐厅的时候你们用了什么中国的元素？
s. 你们家的装修跟skane其他的中餐厅有什么区别？
t. 中餐厅的装修重要吗？你觉得在装修一家地道的中餐厅时什么比较重要？
u. 什么方面会让客人觉得一家中餐厅很中国，很地道？

5. 你在宣传的时候说在你的餐厅能吃到原汁原味的中国菜，那是什么让你能够保证你们的中国菜最正宗？
v. 对你来说什么是正宗的中国菜？
w. 在瑞典为什么很难找到正宗的中餐，你觉得这是为社么呢？
x. 你觉得正宗的中餐给你们的客人带来什么价值？
y. 你们认为什么样的客人会被你们的宣传所吸引，作为正宗的中餐厅？

6. 对你来说什么代表一个中餐厅的经验？
z. 除了菜以外，一个中国餐厅体验还有什么特色？
   i. 你认为在你的餐厅里从哪方面能感受到中国文化的影响？
   ii. 从你们餐厅的装修和服务中，是否能让客人感受到真正的中餐体验？

Appendix 3 - Interview guide for consumers

Outline
- Meet the respondent
- Explain the outline for the observation/interview
- Start audio recording when entering the restaurant
- Dine with the respondent
- Interview respondent (refer to interview guide below)
- Finish interview and leave restaurant
- Write field notes

Open questions to discuss during dinner
1. What is your experience of, and relation to, Chinese culture

2. What is your experience with China? (Only applicable to HCA consumers)

3. Tell me about a Chinese restaurant in China you visited (Only applicable to HCA consumers)
   a. What did you like there?

4. What types of restaurants do you prefer?
   a. Any exotic ones?
   b. Why do you prefer these?

5. Have you been to this restaurant before?
   a. What do you think about it?

Interview guide
1. What is a Chinese restaurant for you?
   a. For what reasons do you visit a Chinese restaurant?
   b. Why do you chose a Chinese restaurant and not another Swedish or exotic one?

2. What is Chinese culture to you?
   a. When you think about Chinese culture what do you think about?
   b. What do you think of when you think of Chinese food?
   c. What do you think about when you think about a Chinese restaurant experience?
   d. Where do you think you get these references from?

3. Tell me about the Chinese restaurant experience we just had
   a. What was your first impression of the restaurant?
   b. Did your experience match your initial impression? What was good/bad?

      c.   Was there any cultural aspects that you noticed that were or were not there?

4. If you were going to eat Chinese food, where would you go?
      a.   How is that restaurant different from this one?
      b.   Why would you rather choose that one/this one?
      c.   What makes you value that one/this one more?

5. (For HCA) What similarities and differences are there between this restaurant and the one in China you told me about? (Connected to question 3 in observation)
      a.   What's your overall opinion of Swedish Chinese restaurants?
      b.   In what way do you think Chinese restaurants in Sweden cater to customers?

6. (For LCA) What similarities and differences do you think there are between this restaurant and a restaurant in China?
      a.   What's your overall opinion of Swedish Chinese restaurants?
      b.   In what way do you think Chinese restaurants in Sweden cater to customers?

7. Did you like the restaurant experience we just had?
      a.   Why do you like it
      b.   What did you value in this restaurant experience?
      c.   What was the best with it?
      d.   Would you come back to this restaurant

8. How did the environment affect your experience?

9. How Chinese do you find the restaurant experience to be here?
      a.   What could make the experience feel more cultural accurate to China?
      b.   Is that important for you?
      c.   Why is it/isn't it important for you?

10. Will a high cultural aspect be important for you when you choose a Chinese restaurant in the future?

Field note

Category	Notes
Space: the physical place or places.	
Actors: people involved.	
Activity: a set of related acts actors did.	
Object: the physical things that are present.	
Act: single actions that actors do.	
Event: a set of related activities that people carry out.	
Time: the sequencing that takes place over time.	
Goal: the things people are trying to accomplish.	
Feeling: The emotions felt and expressed.	

Appendix 4 - Contributing sites during the Netnographic study

The netnographic study was conducted over the course of 30 hours. During the course of this study many sites were visited and evaluated. In order to ease the replication of the study the sites evaluated that fit the criteria presented in "3.4.2 Criteria for choosing the sites" are presented below. In order to keep the list comprehensive and practical, sites where no new insights were gained, or which solely contained material that was not used in the later stages of analysis, are also omitted from this list.

Sites visited
http://www. tripadvisor.se
http://www.matforum.se
https://www.flashback.org/f257
http://www.ungdomar.se/forum/
http://www.kristeribeijing.blogspot.se
http://www.dn.se/mat-dryck/

En restaurang med billig mat och där du vet vad du får... just det, en kinarestaurang

Trots att det bara är en liten del av den svenska befolkningen som har rest till Kina, så har det nästan blivit en svensk vardag att äta kinamat. En restaurang med svart och röd inredning, där maten serveras på buffé och där man skryter om sina kunskaper att äta mat med två pinnar. Ja, det är vad en kinarestaurang är för många svenskar. Men vad hände egentligen med den riktiga kinamaten och varför vill inte svenskar ha den? Varför har svenskar accepterat att en matkultur så extraordinär och orientalisk blir representerad av sötsur sås och friterad banan? Det har en studie vid på Ekonomihögskolan vid Lunds Universitet tagit reda på.

Matkultur är något som har utvecklats på olika ställen i världen genom årtusenden. Det har skett genom att lokala råvaror har används och att matarvet från tidigare generationer har tagits till vara. I dagens samhälle när en matkultur tas från ett ställe i världen och placeras i en annan, så sker ofta en förändring. På grund av att råvaror inte är tillgängliga och att smakpreferenser skiljer sig, så utsetts matkulturen för en adaption. En anpassning till den nya marknaden, där de traditionella och kulturella aspekterna frångås. Där det genuina och autentiska inte tas till vara.

Det smakar inte som hemma

Tre civilekonomstudenter på Lunds Universitet, har genomfört en studie, där de undersöker detta fenomen. De har alla stort intresse för kinesisk kultur och blev förvånade första gången de reste till Kina. I en intervju med en av författarna, berättar Jonatan hur han minns första gången han togs till en restaurang i staden Xiamen. "Jag var helförvånad, jag hade ätit mycket kinamat i Sverige innan jag reste dit, men den här maten var något helt annat."

Sedan första gången han och de två andra författarna var i Kina, har deras bild av kinesisk mat förändrats. "Ingen av oss äter egentligen svensk kinamat längre", säger Niklas och menar på den stora skillnad de upplevt av svensk kinamat och mat i Kina. Det var det som inspirerade studenterna att undersöka kinesisk matkultur och värdet i att behålla det autentiska och genuina, även fast matkulturen förflyttas till ett annat land.

Varför äter svenskar kinamat?

I den konsumentstudie som studenterna utförde, undersöktes två olika typer av svenska konsumenter. Dels konsumenter som tidigare varit i Kina, samt konsumenter som inte varit det. Jonatan säger att "Givetvis hade de olika grupperna olika anledningar till att gå på kinarestaurang. Målet var att undersöka vilket värde som dessa olika konsumenter upplever när de möter genuin och autentisk kinesisk matkultur. Detta genom att gå på en riktigt autentisk kinarestaurang."

I studien visade det sig att den konsumentgrupp som representerade större delen av den svenska befolkningen, hade liknande anledning till att gå till en kinarestaurang som att gå till en snabbmatskedja. Det som konsumenterna förväntade sig av en kinarestaurang var att det skulle vara billigt samt att menyn hade rätter som "fyra-små-rätter" och "friterad kyckling i sötsur sås". Det skulle även vara mycket mat för pengarna och att det skulle finnas en typ av asiatisk inredning. Värdet den typen av konsumenter fick ut av

kinarestaurangupplevelsen var därför högst funktionell, medan konsumenter med erfarenhet från Kina, ville ha en helt annan upplevelse.

Sökandet efter "riktig" kinamat

De konsumenter som hade tidigare erfarenhet av Kina, hade andra mål när de gick på kinarestaurang. De sökte en nostalgisk upplevelse, något som påminde dem om deras resor och tidigare upplevelser. Det som dessa konsumenter la mest vikt vid var maten och processen bakom. Att den var tillagad med rätt råvaror och på ett traditionellt kinesiskt sätt. Att äta fyra-små-rätter, var för dem inget alternativ.

Dessa konsumenter var därför selektiva i sina kinarestaurang besök, de gick inte till den svenska typen av kinarestauranger, utan höll sig till de som serverade "riktig" kinamat. Något som en svensk konsument utan erfarenhet från Kina, tyckte var främmande. Eftersom att dessa konsumenter inte hade någon tidigare erfarenhet av sådan mat, så upplevdes den bara annorlunda. För dem var inte den maten inte "riktig kinamat".