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School of Business

International Marketing Management

Consumers' opinions on scent marketing usage in retail environment

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to examine the opinions and perceptions of Finnish consumers towards scent marketing usage in retail environment. The research concentrates on the two main ways that scent marketing is used in retail environment; usage as a part of the branding strategy and subliminal usage. The research method is qualitative. Data was collected from five consumer interviews. The findings show that consumers have a positive opinion on the usage of scent marketing in retail environment. There is a preference towards the usage of scent marketing as a brand-building tool and the usage as a brand-building tool was seen more acceptable by the consumers than the subliminal usage of scent. However, subliminal use of scent was not seen completely negative, since consumers believe that buying decision is often based on more important factors than the scent, for instance price. Consumer do not believe that a subliminal scent can affect a lot on their buying behaviour, except occasionally when making an impulse purchase decision.

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on tutkia suomalaisten kuluttajien mielipiteitä ja käsityksiä tuoksumarkkinoinnin käytöstä vähittäistavarakauppa olosuhteissa. Tutkielma keskittyy tuoksumarkkinoinnin kahteen pääasialliseen osa-alueeseen vähittäistavarakaupassa; tuoksumarkkinointiin osana brändäystä ja tuoksumarkkinoinnin alitajuntaiseen käyttöön. Tutkielma on laadullinen tutkimus. Aineisto kerättiin viideltä suomalaiselta kuluttajalta ja aineistonkeruumenetelmänä toimi haastattelu. Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat kuluttajien mielipiteiden olevan positiivisia tuoksumarkkinoinnin käyttöä kohtaan. Tuloksien mukaan kuluttajat suosivat tuoksumarkkinoinnin käyttöä enemmän brändäyksessä kuin tuoksumarkkinoinnin alitajuista käyttöä. Tuoksumarkkinoinnin alitajuista käyttöä ei kuitenkaan todettu täysin negatiiviseksi, sillä kuluttajat uskovat, että ostopäätös tehdään perustuen tärkeämpiin asioihin kuin tuoksuun, kuten esimerkiksi tuotteen hintaan perustuen. Kuluttajat uskovat, että alitajuisella käytöllä ei ole suurta vaikutusta asiakkaan ostopäätökseen muulloin kuin joissakin yksittäisissä heräteostoksissa.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The first chapter introduces the background and main purpose of the research. Research gap and research questions are presented, theoretical framework is defined, and delimitations and research methods are discussed. Shortly, the first chapter gives a comprehensive overview of the thesis and its structure.

1.1 Background of the research and research gap

Marketing has seen dramatic changes in the past decades. As the technology has developed, the options available for marketers have increased and created a whole new world for marketers where marketing is no longer a one-way communication with the consumers. The changing world of marketing has enabled marketers to create new communication methods to deliver their message, for instance social media communication. Technology has enabled the creation and common usage of scent marketing. However, technological developments have also enabled consumers to become more critical towards companies' marketing efforts and products, for instance to create nationwide boycotts and protests towards companies, as was the case of Nike and its sweatshop allegations (Nisen, 2013).

In the modern world where competition is getting fiercer and fiercer each day, companies have been forced to find new ways to attract the attention of potential customers. As the western culture in general, marketing has become more individualized since consumers demand more service and more personalized products. However, many companies are failing to attract the attention of the customer and many advertising campaigns don't register anything distinctive in the customer's mind. Many products turn out to be interchangeable commodities instead of powerful brands. In order to stand-out brands need to be powered up with full sensory and emotional experience. (Kotler, 2005)

Companies are constantly trying to find new ways to beat their competitors in more creative ways, and marketing initiatives are used both in large scale such as TV-

or social media campaigns as well as in individual level such as personalized product offerings. May it be the IKEA's confusing store design, which guides the customer through the whole store or the branded smell of Abercrombie & Fitch, there are ways how marketers are trying to affect customers to buy more without the customer even realizing those effects. When we see an advertisement on TV or get a discount coupon on our mailbox, we all know how it is meant to affect us – to buy the product. However, there are ways to affect people, so subtle and unnoticeable, that most of us aren't even aware of their existence. One of these methods is scent marketing – a term, which refers to the usage of smell in advertising products and relies on the neuropsychological effects of the olfactory stimuli – emotionalization and recall by smell (Emsenhuber, 2011, 344).

Scent marketing creates possibilities for marketers to affect consumers both subliminally and on a conscious level. Scent marketing can be used as a product scent, where the scent itself is the product, such as perfume. Scents can be used as a marketing scent, where the scent is used as a promotional tactic, for instance the traditional example of the smell of baking in a house that is for sale. The third type of scents used in marketing is ambient scents, further divided in objective ambient scent and covert objective ambient scent. Ambient scent itself is defined as a general odour that is present in the environment, but does not emanate from a product. Objective ambient scent refers to the application of ambient scent technology with the intention of affecting consumer's attitudes and behaviour in order to benefit the retailer. Covert objective ambient scent is similar to objective ambient scent, but differs from it, as suggested by the term already, is subliminal. (Bradford & Desrochers, 2009) Companies are also able to create their own specific scent to strengthen their brand, which is known as signature scent or a scent logo (Dublino, 2012). This carefully designed scent can be used in the company's retail stores, as is the case with Abercrombie& Fitch and Singapore Airlines (Lindstrom, 2005, 2-22).

There are around 100 000 odours in the world, from which 1000 are considered to be primary odours. Combination of different odours creates multiple possibilities to the creation of scents. Scents have been proven to affect mood; unpleasant odours affect negatively (Shiffman, Sattely Miller, Suggs & Graham, 1994) and

pleasant odours affect positively (Rétiveau, Chambers IV & Milliken, 2004). For marketers, this creates an interesting opportunity to try to affect consumers' mood positively, and through this, make consumers spend more time in their stores and perceive the store and brand more appealing and positive.

As scent marketing is quite recent development in the modern marketing world, the research has mainly concentrated on studying scent marketing from the point of view of marketers. However, the consumers have become more and more aware of their rights and their possibilities to affect companies and their marketing efforts, thus, marketers are no longer safe when it comes to unethical actions or actions that the public doesn't support. Consumers are more increasingly making product purchase decisions based on their personal values, which is proven by trend of CRM, fair trade and organic products. Based on this, it could be argued that research on consumers' opinion on marketing method, which can be highly manipulative and often affects people unconsciously, could give valuable information for marketers.

Consumers' opinions and perceptions provide information that can be used in order to avoid bad publicity, which could be harmful for the company. Do consumers accept the use of scents, which have a direct link to their emotions, memory and mood, in marketing? Are consumers worried about the effects of artificial scents in public environments? How should marketers take into account people with allergies or over-sensitive people who react negatively on scents? Do consumers believe, that they have the right to know about the subliminal marketing methods applied on them? What kind of managerial implications the consumers' opinions and perceptions have? Are legislation changes needed or is the code of conduct enough for marketers to respect consumers' opinions?

The research gap rises from the fact that currently, there isn't information on consumers' opinions and perceptions towards scent marketing. Scent marketing campaigns have showed that consumers are worried about the usage of scent marketing, as was the case of Got Milk? - campaign published in San Francisco, where the advertisement campaign using scent as one element got cancelled due

to the public's complaints. The Got Milk? - campaign included stark black ads located in bus shelters in San Francisco downtown. Along with the visual advertisement, scent strips eliciting the scent of chocolate chip cookies were placed in the bus shelters. The scent could only be noticed subliminally. As the news broke off of the campaign before it had even started properly, several activists groups complained about the campaign claiming it was harmful for people with disabilities, such as people suffering of chemical allergies, obesity and diabetes. Eventually, the campaign was cancelled due to the pressure of the activists group, showing that the power of consumers can be quite strong. (Cuneo, 2006)

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008) consumer's fear for subliminal advertising has been around for years. In 1957 a researcher announced that his research which was carried out in cinema, where the viewers were flashed the phrases "Eat popcorn" and "Drink Coca-Cola" for every five seconds in for 1/3000th of seconds, and viewers did not recognize these messages consciously, resulted in consumer's buying 58% more popcorn and 18 % more Coca-Cola. This resulted in the fear of brainwashing in consumers and lead to the practise becoming illegal in California and Canada. However, the researcher later admitted making up the data, and even though it has later been proved that subliminal messages and consumer behaviour are not connected, the fear in the consumers still seems to exist. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008, 143-144)

Recent insights on influence tactics and persuasion have emphasized that humans often react quite "mindlessly" to stimuli, which trigger certain automated responses (Dijksterhuis, Smith, van Baaren & Wigboldus, 2005). Consumers also make some decisions without information processing and bypassing attitudes, which is the opposite action compared to conscious decision-making and in these cases consumers make buying decisions truly on impulse. These kinds of impulse choices are most often strongly affected by subtle cues in the environment. (Dijksterhuis et al. 2005).

Based on the previous discussion, it is obvious that marketers, retailers and companies in general are trying to affect consumers through scents, either by subliminal methods or by making the use of scent a clear part of their branding strategy. As was proven by Dijksterhuis et al. (2005) it is also a valid concern for consumers to be worried about the effects of scent as a marketing tool. Therefore, research on consumer opinions and perceptions towards scent marketing's different usage methods is relevant and needed.

1.2 Research problem and research questions

The starting point of this research is to study the consumers' opinions in relation to scent marketing. The research aims to understand consumers' opinions concentrating on scent marketing as a subliminal marketing tool as well as to find out how is scent marketing perceived when it is known to be part of the brand. The current research of scent marketing is concentrated in studying the marketing method from a company perspective and, thus, excludes the consumer side of the phenomenon. Albeit, there is research on subliminal marketing from a consumer perspective and consumer opinions towards subliminal marketing, there is a lack of research on consumer perspective concentrating directly on scent marketing both on the subliminal side of the marketing method and also when it is used as a one tool in brand building. As consumers' opinions have been established, the aim is to find similarities and differences between consumers. The information found in the study can be used in the development of scent marketing towards usage that would be mutually beneficial for consumers as well as for companies and retailers.

The main research question and sub-questions are described below:

What are the opinions and perceptions of the Finnish consumers' towards scent marketing usage in retail environment?

1. How do the consumers see the subliminal aspects of scent marketing?

2. How do the consumers see scent marketing when used as a brand-building tool?

3. How do consumer opinions on scent marketing differ when scent marketing is subliminal and when scent marketing is build to be part of the brand itself?

1.3 Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework describes the structure of the research and illustrates the theory on which the research is built on. The framework consists of overall topic of scent marketing, which is divided into smaller topics that are essential parts of scent marketing, such as scent marketing usage subliminally and scent marketing usage in branding. Also, olfactory sense and its connection to consumer emotions, mood and memories are explained, since the understanding of these topics is essential to be able to understand the reasons behind scent marketing. Figure 1 presents the theoretical framework of the study.

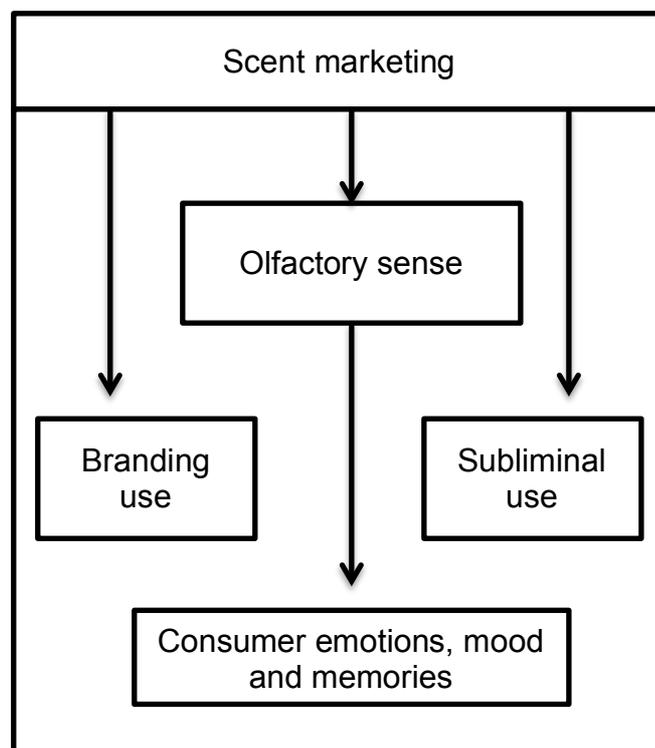


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the study

1.4 Delimitations

The research is delimited in scent marketing usage in retail environment. This is due to the fact that scent marketing a rising trend in marketing world, especially in retailing, growing approximately 10% annually (Dublino, 2014). The topic is also an under researched topic, especially when considering the consumer side of the research. The choice can also be justified with the information that the study is expected to produce; the results can be expected to produce new insights into consumers' opinions and behaviour in retail environment when scent marketing is used, and thus, provide possibilities for development of the marketing technique.

Atmospherics of the environment in which a product is sold are believed to affect greatly on marketplace responses. Unlike products, where the scent only has an affect on the perceptions of that particular product, ambient scents can influence reactions on all the products sold in the scented environment, including products which would be difficult or inappropriate to add fragrance, and, thus make it more interesting choice for marketers, since it enables the promotion of many products instead of just one. (Gulas & Bloch, 1995) Thus, delimiting the choice on ambient scent marketing offers the possibility to increase knowledge on the whole store environment, instead of just one particular product.

1.5 Definitions of key concepts

In the below chapter the definitions for key concepts are provided.

Scent marketing refers to the usage of smell in advertising products and relying on the neuropsychological effects of the olfactory stimuli – emotionalization and recall by smell. Scent marketing shouldn't be confused with the term scent advertising, which refers to perfume advertising (Emsenhuber, 2011, 344). The objective of scent marketing is to set mood, promote products or position a brand (Vlahos, 2007).

Subliminal advertising can be defined as “a technique of exposing consumers to product pictures, brand names or other marketing stimuli without the consumers having conscious awareness. Once exposed to subliminal marketing stimulus, the consumer is believed to decode the information and act upon it without being able to acknowledge a communication source.” (Trappey, 1996, 517)

Branding refers to the strategic processes used to create and maintain meanings that are attached to products, services or organizations (Solomon, Bamossy, Askergaard & Hogg, 2013, 38)

Consumer behaviour refers to the mental and physical activities which are undertaken by consumers to acquire and consume products so as to fulfil their needs and wants (Mittal, Holbrook, Beatty, Raghubir, & Woodside, 2008, 9). It should, however, be noted that consumer behaviour has several elements in it and the above definition is quite narrow.

Ambient Scent refers to “scent that does not emanate from a specific object but is present in the environment” (Spangenberg, Crowley & Henderson, 1996, 67).

1.6 Research methods

Theoretical part of the research is based on current literature, which has been collected from numerous articles, scientific publications, books, web-based information and other online publications. The main topics discussed in the literature were about olfactory sense, scent marketing and subliminal advertising. This literature was then analysed, and based on the analysis a relevant theoretical framework was constructed. The empirical part of thesis will be discussed extensively later on in chapter 4.

The research method of the thesis was a qualitative case study research. The purpose is to study the underlying opinion of consumers of a contemporary marketing phenomenon. Qualitative study was chosen for the research, since

opinions are often in the form of qualitative data. Qualitative research also allows more in-depth understanding of the consumer opinions, and thus, it is more relevant concerning the research question.

The sample group was interviewed based on a semi-structured interview, in which the interviewer had a list of themes and questions. Semi-structured interview was chosen for the interview method because it allows the subjects to express their own opinions freely. However, discussions on the themes were not exactly similar in each interview, due to the subjects' own personal opinions, which guided the interviews to some extent.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The structure of the thesis is illustrated in figure 2. The figure shows the order of chapters and defines the allocation of the theoretical framework and empirical analysis as well as conclusions. Figure 2 also shows the positions of the sub-questions, which have been presented in chapter 1.2.

Scent marketing relies on the unique capabilities of the human olfactory sense and builds its success upon the different and effective way to interact with emotions, moods and memories. Thus, the main concept in theoretical framework is scent marketing, which acts as an umbrella for the framework and for the thesis structure. However, the thesis is built first explaining the functioning and abilities of the human olfactory sense in order for the reader to be able to understand the topic comprehensively. After the foundation for scent marketing has been built, the thesis moves on to explaining scent marketing on a general level. Scent marketing is then divided into two main categories based on how it is used, and thus, theory on scent marketing usage as a branding tool and subliminal usage is provided. After the theoretical framework of the study, thesis explains the research methodology and data collection methods. Data analysis is presented on chapter 5 and finally, conclusions will include theoretical and managerial implications, limitations of the study and directions for future research.

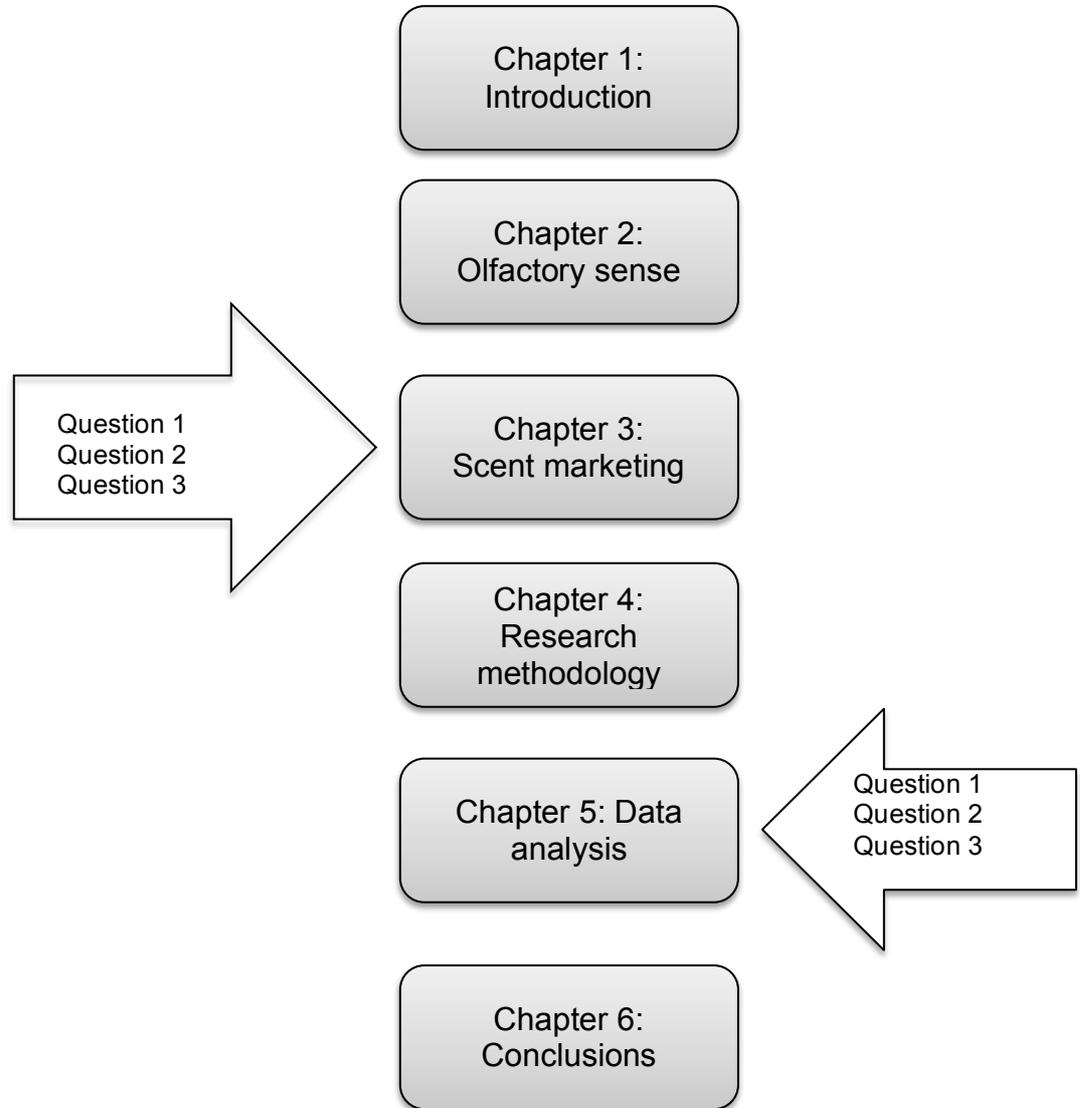


Figure 2. The structure of the thesis

2 OLFACTORY SENSE

The myth of the olfactory sense has been around for centuries. Ancient civilizations, such as the ones in Mediterranean area or Middle East invented perfumes. Scents were used to render homage to gods and used as a class distinction between people – only the ones belonging to higher castes were able to afford the luxury fluids and scent themselves and their homes. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 345-347)

The history of mankind and scents varies across cultures. In Asian cultures, scents have been a part of the daily life and play an important role in traditions and medicine of the Far East. Unlike the Western culture, where the phenomenon of deodorization has taken the control of smells, the Eastern Asian cultures preserve their olfactory sense, regard their sense of smell as a natural part of life and there are no inhibitions in this context. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 345-347)

The Western civilization however has had a rather opposite reaction to the human olfactory sense. Smells, especially the not so pleasant ones, have been considered as a disturbance. They have been tried to cover with different methods such as perfumes and scented powders and eventually smells have become a taboo in the European societies. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 345-347)

As the history developed to the beginning of 20th century, the launch of Channel no. 5 marked a new era for the Western history of scents. Perfumes were no longer luxury products and no longer did scents indicate a social class of an individual. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 345-347)

Currently, we are living in a third olfactory revolution. Recent discoveries on the physiological aspects of the olfactory sense, the discussions of olfactory disturbance caused by cigarette smoke and biogas plants and the growing interest of using scents for marketing purposes indicate a new relevance for scents in our society. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 345-347)

2.1 Olfactory sense's physiological side

The olfactory sense has been a mystery to the mankind for a long time. Historical use of scents shows that the olfactory sense has been a misunderstood, but yet an intriguing sense. Scents have been connected with diseases and immoral behaviour but at the same time they have been used in religion as a spiritual instrument, as medical treatment in the Asian cultures and already centuries ago to lure customers to the various stands in the market square. (Emsenhuber 2011, 344-346)

The recent discoveries on the olfactory sense have shed light on this sense, which has often been overlooked. The first olfactory receptor was decoded in 1991, (Buck & Axel, 1991) from which the researchers Linda Buck and Richard Axel received a Nobel price in 2006. The research on the olfactory sense is quite recent and ground-breaking results in understanding the human olfactory sense have been made in recent years, showing evidence that the mysterious sense affecting human emotions in an irresistible way has started to become more understandable.

The olfactory sense is one of the most primal and deeply rooted senses which humans possesses. Our sense of smell functions as an alert system. Evolutionally and neurologically considered, the sense of smell is the fundamental instinct, and this functionality is still visible today. (Bradford & Desrochers, 2009, 142)

Realizing a smell starts with a biochemical process which is based on a lock and key principle. The olfactory epithelium, which is located at the upper end of the human nose, consists of about ten million olfactory receptors, which are sensitive to about 350 different volatile components. When an odorant molecule is connected to the right receptor, an impulse is sent to the olfactory nerve, also known as the olfactory bulb, which is connected to the different cerebral areas of the human brain. The extraordinary characteristics of olfaction can be explained with these neuronal connections. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 348) Accordingly, the

human body has between 6 and 10 million receptor cells, which are located at the olfactory epithelium (Strugnell & Jones, 1999, cited in Ward, Davies & Kooijman, 2006).

Due to the superficial location of the nasal mucosa the olfactory receptor neurons have a direct access to the odorant molecules. This means that the neurons are exceptionally exposed, and can be damaged more or less continually by airborne pollutants, allergens, microorganisms and other harmful substances, (Sinauer Associates, 2001) explaining partly why the sense of smell decreases with aging (MedlinePlus, 2014). Indeed, a new born baby has 300 per cent greater sense of smell than a grown-up (Lindstrom, 2005, 3).

Perceiving odours is unavoidable and the only way to stop spontaneously perceiving the surrounding odours is to stop breathing. This, as we all know, is impossible. This inability is caused partly by the lack of olfactory palpebral and partly by the direct connection of the olfactory epithelium and long-term memory. The signals sent by the olfactory stimuli are processed without any filtering in the human brain, and odours are saved in the long-term memory in combination with the current smell situation, which includes the surrounding environment such as the locations, plants, persons and emotions. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 348)

The olfactory sense is the slowest sense of the human body. Even though it might be the slowest human sense, the odour sensations persist for longer lengths of time than sensations experienced by other senses. The olfactory sense differs from other senses such as visual or hearing sense in that it is not spatially specific. This in practise means that it's impossible for humans to localize precisely spatial coordinates for olfactory sources if other physical cues are absent. (Herz & Engen, 1996, 301)

2.3 Connection to memory, emotion and mood

The olfactory sense, memory and emotions have a special connection. The odour-

evoked memories are unusually strong compared to memories evoked by other senses. This special connection may be explained with the direct and intense contact with the neuronal substrates of emotion and memory. The primary olfactory cortex forms a direct anatomical link with the amygdala, which is a hippocampal complex of the limbic system. (Herz & Engen, 1996, 300) The amygdala is separated from the olfactory nerve by two synapses and is critical for the expression and experience of emotion (Aggleton & Mishkin, 1986, cited in Herz & Engen, 1996) as well as for human emotional memory (Cahill, Babinsky, Markowitsch & McGaugh, 1995, cited in Herz & Engen, 1996). The olfactory nerve and hippocampus, which is involved in the selection and transmission on information in working memory, short- and long-term memory transfer and different declarative memory functions, are separated by only three synapses (Eichenbaum, in press; Schwerdtfeger, Buhl, & Gemroth, 1990; Staubli, Ivy, & Lynch, 1984, 1986, cited in Herz & Engen, 1996). The two medial temporal lobe structures – the amygdala and hippocampal complex - are linked to two independent memory systems and each have unique characteristic functions. In emotional situations the two systems interact in an important but subtle way. (Phelps, 2004, 198)

Research has shown that odour- evoked memories are more emotionally loaded than memories elicited through other modalities (Herz, 1996; Herz & Cupchik 1995, cited in Herz & Engen, 1996). According to Herz and Engen (1996) Herz and Cupchik (1995) studied the odour-evoked memories and whether they elicit more emotional memories than verbal cues. In the study, the subjects were shown sixteen emotionally evocative paintings, which were paired with sixteen cues, either odours or verbal odour labels. The subjects painting recall and associated emotional experience was tested 48 hours later by cued recall. The results then showed, that despite the painting recall accuracy was equivalent with both cue types, the subjects showed more emotion elicited in the recollection, experienced more emotion and higher emotional intensity as well as greater confidence in emotional memory when the recall was associated to an odour. Later on in a follow-up study (Herz, 1996) which used the Herz and Chupchik's (1995) methodology cues represented in olfactory, tactile or visual form, for instance, the

smell, feel or sight of an apple, were compared as memory associates to emotional paintings. Results showed that memory accuracy didn't vary between the cues, but odour cues led to the most emotionally potent memory experiences. These research results prove that odours are equally potent with other stimuli in producing accurate event recollections, but that odours evoke memories, which are emotionally more potent. (Herz & Engen, 1996, 306)

Odours can affect to mood. Pleasant odours have been proved to affect positively on an individual's mood (Rétiveau et al. 2004) where as unpleasant odours have been proved to affect negatively on an individual's mood (Shiffman et al. 1994). Moods in turn affect on consumer behaviour and consumption experiences. Research has shown that consumers linger longer in positive-mood environment, thus, explaining retailers' willingness to play good music in a store. Generally, good moods make consumers respond positively to market stimuli, bad moods affect consumers reversely. Consumption experience in turn is affected positively if the consumer is on a good mood, and negatively if the consumer is on a bad mood. (Mittal et al. 2008, 49) The functioning of the olfactory scent and its connection to memory, emotion and mood is illustrated in figure 3.

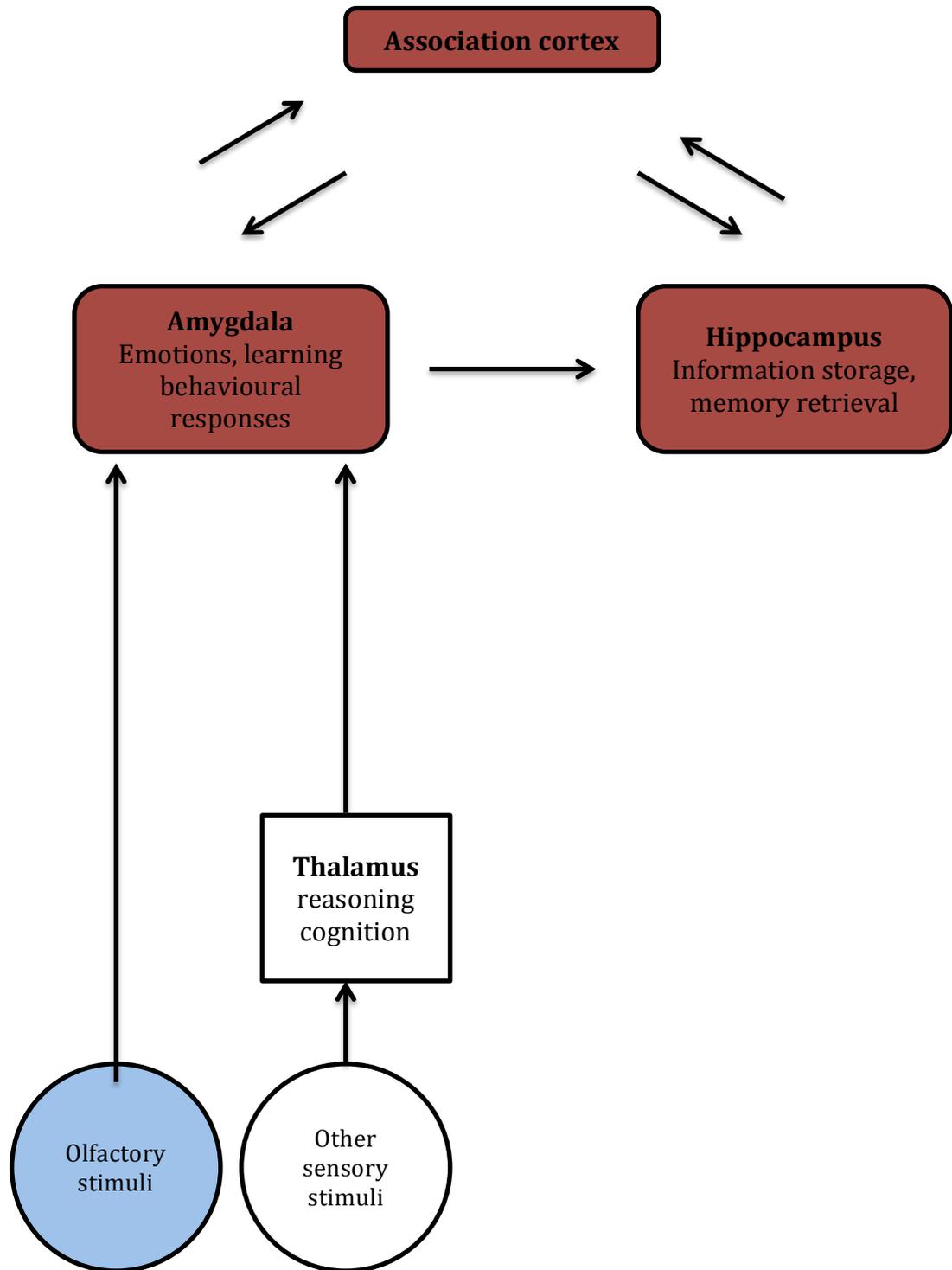


Figure 3. The emotional brain (Kivioja, 2012, 12)

2.4 Negative sides of the olfactory sense

The thesis has discussed the olfactory sense in a very positive light; how it has a strong connection to memories, how strong emotions it can create and how it is one of the strongest senses humans have. However, there are negative sides on the olfactory sense, and in some cases it isn't as accurate as we seem to think it is.

The olfactory sense can be fooled and confused. An important part of the olfactory sense's functionality is congruence. The smell and the other environment in which the smell is presented needs to be consistent and there needs to be congruence between, for instance, the product and the smell presented with it. The molecules and receptors of the olfactory sense seem to have a rather simplistic correspondence, but smell as a sense appears to contribute to human perception of the totality of a set of stimuli in a complex way. In practise, this means that smell is actually only one element of the information drawn from the different senses, which is processed to arrive at final cognition. This element creates a situation in which the totality of perceived experience can be different from the individual perceptions attached to a particular stimulus. As to highlight the importance of different elements in creating an olfactory stimulus, such as taste and visual elements, an example can be given. If a smell is associated with an unusual colour of food, people can sometimes be unable to identify correctly what they are presented with. This shows, that an experience isn't always a simple additive of summation of one stimuli encountered, but instead, a complex interaction in which judgement, norms, past experience and individual's expectations all play a part in. (Ward et al. 2006, 293) From this it's possible to draw a conclusion, that if there is no congruence in the scent and the environment it is presented in, there will be problems and misunderstandings in the human mind. Perceiving the smell can then create negative reactions in individuals and, if the scent is used in marketing purposes, there might be an exactly opposite reaction as to what was intended to be the reaction.

Differences in individual's olfactory perception, sensitivity, discriminative ability and

capacity to recognize and identify odours are wide (Milotic, 2003, 187). Scents can revive long forgotten memories (Milotic, 2003,188), which can be either positive or negative. This information shows, that perceiving the smell is an individual process that might be difficult to forecast. Of course, there are scents that are generally considered to be pleasant, but when it comes to an individual level of the consumer, an unexpected and an unintended negative reaction can be caused to a certain individual even though the marketer has intended to use a scent that creates a pleasant and positive feeling towards the environment.

3 SCENT MARKETING

3.1 What is scent marketing?

Scent marketing can be defined as the usage of smell in advertising products and relying on the neuropsychological effects of the olfactory stimuli – emotionalization and recall by smell. Scent marketing shouldn't be confused with the term scent advertising, which refers to perfume advertising. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 344) Vlahos (2007) defined scent marketing as a way to set a mood, promote products or position a brand.

Scent marketing can be roughly divided into two main categories; ambient scenting, which refers to filling a space with a pleasant smell, and scent branding which refers to creating a signature scent to a brand (Elejalde-Ruiz, 2014). However, scent marketing can be used in multiple ways. The signature scents, also known as scent logos, are individual scents that are developed specifically for the needs of a certain company and used exclusively by the company to convey the brand's "feel" to the customers and are often used by department stores and hotels (Pappas, 2015). The signature scent needs to be consistent with the image and emotions of the brand (Dublino, 2012). Bradford and Desrochers (2009) have created a more specific definition of scent marketing than the above mentioned two categories. They divide scent marketing into three different categories. These categories are marketer scent, product scent and ambient scent. The third category, ambient scent, can be further divided in two categories; objective ambient scent and covert objective ambient scent. The categories are illustrated below.

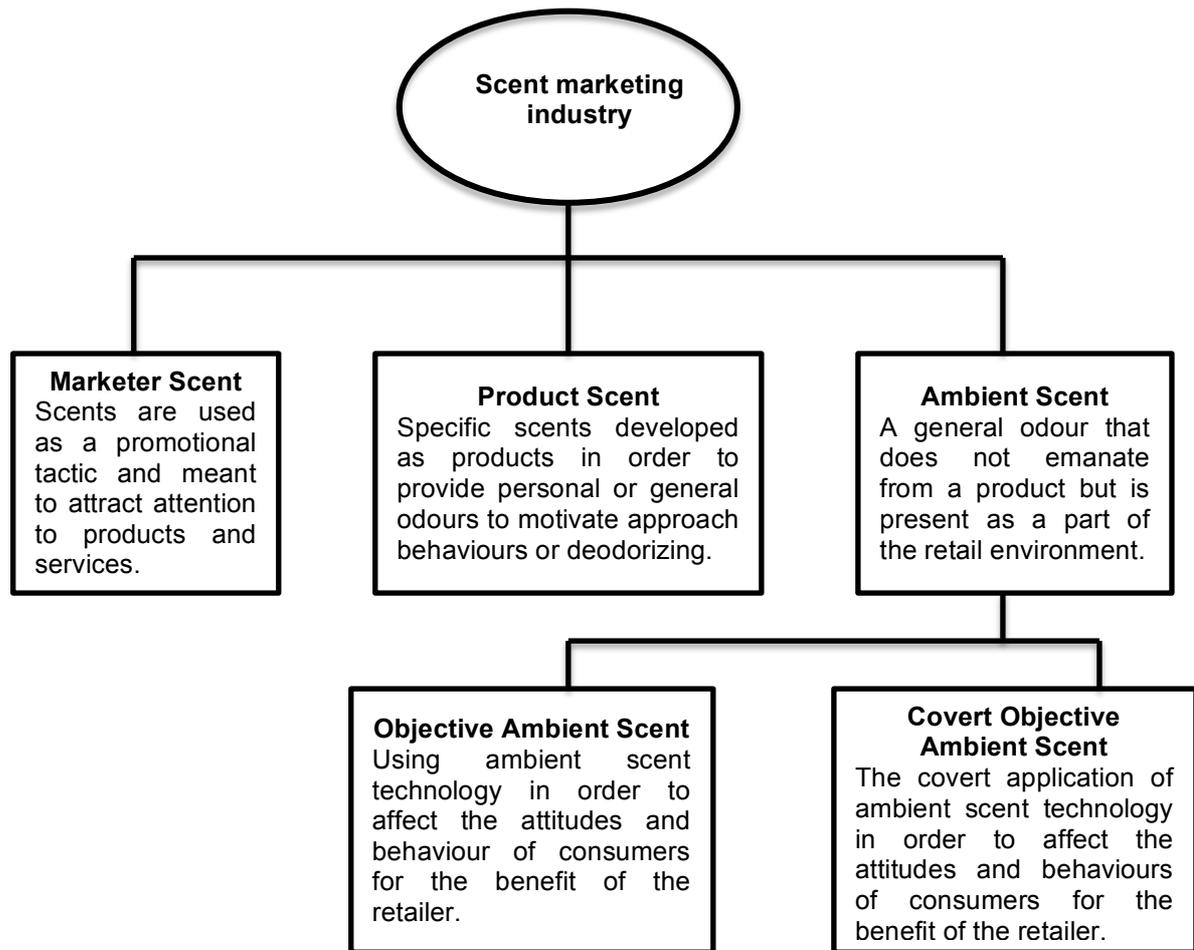


Figure 4. Framework for using scents in marketing (Bradford & Desrochers, 2009, 142)

The marketer scent of the framework refers to the usage of scents as a promotional tactic. This can be for example the new car smell at a car dealer or the classical example of the smell of baking at a home that is for sale. The second type presented in the framework is the product scent. This means that the product itself is a scent and includes products such as perfumes and air fresheners. The third type, ambient scent, refers to scent, which does not emanate from a product but is present in the retail environment. This third type can further be distinguished in two subcategories, the objective ambient scent and the covert objective ambient scent. Objective ambient scent is defined as “the application of ambient scent technology with the intention of affecting the attitudes and behaviour of consumers for the benefit of the retailer”. (Bradford & Desrochers, 2010, 142-143) Covert objective ambient scent resembles the objective ambient scent in that it does not

emanate from a product and it is used purposefully (Bradford & Desrochers, 2010, 147). However, it differs from the objective ambient scent in that it is covert meaning that it is not openly acknowledged or displayed but does not necessarily require that something is hidden (Martin & Smith, 2008, cited in Bradford & Desrochers, 2012, 147). Ambient scents are often believed to have the potential to create a positive mood states in consumers, and later on turn this positive mood state as more favourable store and product evaluations, and eventually, increase sales revenue (Morrin, 2010, 76).

It has been established that scents can retrieve long-forgotten memories (Milotic, 2003, 188) and affect on people's emotions and to the depth of the emotions (Herz & Cupchik, 1995 cited in Herz & Engen, 1996). However, there is controversy in the academia on whether scents actually have any effect on consumers' mood. In their research Bone & Ellen (1999) showed that only 16.1% of 206 tests showed that scents have an effect on mood, which in this case was defined as; 1) arousal, e.g anxiety or sleepiness 2) valence, e.g. pleasantness or unpleasantness. Similar results have also been found by Spangenberg et al. (1996) in a research examining the ambient scent in a simulated retail environment. Spangenberg's et al. (1996) research showed that the nature or the intensity of the scent appeared to be less important factor in affecting to the mood of the consumers. However, the study did suggest that ambient scent might lead to an enhanced subjective experience for retail consumers.

Despite controversy in academic research concerning the effects on mood, it has been proven that ambient scents can affect to consumer's ability to evaluate merchandise (Spangenberg et al. 1996) or to their willingness to spend more money (Hirsch, 1995). Spangenberg et al. (1996) also show that consumers who shop in scented stores perceive to spend less time in the store than consumers who shop in not scented store. However, Hirsch (1995) as well as Herz (2011) claim that scents can not influence unintended behaviour, although they do have an ability to increase the odds to influence behaviour what was already intended by the individual.

Ambient scents and product scents differ greatly in the benefits, which they can bring to the retailer. Where product scents are aimed to promote a certain product, ambient scents can potentially affect reactions on all products sold at the same environment, including products, which could be otherwise inappropriate to add fragrance (Gulas & Bloch, 1995).

The following graph illustrates why scent marketing is effective and why scent marketing is of interest to marketers through its connection to memories and mood.

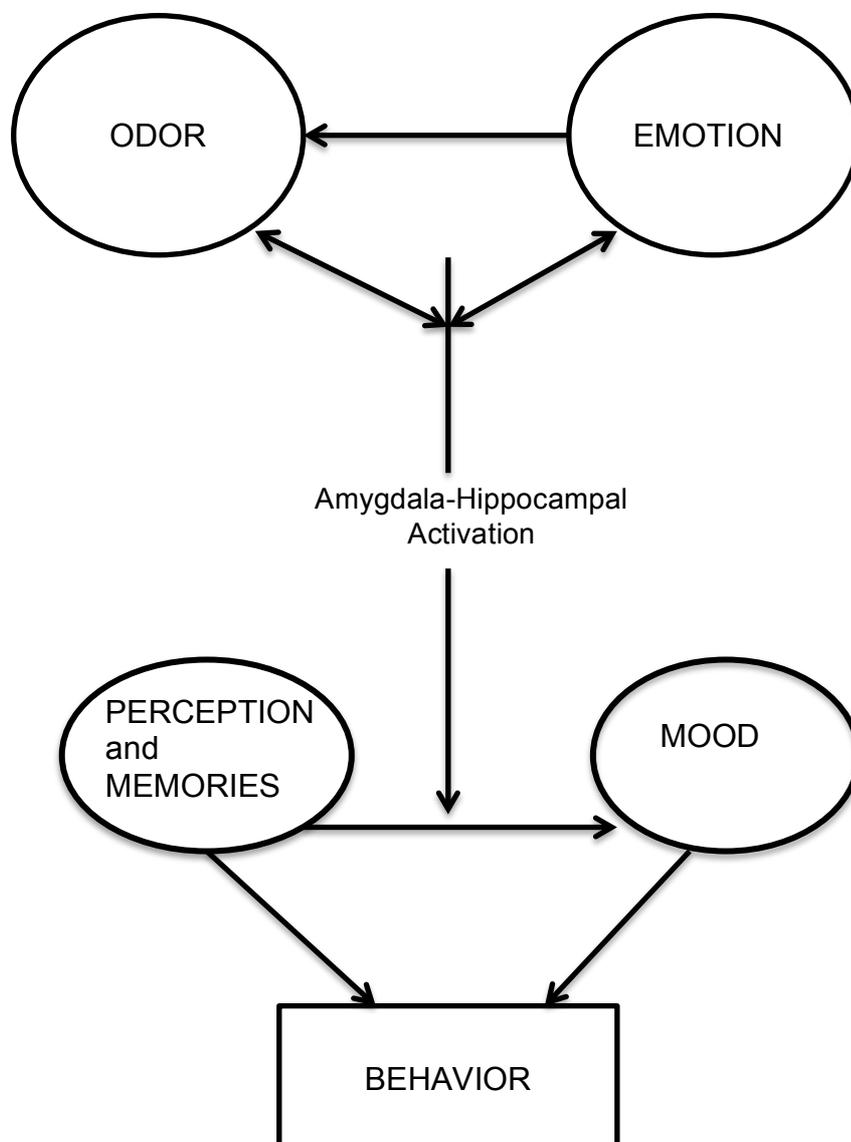


Figure 5. Connection of odors, emotions, memories and mood to behaviour. (Herz, 2010, 103)

The above figure shows that emotion and a novel odour are experienced together. Through amygdala-hippocampal mediation the odour is associated with the emotion that then produces the hedonic responses and memories that are elicited by the odour. As a function of the acquired hedonic valence and emotional associations, subsequent exposure to the odour affects mood and harmoniously influences behaviour. (Herz, 2010, 103) For marketers, the connection to emotions and mood is interesting due to the possibilities it offers in enhancing consumer's perception of the brand and the retail environment. Once an association is formed with a certain scent, it can stay with the individual for a lifetime (Herz, 2011). For retailers and advertisers this means a chance to tap into the scent association to help to establish an emotional intimacy between the brand and consumer (Harrop, 2011).

As already mentioned scent marketing has many factors which need to be taken into account when designing a scent marketing campaign, such as the congruence of the scent and product and what type of scent marketing method is chosen. Apart from these relevant factors, scent marketing can be designed to be highly targeting marketing method. People's preferences towards a certain scent are also affected by the person's age and gender as well as culture. Obviously, there are individual differences to scent preferences and the following tables do not apply to all people, but provide some direction to the scent preferences of different demographics.

In the following table scents that appeal to people based on their gender are presented.

Table 1. Preferences of scent based on gender (Pappas, 2015)

Male	Female
New car	Lavender
Fresh-cut grass	Floral
Tires	Vanilla

Preferences towards a certain scent are also affected by the person's age. The following table provides examples of scents that appeal to people based on their age.

Table 2. Preferences of scent based on age (Pappas, 2015)

Ages 18-35	Ages 36-50	Ages 51 and over
Bubble gum	Play-Doh	Grass
Heated plastic	Crayola Crayons	Trees
Baby Powder	Chlorine	Hay
Coffees	Bubble gum	Horses
Teas	Baby powder	Snow
Mojitos	Suntan lotion	Sand

People's preferences for scents based on their age is highly affected on the decade when they grew up, and thus, in the future the scent preference of different age groups will change. Target group's age can bring interesting dimensions for scent marketing campaigns, and thus should be considered when designing a scent marketing campaign; Hamley's, a children's toy store, used the scent of pina colada, which made the parents linger longer (Hilpern, 2011). The scent of an alcoholic drink might not be the first fragrance to think of when thinking of scenting a children's toy store, however, in the end it is the parents who make the decision to go into the store and are the ones paying for the products.

Cultural background also affects on people's preferences towards a scent. The following table illustrates the differences between Finnish and American consumers.

Table 3. Preferences of scents based on cultural background (Pasila, 2009)

Finnish consumers	American consumers
Scents that are close to nature e.g. forest and tar	Sweet fragrances
Freshly cut grass	Vanilla
Coffee	Cinnamon

Cultural issues affecting on consumers preference show that each country has its own heritage when it comes to scents. For instance, the scents mentioned in table 3 for the preferences of scents reflect the traditional elements of the Finnish culture. Forests are part of the national history and Finnish people are one of the world's biggest coffee drinkers. The sweet scents preferred in U.S would be too much for the Finnish nation that is used to natural scents and values traditional scents that are tied to local culture (Kivioja, 2014). Thus, cultural traditions and values create dimensions for scent marketing that needs to be taken into account in order to make the scent marketing campaign successful.

3.2 The effects of scent on consumer behaviour

Literature review on scent marketing showed, that currently the research on scent marketing is concentrated in ambient scent and what kind of effects the ambient scent has on consumer behaviour. Even though it is scientifically been proven that smell can evoke strong emotions and memories, it seems that there is an on going debate whether scent marketing can have any effect on consumer behaviour or is it just the illusion and wishful thinking created by marketing managers. The questioning of the effects of scent in consumer behaviour was the underlying idea on many empirical researches and scientific publications on scent marketing. This criticism was also evident in many other sources found through secondary data collection such as articles, blogs and other online sources. Table 4 has collected published researches on scent marketing in which the issue is discussed.

Table 4. Researches on scent marketing.

Author	Name	Year	Place	Result
Hircsh A.R	Effects of Ambient Odors on Slot-Machine Usage in a Las Vegas Casino	1995	USA	The study showed that the amount of money gambled in the slot machines surrounding Odorant No. 1 during the experimental weekend was higher than the amount gambled in the same area during the weekends before and after the experiment.
Mitchell D.J., Kahn, B.E. & Knasko, S.C.	There's Something in the Air: Effects of Congruent or Incongruent Ambient Odor on Consumer Decision Making	1995	USA	Pleasant ambient odours were found to effect consumer decision making depending on the scent's congruence or incongruence with the target product class.
Spangenberg, E.R., Crowley, A. E. & Henderson, P.W	Improving the Store Environment: Do Olfactory Cues Affect Evaluations and Behaviors?	1996	USA	Ambient scent might lead to an enhanced subjective experience for retail consumers. Subjects in the scented condition perceived spending less time in the store whereas subjects in the no-scent condition perceived spending significantly more time in the store than they actually did.
Bone, P. F., & Ellen, P.S.	Scents in The Marketplace: Explaining a Fraction of Olfaction	1999	USA	16.1% of 206 tests showed that scents have an effect on mood.
Mattila, A.S., & Wirtz, J.	Congruency of Scent and Music as a Driver of Instore Evaluations and Behavior.	2001	USA	Consumers rated the environment significantly more positive, showed higher levels of approach and impulse buying behaviour and experienced enhanced satisfaction when ambient scent and music were congruent with each other in terms of their arousing qualities
Chebat, J.-C., Michon, R.	Impact of ambient odors on mall shoppers' emotions, cognition and spending. A test of competitive causal theories	2003	Canada	Odours had significant impact on perception of product quality and shopping environment.
Milotic, D.	The Impact of Fragrance on Consumer Choice	2003	Australia	The results of a case study on bar soaps showed how changes to the product fragrance or packaging can affect the consumer's purchase decision.
Ward P., Davies B. J., Kooijman D	Olfaction and the Retail Environment: Examining the Influence of Ambient Scents	2006	Europe	Significant differences in consumer perceptions towards the store's environmental attributes were identified, even though less than 10% of respondents questioned were aware of the use of in-store fragrances
Parsons, G. A.	Use of Scent in a Naturally Odourless Store	2008	New Zealand	In a store that is normally odourless, the scent needs to have a perceived association with the store-type in order to create positive responses and the presence of a pleasant but non-associated scent can in turn lead to negative affective or behavioural responses
Bradford, K., D. & Desrochers, D., M.	The Use of Scents to Influence Consumer Behavior: The use of Scents to Make Scents	2009	USA	Scent marketing is a trend in marketing world; identification of ethical problems; current observation that scents can evoke responses before the consumer is even conscious of their presence

As is evident in table 4, scents affect consumer behaviour. Different researches have found different results, but the themes rising on affecting consumer behaviour are the effects on how consumers perceive the store environment, consumer purchase decisions, the congruence of the ambient scent with other

attributes of the environment and the product itself as well as the subliminal effects of ambient scent.

Ambient scents have the ability to create positive responses towards the store environment and higher levels of satisfaction on consumers (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001). Chebat and Michon (2003) found that ambient odours have a significant effect on consumer's perception of the store and product quality. Similar results were also found on the studies conducted by Ward, Davies & Kooijman (2006) as well as Spangenberg, Crowley and Henderson (1996). Interestingly though, in the studies of Ward et al. (2006) less than 10%, which equalled to 16 out of 197, subjects indicated awareness of the ambient scent where as in Spangenberg's et al. (1996) study none of the subjects were aware of the scent. The studies do not mention whether the concentrations of the scent in the studies were so low that they would have been impossible to detect on a conscious level. However, the results show that most of the subjects were not consciously aware of the scent, despite scent proved to affect their behaviour such as underestimating the time spent in the store (Spangenberg et al., 1996) or perceiving the fragranced store darker, more stimulating, more inviting, busier and more formal (Ward et al. 2006). These results speak on the assumption that scents do have subliminal effects on consumer behaviour.

Scents can affect on consumer's buying behaviour. In Hirsch's (1995) study the consumers spent more money on the casino's slot-machine when the slot-machine area was fragranced compared to time when it wasn't. Mattila and Wirtz (2001) found that the congruence of music and scent affected positively on impulse buying behaviour whereas Milotic (2003) found that changes in product's scent can have an effect on consumer's purchase decision. Chebat and Michon (2003) found that consumer perception of product quality, which was significantly affected by the ambient scent, induced a more favourable shopping mood, which lead to more money spent.

Scents affect on consumer's moods, as is shown in Bone and Ellen's study (1999). Chebat and Michon (2003) also found that with ambient scents consumer's moods

could be altered, however, the mood's effects on spending were found to be insignificant.

To enhance positive perception, many studies showed the odour's congruency is an important factor. This is especially evident in Parson's (2008) study, which shows that in order for a store that is naturally odourless to gain positive effects from consumers, the scent needs to be congruent with the store-type. The presence of non-associated scent proved to have a negative effect on consumers. Similar results were also found in the research conducted by Mitchell, Kahn and Knasko (1995) which showed that in congruent scent conditions subjects spent more time processing the data, were more holistic in their processing and were more likely to go beyond information given, relying more on inferences and self-references as opposed to incongruent scent.

From the above chapter it can be concluded that ambient scent can have an effect on consumers in many different ways, thus, it presents an interesting and cost-effective way for marketers to affect consumer behaviour.

3.3 Problems of scent marketing

As already discussed, congruence is important part of the olfactory sense and the mind's ability to understand the stimuli. As for scent marketing this means that marketers using scents need to be careful when designing their scent marketing actions. The other elements, such as visual and auditory elements of the advertisement need to be congruent with the olfactory stimuli presented to consumers. A good example of a failed scent marketing usage is the American Got Milk-campaign presented in San Francisco bus stops. The campaign included stark black ads located in bus shelters in downtown. Along with the visual advertisement, the advertisement had scent strips eliciting the scent of chocolate chip cookies were placed in the bus shelters. The scent could only be noticed subliminally. As the news broke off of the campaign before it had even started properly, several activists groups complained about the campaign claiming it was

harmful for people with disabilities, such as people suffering of chemical allergies, obesity and diabetes. The campaign was cancelled due to the pressure of the activists group, showing that the power of consumers can be quite strong. (Cuneo, 2006)

Perceiving scents is subjective experience, which is affected by many different factors such as culture, individual preferences and personal history. Therefore, problems will be created by the fact that each individual can perceive a certain scent in an unpredictable way. Smell is an inert medium and changing the smell takes minutes. This leads to a situation, where each consumer can't be met on an individual level, but instead scents need to be adapted to match the preferences of the majority. (Emsenhuber, 2011, 359) Examples of this kind of preference adaption of certain consumer groups can be given based on for instance geographical location and cultural aspects. In the U.S, consumers prefer sweet scents such as vanilla and cinnamon, but in the Finnish markets consumers prefer coffee, forest and tar – all scents that symbolize the Finnish culture and history. (Pasila, 2009)

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, congruence with the product or the retail environment is a crucial factor in successfully executed scent marketing campaign. In retail environment, it might be difficult for the retailer carrying multiple products to select a single ambient scent associated with different intrinsic scent, for example in grocery store. (Grohmann & Thomas, 2014) It should also be noted that other sensory cues along with scent are an important part of the consumer's experience of the retail store and affect on the atmosphere as a whole, thus environmental stimuli should not be considered in isolation from each other (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001).

Scent marketing is a problematic in a sense that it is difficult to measure it effectively. For marketers and retailers scent marketing offers a way to connect with customer emotionally, create a place where customers want to come back to and through this increase brand loyalty. Scent marketing creates an experience for the customers, retailers in turn get longer linger times, which often translates

into higher revenues. (Signorin, 2013) Despite the benefits of that scent marketing offers, getting exact numbers on scent marketing's success is difficult, and thus, it might not always seem an interesting enough opportunity for marketers to invest into.

One of the main problems concerning scent marketing is how it affects on people with scent allergy or people who are over sensitive towards scents and chemicals. There has been a concern on how the chemicals used in the scents affect both consumers as well as to the employees (Klara, 2012). A parliamentary question to The European Commission has been issued on the usage of scent marketing and its regulations concerning the allergic reactions and other negative effects of scent marketing usage to individuals (Breyer, 2014). Fragrances have also been criticized due to the lack of requirement for disclosing the formulas, and thus people are not aware of what chemicals have been used in them (Elejalde-Ruiz, 2014). The scent marketing industry claims that the scents used in scent marketing are tested and approved by the International Fragrance Association and meet high global regulation standards. The concentrations are also one part below million, and thus, are under the level of triggering an allergic reaction (Semoff, 2012). The complaints of scents are often based on personal dislike towards the fragrance or overuse of the fragrance in small place (Sutton, 2011). It is obvious that the industry is taking the health issues seriously, but obviously, scent marketing can be a risk for a company just as any marketing method can be.

3.4 Scent marketing ethics

It seems that professionals consider scent marketing to be an ethical form of marketing. Eric Spangenberg, a marketing professor who has studied scent marketing phenomenon, classifies scent marketing to be a problem of a larger ethical framework: "One could argue that it's nothing more insidious than pleasant music". (Spangenberg, 2012, 1) Rachel Herz, expert on psychology of smell, sees scent marketing as a way to draw attention to particular items. According to Herz, smells do not actually mean anything prior to association with experiment. (Herz,

2012) Therefore, professionals in the area of scent marketing seem to consider that it is only one marketing tool among other tools which are used to stimulate senses, such as background music or calming colours.

Drawing the line on what is ethical marketing can sometimes be difficult. Many morally contestable issues, not just in business, but also in other areas of life, are not necessarily illegal (Crane & Matten, 2010, 5) As for the ethical issues presented with scent marketing, an example can be provided with the advertising of the American TV-show *Weeds*. The TV-show advertisements used scent, which was made to resemble marijuana as much as possible. The scent was considered to be the buzz-factor in the show's advertising. (Ives, 2006) Using marijuana, an illegal substance in many countries, can raise quite controversial feelings in consumers as well as in the authorities. Compared for instance with the laws requiring cigarettes to be kept hidden in the Finnish stores, using marijuana scent in advertising, despite there is no law forbidding it, might be very close to the illegal area of marketing and unethicity.

As the technology and research on the olfactory sense develops, new ethical problems are created. Increasing research on human body odours can become a new data source for intelligent systems, which would enable these systems to recognize individuals and also their emotions (Sauer, Karg, Koch, De Kramer & Milli, 1992, cited in Emsenhuber, 2011, 354). For marketers and advertiser the ability to sense customers and their emotional state could become quite useful instrument (Emsenhuber, 2011, 354). However, machines detecting the customers emotional state based on the individual's body odour might not be the most ethical action and could violate the privacy laws and regulations.

3.5 Scent marketing as a branding tool and subliminal usage

When used in retail environment scent marketing is mainly used as a brand-building tool or as a subliminal marketing method. As the thesis concentrates in

retail environment it is important to make distinction between these two methods, thus in the following sections the methods are explained thoroughly.

3.5.1 Scent marketing as a branding tool

When used as a branding tool the company uses a specifically developed scent, also known as scent logo, which is added into the retail environment and to products. The scent logo is a custom scent designed to embody the unique characteristics of the brand and after repeated exposures to the scent logo the scent becomes associated with the brand. For successful use of the scent logo, the scent needs to be consistent with the brand's image and emotions. The scent can also be designed to match the target groups' scent preferences – middle-aged consumers prefer different scents than teenagers. (Dublino, 2012)

Signature scent works for companies that want to create or maintain an iconic brand. Signature logo offers the possibility to tell a consistent brand story for brands that sell their products in department stores, as was the case of Hugo Boss, one of the earliest adopters of scenting in 2011, who at the time sold their products in large department stores like Nordstrom. (Burke, 2014) One of the success stories of scent logo is Abercrombie & Fitch whose signature scent, Fierce, is customized for the target group, making it easy for the brand's target group to identify the brand's clothes by their smell. The scent is diffused into the company's stores and products while the fragrance is also sold as a personal fragrance and is number one selling fragrance for men in U.S and Europe. (Dublino, 2012) With the ability to recognize the clothes only by smell, the company gets brand recognition every time a consumer wears the brand's clothes, making it a great tool in building an iconic brand.

3.5.2 Subliminal use of scent marketing

Subliminal advertising is by definition "a technique of exposing consumers to product pictures, brand names or other marketing stimuli without the consumers having conscious awareness. Once exposed to subliminal marketing stimulus, the consumer is believed to decode the information and act upon it without being able

to acknowledge a communication source.” (Trappey, 1996, 517) Subliminal advertising can also be defined as “the use of words, pictures, and shapes that are purposely inserted in advertising materials so that the viewers of the material cannot process the imagery at a conscious level, but rather at a subconscious level” (Rogers & Seiler, 1994, 38). “Subliminal” should also not be confused to “subtle”. Subliminal messages involve specific words or images, which are deliberately hidden within a larger context and have the intention of subverting perceptual defences and affect to the attitudes of consumers subconsciously. Subtle, however, refers to the use of, for instance, colours to enhance presentation of certain products or to subtly influence the mood of consumers. This may be subtly manipulative practise, but it does not involve purposeful deception. (Aylesworth, Goodstein & Kalra, 1999, 74) Subliminal advertising is a difficult term to define, and there is also controversy on in the academia on the exact elements included in the definition. Solomon et al. (2013) state that subliminal perception refers to a stimulus which is under the level of the consumer’s awareness and “remember, if you can see it or hear it, it’s not subliminal: the stimulus is above the level of conscious awareness” (Solomon et al. 2013, 133). This view supports the view of Aylesworth, Goodstein & Kalra (1999) which is mentioned above. However, Mittal et al. (2008) defines subliminal perception as “a perception of a stimulus without being aware of it”, while stating that even though the stimulus is possible to notice on a conscious level, without focusing attention to the stimulus, it has been perceived below the threshold of awareness, and thus, it is subliminal (Mittal et al. 2008, 76).

Despite controversy in the academia on whether subliminal advertising actually can affect to consumers, the previous discussion of the thesis shows that scents and the usage of subliminal scent marketing does indeed have an effect on consumers, and thus, it can be argued that subliminal advertising, at least in the form of scent marketing, can in fact affect consumer behaviour. Olfactory stimuli and its subliminal effects have been neglected for a long time when research of the topic has mainly concentrated on the effects of subliminal visual and auditory advertising (The Economist, 2007), but the recent research shows that odour can influence behaviour and physiology at concentrations which are too low that

odorants are not consciously perceived (Li, Moallem, Paller, & Gottfried, 2007, 1047).

When used subliminally, scents are often used as ambient scents, which means that synthetic scents are added to the retail environment. These scents are then registered unconsciously by the consumer. The subliminal use of scents is aimed at affecting consumers' mood, to increase the pleasantness of the store environment or the atmosphere. In some cases scents can be used subliminally to increase the sales of a certain product, for instance, the sales of apples, where as in other cases the scent is used to increase the consumers positive perception of the store, and thus, to increase the sales of any product sold at the store.

Subliminal advertising has often been thought as visual or auditory cues, and is also illegal in many countries. However, scent marketing has created a new dimension to subliminal advertising. According to research, scents do not make humans to do what they do not want to do, but scents can influence human behaviour at concentrations that are below the conscious level such as strengthen previously intended behaviour, thus, the subliminal aspects and criticism towards scent marketing is justified and understandable.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The fourth chapter presents the research methodology. The chapter describes the qualitative research method, the research process and data collection.

4.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research can be seen as an umbrella that holds several different kinds of qualitative researches under the term. Thus, qualitative research can be discussed in larger scale purpose as well as in a narrower purpose. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002, 7)

According to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2007, 470) “qualitative data refers to all non-numeric data or data that have not been quantified and can be a product of all research strategies”. Qualitative data includes the following attributes:

- Instead of numbers, qualitative data is based on meanings which are expressed through words
- Data collection results in non-standardised data which requires classification into categories
- Analysis is conducted through the use of conceptualization (Saunders et al. 2007, 472)

Qualitative research has been criticized for one of its focal points – small sample groups. This is due to the fact that small sample groups rely greatly on the subjectivity and interpretation of the researcher. Understandably, it makes more sense for managers to prefer relying on larger samples with quantified results. However, qualitative research has the benefit of providing a way to understand the in-depth motivations and feelings of consumers. Also, data offered by qualitative research is rich, human, subtle and often very revealing. (McDaniel & Gates, 2013, 81)

4.2 Data collection

The most suitable data collection method for this research is a semi-structured interview. In the following chapter the reason for this method is explained and the structure of the interview is defined.

The basic idea behind an interview is very simple. When the thoughts of people or reasons for their behaviour are studied it makes sense to ask them. The main benefit of an interview is its flexibility, since an interview allows the interviewer to repeat the question, correct misunderstandings, clarify phrasing and have a discussion with the interviewee. Interviews also allow the possibility to present the questions in order in which the interviewer decides to be most suitable. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002, 74-76) An interview can lead to discussion into areas that the researcher has not previously considered, but are significant for understanding, thus an interview as a data collection method can offer rich and detailed data (Saunders et al. 2007, 316).

A semi-structured interview proceeds through certain, predetermined and central themes and with clarifying questions related to the themes. In a semi-structured interview, it is important to note that answers should be meaningful in regarding the research topic, thus questions can't be just anything. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002, 77) Non-structured interviews, such as semi-structured or in-depth interviews are often used to gather data that is aimed at revealing and understanding the 'what' and 'how' as well as to emphasize on exploring 'why' (Saunders et al. 2007, 313).

Concerning this research, the purpose is to find the opinions and perceptions of the Finnish consumers towards different elements of scent marketing usage in retail environment. As mentioned above, when researching the opinions of people, the simplest way to find out the opinions, is to ask them, thus, an interview as a data collection method is a viable choice. The benefits of semi-structured interview have also been demonstrated earlier. Semi-structured interviews in this research are justified with the benefits offered by the method as well as the fact that the topic is quite detailed and uncommon topic. Certain themes and topics are needed

to discuss and the interviewees might need to be provided with clarifications of the topic, thus there is a need for some structure in the interview. However, as it is also needed to allow the interviewees to speak freely on their opinions towards the topic, semi-structured interview also allows some degree of freedom as a data collection method.

The data was collected from five Finnish consumers. The interviewees were young female adults aged between 20-25. The group was chosen to be young adults since most of the interviewees had experience on independent living, and thus, have a thorough experience on making buying decisions, such as everyday grocery shopping as well as making decisions on more expensive products or services. This age group is also in a turning point of their life where they start to earn more money and in few years are in a situation where they start a family, which means that the group will be spending a lot of money on very different kind of purchases. As scent marketing is becoming more common and in future it can be expected to be mainstream, younger generations will grow up to the use of it, and, thus, it is a normal marketing method for them. Younger generations also value more experiences (Rahkonen, 2014) and, thus, can be expected to value life with less materialistic ownership in the future. Older generations in turn have already brought up their kids, bought apartments and cars and are currently spending their money on things such as holidays, home improvements and health (Solomon et al, 2013, 468).

Table 5 introduces the interviewees. The names of the interviewees have been changed.

Table 5. The interviewees.

Name	Age	Gender	Occupation
Essi	25	Female	Student
Milla	25	Female	Midwife
Tiia	20	Female	Student on a gap year
Emma	25	Female	Student
Saara	25	Female	Student

4.3 Structure of the interview

The interviews with the subjects were semi-structured interviews, in which the themes of scent marketing usage in retail environment were discussed. Each of the interviews was recorded and transcribed.

Firstly, the subjects were asked to rate all five senses, that is vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell into the order of importance, beginning from the most important sense.

In order to enhance the subjects' understanding on the importance of the olfactory sense a test to demonstrate this was done. In the test, subjects were asked to close their eyes and hold their nose with their other hand so that they would not be able to see or smell anything. While doing this, the subjects drank Sprite and were asked to identify the soda. After this the subjects were asked to drink Coca-Cola and also identify the soda they were drinking. This test is based on the knowledge, that one is not able to taste the difference between Sprite and Coca-Cola if one cannot smell it. This turned out to be true in each of the tests.

After this, the subjects were provided with a written description of scent marketing usage in retail environment, which explained how scent marketing is used and what kind of effects it can have on consumers. This was done to ensure that the subjects fully understood the concept and how scent marketing is used, since it can be assumed, that scent marketing is not a known and a recognized topic by

the subjects due to its novelty as a marketing method. The interviewees were free to ask questions to gain more knowledge and understanding on the topic. The following text regarding scent marketing was provided for the subjects:

“Scent marketing refers to artificial scent added into store environment. The scents can be used to sell certain products, e.g. in a grocery store the retailer can add the smell of apples near the apple shelves to increase the sales for apples. Pleasant scents can also be added into the store environment to increase the general atmospherics and to make consumers feel more positive, and in turn, try to make consumers spend more money in general. Scents can affect consumers subconsciously, this means that scents can be used in a so subtle way that consumers won’t notice the scent but the scent can evoke memories and emotions in the consumers. Thus, the consumers aren’t able to understand why a certain memory, for example from their childhood, came into their mind. Through these strong emotional connections, the retailer can try to increase consumer’s willingness to spend more and perceive the store and the brand more favourably. Scents can also be created specifically for a certain brand, which then uses the scent in their stores and adds it to their products. This scent is aimed at increasing brand awareness. For example, a clothing store chain can create a certain scent that is added into all of their stores and to all of their products. This scent is then noticeable for example when a friend wears clothes from that brand, and thus, strengthens the brand awareness in consumer’s mind.”

It should also be noted, that the subjects were provided extra information during the interview, since they were allowed to ask questions and there was some discussion on the topic between the interviewer and the interviewee during the interview. Also, because all the subjects are individuals the conversation shifted between different topics, thus in some cases the order of the questions was not exactly the same in each interview. Each interview was an individual interview, thus there was some variance in which questions were asked. This was due to the fact that the respondent in previous answers already answered some questions, which were supposed to be asked later, thus, each question might not have been necessary to ask separately. The first interview was a test interview, which

showed that some questions are not necessary questions, thus, there is some variance between the first interview and the other four interviews. The interview questions and their relations to research questions are presented in table 6. Sub-question 3 did not have a specific interview questions, thus, it is not included in the table 6.

After the interview, the respondents were asked again to rate the five human senses in order of importance. Each respondent changed the importance of olfactory sense on a higher level, which shows that the olfactory sense plays a larger role than what seems to be generally assumed.

Table 6. Interview questions.

Question	Research question	Type of scent marketing
After reading the text on scent marketing, what kind of thoughts comes into your mind considering scent marketing?	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
Does the scent of a product ever affect your buying decision?	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
Does the scent of the sales environment affect your buying decision?	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
Does the product have smell like the general image of it is?	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
How do you think you would behave in a shopping environment where the scent does not match with the sold products? E.g. the scent of bread in detergent department.	Main research question	General vie of scent marketing
What do you think about scent marketing as a branding tool? (E.g. in the example of clothing store in the given introductory text)	Sub-question 2	Branding
Do you think that the usage of scent marketing could affect your decision to shop at a certain store that uses scent marketing as a branding tool, and you are aware of its usage? Why? Why not?	Sub-question 2	Branding
Do you have any concerns on the usage of scent marketing in retail stores when it is used as a part of branding strategy in retail stores and customers are aware of its usage?	Sub-question 2	Branding
Are there some retail conditions in which scent marketing would be a nice element in the store environment? If yes, please specify these conditions.	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
Are there some retail conditions in which scent marketing would be a negative element in the store environment? If yes, please specify these conditions.	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
After the above questions respondents were shown a video, which demonstrated subliminal advertising and how it affects consumers. This was done to ensure that respondents understand the concept of subliminal advertising.		
Do you think that scent marketing usage is deceptive marketing? Why? Why not?	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
Do you think that scent marketing differs in some way from other marketing methods? Please provide arguments for your answer.	Main research question	General view of scent marketing
Scent marketing has strong subliminal affects, what do you think about this kind of subliminal usage of scent as a marketing method?	Sub-question 1	Subliminal use
Do you have any concerns on scent marketing usage in retailer store when it is used subliminally? Please provide arguments for you answer.	Sub-question 1	Subliminal use
Do you think that the knowledge of scent marketing usage subliminally in a certain store could affect your decision to shop there? Why? Why not?	Sub-question 1	Subliminal use
What is your final verdict on scent marketing usage in retail store?	Main research question	General view of scent marketing

5 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis is based on the results of the qualitative interviews. First, the interviews were transcribed in order to make the analysis effective and reliable. The results are divided into main concepts, based on the themes of the interviews and concepts presented on the theoretical framework.

The data from the interviews was analysed and differences and similarities between the subjects' responses are discussed. Analysing the differences and similarities among the subjects' responses will provide answers to the research and sub-questions.

5.1 Initial opinion towards scent marketing

The first question presented for the interviewees after they had read the introductory text on scent marketing, asked about their initial thoughts that they have on scent marketing.

The themes that rose from the initial opinions were that scent marketing is an interesting, but quite unknown concept with pleasant aspects. Interviewees also acknowledged negative aspects of scent marketing such as how it affects on people with allergies and considered the subliminal aspects to be questionable. The answers were very subjective and the differences on how interviewees approached the topic were visible in the answers.

*For me it is an unfamiliar topic, but I can imagine that it is used commonly. I have encountered it myself, but I don't really pay too much attention on it. **Essi***

Two of the interviewees stated that they were worried about the effects of the artificial scents on people with chemical allergies and over-sensitivities towards scents. However, both of the interviewees acknowledged scent marketing might work and even be a pleasant element.

*Well, the first thing that comes into my mind is that people who are allergic, and there are a lot of people with allergies, or people who are otherwise sensitive, that they will not enjoy this at all. Also, people who suffer from migraines won't enjoy it. But, on the other hand, it is an interesting idea and could work, but it's just that people with allergies might not like it and then those people might start to avoid the stores using it. **Tiia***

*I always wonder how many people suffer from the scents. But since I personally don't suffer from the scents I think it could sometimes be kind of fun if there was a pleasant scent in the store. **Milla***

Two of the interviewees had positive thoughts and started to discuss on the actual effects of scent marketing, which the marketers are trying to tap into when using scent marketing.

*Well, it's at least somehow nice, pleasant, not any negative thoughts. If it smell's like apples in the apple shelves, I can imagine it increases sales... Well, in some clothes it's a bit annoying if they have a certain smell, except if the smell is good, then I'd rather buy clothes or things that smell good. **Emma***

*Well, the first thing that I think of is that they really evoke memories and emotions, a lot of scents came into my mind that reminds me of a certain event. But then I'm thinking that are the same scents necessarily positive to all people, that can they evoke negative things? **Saara***

Also, subliminal effects were commented by one of the interviewees.

*As a consumer, I don't want to be affected subliminally, but if the [scents] make it more pleasant to go to the store, then to some extent it would be ok. **Saara***

The initial ideas presented by the interviewees showed very personal answers and the interviewees discussed the topic from different angles.

5.2 Connection to emotions, mood and memory

The interview did not have a specific question asking about the connection to emotions, mood and memory. However, the respondents' answers showed that there is a strong connection between scents and human emotions, mood and memories. Individual differences on how people perceive scents and how they affect individuals were also evident. For instance, Saara talked a lot about memories, emotions and moods affected by scents where as others did not mention these connections at all.

Saara acknowledged the connection to memory in different responses.

Well, the first thing that I think of is that they really evoke memories and emotions, a lot of scents came into my mind that remind me of a certain event. Saara

On the other hand people probably want those memories, that it is a nice thing that some product brings a memory from your childhood. Saara

Saara also mentioned the connection to emotions.

The emotions created by scents are stronger. You can remember something that happened years ago, for example a certain moment that you connect to the scent. Even though that can happen for example with music or some picture, it probably is not as strong. Saara

The connection to mood seemed to be more commonly acknowledged.

If I'm buying something from the deli counter, and it smells terrible, it makes me feel a bit unpleasant. Emma

It's exciting and in a nice way surprising if it smells something completely different than what you are expecting. Saara

I don't know if you can say a scent is calming, but if it created a calming feeling to the person, then it would be good. Milla

5.3 Congruence

Theoretical part notes that congruence is an important factor in successful scent marketing campaign, thus the interviewees were also asked on the congruence of the sales environment, the product and how the congruence between these two factors affects their shopping decision and shopping behaviour. In the interview, providing an example in which freshly baked bread smelled in the detergent department tested the congruence while the interviewees were asked how they would behave in such a situation. The example was provided since it was assumed that it would be difficult for the interviewees to imagine the situation without a concrete example in which they can relate to. It was evident in the answers that the interviewees found it hard to imagine and understand the congruence between the scent and sales environment on a general level thus, their answers were reflected on the given example.

Confusion is a usual reaction when the environment and the product do not have a congruent scent. Only two of the interviewees acknowledged this factor by themselves.

Well, at first I could be really confused, that what is this thing? Milla

Well, maybe at first I would wonder why it smells bread in here. Emma

However, two other respondents admitted that confusion might be possible reaction in further discussions, making the total number of respondents who answered confusion as a reaction to incongruent scent equal to four.

Four out of five respondents believed that the incongruent scent would not affect their choice of detergents.

*It would probably make me want to buy bread, but I don't think it would affect on the decisions concerning the detergents. **Essi***

*I think I would still want the same detergent that normally or at least very similar detergent, I'd think so. **Saara***

Three respondents believed that the incongruent scent would direct them to buy the product that is suggested by the scent, in this case the bread.

*Well, probably you would buy the detergent and go quickly buy bread. **Saara***

*Could be that I'd think it's great, you can buy freshly baked bread here that smells all the way to the detergent department, so I would want to buy bread. **Emma***

One of the respondents found it to be an interesting idea in some cases that there would be an incongruent scent in the store.

*Sometimes it is kind of exiting and surprising and in a way a nice surprise, that it smells different than what you're expecting. **Saara***

Table 7. Summary of opinions on scent's incongruence

Incongruent ambient scent in store environment vs. products that are sold	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Would not affect on detergent decision	x		x	x	x
Would probably make to want bread	x			x	x
Confused		x	x	x	x
Occasionally would be fun if the smell was surprising (but congruent and pleasant)					x

The respondents were also asked does a product need to smell like the general image of the product is. Despite not being related to the retail environment the question tests the congruence, which is an important element in scent marketing.

Four out of five respondents said that they do expect a product to smell like the image of the products suggests.

*Well, if I would want to buy for example a shampoo that smells like an apple, then it really would have to smell like apple... If there is a picture of apple and then it smells like lemon or something else or like really fake apple, then it doesn't match the image I have and I would leave it in the store. **Milla***

The question also revealed the individual differences and personal preferences that people have towards scents.

*It would be nice if a cinnamon bun would smell like cinnamon, when you think on a general level... If it smelled like marshmallow I wouldn't buy it because I don't like the smell of marshmallow or the taste of it or anything of it, but if it smelled like vanilla, I wouldn't mind. **Essi***

If there were a shampoo that smells like petrol, okay, I would buy it because of the petrol scent. Tiia

In earlier discussions Tiia had mentioned that she likes the smell of petrol. She also stated that she wouldn't mind using a shampoo that smells like a cinnamon bun, even though it might be completely opposite scent that is associated in shampoo. Her opinion shows that incongruent but good smell would not be seen as a negative thing that would affect her decision to buy the product. All together, three respondents had this opinion in which a good but incongruent scent would not stop them to buy the product where as only one of the respondents claimed that incongruent smell would create a controversial feelings, thus, she would not buy the product. Two respondents mentioned incongruent but bad smell and in such a case they would not buy the product.

Confusion was also mentioned in two answers. One respondent also said that the importance of the scent depends on the product on question.

Table 8. Opinions of respondents towards product and scent congruence.

Product's scent and image congruence	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Depends on the product	x				
Incongruent smell, that is bad → wouldn't buy	x			x	
Incongruent but good smell → would buy	x		x	x	
Incongruent smell → image is controversial → wouldn't buy		x			
Confused feelings		x	x		
Expects that a product's smell is congruent with the given image		x	x	x	x

5.3.1 Summary of scent's congruence and the environment

The main finding concerning the congruence is that consumers seem to find it confusing when the scent does not match either the product or the environment. This is in line with the theory. However, the incongruent scent that creates confusion in consumers does not automatically mean that the consumers will not shop in the store or do not buy the product. If the product or the store has been previously noted to be good, then the incongruent scent would not affect the consumer behaviour.

The buying decision is based on multiple factors, as was pointed out by the respondents in the answers on other survey questions. It seems that scent can be the determining factor in buying decisions in situations where the scent is bad. Incongruent scent was pointed out as a factor that affects negatively on buying decision by one respondent, which suggests that there are individual differences on how incongruent scent affects. A good, but incongruent and unexpected scent can stop consumers to shop at a store, but some consumers also like the surprising element of incongruent scent.

Incongruent ambient scent however does not seem to affect on the buying decision if the consumer has already made the decision to buy a certain product before entering the store. However, there is a possibility that an incongruent ambient scent, such as the scent of freshly baked bread in the detergent department might make consumers buy the product that the scent is suggesting even though the consumer might not have been planning on buying it.

The congruence of the scent and the sales environment is a factor that can affect both negatively or positively on a consumer's buying decision. Individual differences and personal preferences of a consumer affects on how the scent is perceived, thus, congruence should be considered carefully before choosing a scent for ambient scent marketing campaign.

5.4 Scent of the sales environment

The research is concentrated in ambient scents in retail environment. Theoretical part notes that bad smells can affect people's mood negatively whereas good smells in turn affect positively. To find out the consumers' opinions towards the scents in the store environment, the interviewees were asked if there are some store conditions in which the scent would be either a positive or a negative element in the store environment. Also, the respondents were asked if the scent of the sales environment affects their decision to shop at the store.

Concerning the store environment conditions in which the scent would be a positive element in the store, there was some similarity in the respondents' answers. Two of the respondents believed that the ambient scent in store environment would be a positive element when it is being used to increase the store atmospherics.

Well, maybe if you think about it on a general level, it probably increases the pleasantness of the store environment. Milla

Emma also thinks that ambient scent is good in store environment when used to increase the pleasantness of the store. She also stated cosmetics stores are a good environment for ambient scent marketing.

Well, the cosmetics stores, I want that they smell good and then otherwise you would hope that in general it would smell like fresh. Emma

Two other respondents also mentioned the cosmetic stores, thus, the total number of respondents mentioning ambient scent in cosmetic store as a positive element was three.

Well, maybe if some small cosmetic boutiques want to add perfumes, then it necessarily isn't a bad thing, but I wouldn't take them to larger chain stores, since that would probably be too much. Tiia

Like Tiia's personal opinion of preferring scents on cosmetic stores while not taking the scents into larger stores, the personal preferences were evident in Essi's answer. She states that scent is a positive element in the grocery stores fruit department and for some people perfume departments would be similar as the fruit department are for her, even though for her the perfume departments are a bit too much.

Well, I can't really think of anything specific at the moment, but it's nice when you go to a fruit department and the fruits smell, because I love fruits, but otherwise not really. I could, however, think that someone would say the same from perfumes, but for me that would be too much. Essi

Unlike Essi, Emma would not like to have the scents in the fruit department or in grocery store, since she prefers that when it comes to food, the scents would be natural scents coming from the food itself.

Well, maybe in the bread department you would want to buy bread, but it's actually really annoying if the scent doesn't come from the breads, but from somewhere else. Emma

Clothing store was also mentioned once as a store environment where ambient scent would be a positive element in the store. One of the respondents also stated she prefers the stores to smell clean and rather neutral in general.

Table 9. Conditions in which ambient scent is a positive element in the store environment.

Conditions in which scent marketing is a positive element in retail	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Fruit department	x				
Increasing the pleasantness of the atmosphere		x		x	
No specific conditions	x		x		
Cosmetics/perfume	x		x	x	
Clothing store				x	
Clean/neutral scent					x
Smaller stores			x		

As for the store environment in which ambient scent would be a negative element in the environment, the respondents' views varied. Two respondents mentioned that it is a negative element in a store that is used by allergic people.

Because I'm familiar with fragrance and scent allergies, so you always wonder that is it necessary in these days that scents are added in every place? Those who suffer from it will definitely suffer whether it is an artificial scent of an apple or a perfume, so I would say, that it is not right towards a certain group of people that every place smells something. Milla

Pharmacy was mentioned by two of the respondents as a store where scent would be a negative element. This is due to the fact that it used especially by people who are ill.

There they shouldn't take the scents in any case because people who suffer from all kinds of illnesses visit the pharmacy. Tiia

Grocery store was mentioned by one of the respondents and another respondent said that stores, which sell children's clothing, would be stores where scent would be a negative element in the store environment.

In my opinion it is not suitable in bread department, because I want that the scent comes from the bread itself and that it is being baked there. Emma

Maybe some children's clothing. Saara

Two of the respondents stated that the scent would be a negative element in the store environment if the scent would be extremely strong.

Very strong scents in any place, they would be disturbing in any place, but nothing in particular comes into my mind where it would be somehow extremely negative.

Saara

One respondent said that she doesn't believe that it would be very negative thing in any store because she thinks that the retailers do not use the scent in a negative way, meaning that retailers would not scent places which would be inappropriate to scent.

Table 10. Conditions in which ambient scent is a negative element in store environment.

Retail conditions in which scent marketing would be negative	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
If it isn't used negatively, the no	x				
If allergic people use the store		x			x
Pharmacists			x		x
Grocery stores				x	
Children's clothes retailers					x
If the scent is extremely strong				x	x

The interviewees were also presented a question on whether the scent of the sales environment would affect their buying decisions on the store. The main

issue, which rose from the answers, was that respondents admitted that the scent of the sales environment affects their buying decision if the scent is bad. Bad scent would not make the respondents to want to buy products from the store.

*Well, it affects in a sense that if the environment smells terrible then I think that if the products will also smell, but otherwise, no. **Essi***

*It affects. For example, second hand stores smell really bad, so you really don't feel like buying something from there. **Emma***

One of the respondents stated that along with bad scent, the strength of the scent also affects their buying decision.

*Perfume or other cosmetic stores, I easily choose not to go there because the scent is so terribly strong already at the door that I'll rather just walk past the store. **Milla***

Two respondents answered that a good scent also affects their buying decision and shopping behaviour.

*Well, then probably also cosmetic stores if they smell really good, I like all that kind of smells, like for instance The Body Shop, then that affects in a way that I feel like I want one, I have to get one of these amazing body lotions or I have to have one of these amazing perfumes, so yea, in that way it affects. **Emma***

Two respondents said that they haven't really paid attention on whether the scent of the sales environment affects their buying decision.

*I've never really thought about that or I mean I haven't paid attention whether it would smell like something in the store. **Tiia***

Tiia also mentioned that she does not see the scent affecting her buying decision.

Saara was the other one who admitted that she hasn't paid attention to scent in a store, but also claimed that if there was a really bad scent in the store then it might affect her buying decision. However, she believes that a neutral, barely non-existent scent is best for store environment.

Table 11. The sales environment scent's effects on buying decision.

Effects of the scent in the sales environment to the buying decision	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Concerns if the products also smell	x				
No effects			x		
Yes, if the scent is bad	x	x		x	x
Yes, if the scent is good		x		x	
Yes, if the scent is too strong		x			
Haven't paid attention			x		x

5.4.1 Summary of sales environment scent

In retail environment ambient scent has both positive and negative elements according to the respondents and the scent does affect the buying decision in a store.

Cosmetic stores were found to be stores in which the ambient scent was found to be a positive element, which might not be a surprising result since cosmetics often smell, and generally cosmetics stores are expected to smell like something. According to theory, ambient scents can be used to create a positive atmosphere in the store, and this was also evident in the answers. Ambient scent was found to be positive element when it was used to increase the store atmosphere.

As for the retail environment in which the ambient scent would be a negative element, respondents discussed on how the scent affects on allergic people.

Relating to the allergies, pharmacists were mentioned to be environments where ambient scent would be negative. The strength of the scent was also mentioned, and the scent would become a negative element in the store environment if it was too strong.

The ambient scent has an effect on the consumer's buying decision. When the scent is bad it affects on the pleasantness of the atmosphere and one does not feel like shopping there. A pleasant smell in turn can have the opposite reaction where it tempts customers to visit the store and invites them to buy something.

5.5 Scent marketing as a brand-building tool

Concerning scent marketing as a brand-building tool the interviewees were asked how they view scent marketing as a brand-building tool, whether its use would affect their decision and shopping behaviour in a store and do they have any concerns towards the method.

When asked about how they view scent marketing usage as brand-building tool, the respondents all agreed that scent marketing as a brand-building tool offer positive elements for the brand. It was seen as an interesting choice for the brand, a way to differentiate and respondents saw it more positive way to use scent marketing than subliminal usage.

If you think about it from the brand-building point of view, then what could be better that someone wears clothes that smell like the brand and other people recognize the brand? Milla

It's probably a good method, I was thinking about The Body Shop, their products have really strong scent and that's part of their brand, and I think it's really successful. Emma

Despite seeing scent marketing as a brand-building tool in positive light, the respondents also acknowledged its problems. The main problem was the effects on allergic people and how it affects them. This was noted by three of the respondents.

One of the respondents noted the difficulties that a brand faces if the scent isn't recognized and associated by the consumers to the brand.

But of course, if most people don't know the scent that "oh, this is that brand" then the scent doesn't serve its purpose, except that the consumer might think that the clothes smell nice. Milla

Personal opinions were also seen in the respondents' answers. Despite acknowledging scent marketing as a possibility, which could work for brand-building purposes, the respondents' personal preferences for neutral smells in store environment were evident in the answers.

It could work, but personally I, if for example a clothing store adds scents to their stores and to their clothes, then I'd probably would be like: "I'll take these clothes immediately outside to air, so that they don't smell anything". Tiia

In clothes I haven't seen it, and maybe I think that they might be a bit bad thing in such products if they smelled really strongly, they could drive away people who don't like the scents at all. Emma

The dangers of chemicals were also noted by one of the respondents, linking the dangers especially to allergic people. Also, the respondent acknowledged the subjective experience that scents create to each individual.

How do different scents affect different people and then, does it make sense to add more fragrances and chemicals? Saara

Table 12. Opinions towards scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool.

Scent marketing as a brand-building tool	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Could be good	x	x	x	x	
Not good for allergic people	x			x	x
If most people don't associate the smell to the brand → pointless		x			
Personally don't like that my clothes smell			x		
Interesting idea, but is it necessary?					x

The interviewees were asked on whether the knowledge of scent marketing usage would affect their decision to shop in a certain store that uses scent marketing publicly as a brand-building tool and they were aware of the usage in the store.

Four of the respondents admitted that the knowledge of scent marketing wouldn't affect their decision to shop at a certain store. However, depending on how strong the scent is and personal preferences towards the scent would have an effect on the time spent and willingness to visit the store.

Well, no, but probably if the scent was very strong it would shorten the time I spend in the store, because at some point I would just need fresh air. Essi

If the scent were something really terrible, something that I just can't stand and in principle can't even step into the store because of the scent, then I would just put the stores in personal boycott. But if it were something mild and okay, then it would be okay. Although, I might unconsciously reduce the visits to that store, because I don't really care for the scents. Tiia

Milla acknowledged that due to a close relatives severe chemical allergy she can not buy products that are scented, and thus, also could not shop at store that is

using scent marketing. However, in different circumstances she did not see a problem in shopping at store that uses scent marketing.

Well, I don't know, if I would get good clothes for a good price, I don't think it would stop me from buying those clothes only for the reason that they use deceptive marketing method. **Milla**

Saara approached the question differently. She considered that initially she would be curious to visit the store if she heard that they are using scent marketing. However, she believed that scent would not make her buy anything, since on a personal level other issues are more important to her when making a buying decision.

I don't know, probably at first if I heard about it, I could be curious to see what it is, but, I don't know, I think that other issues are more important, that it's not the first thing that would affect the buying decision or to the decision to visit the store.

Saara

In the discussion, Saara also mentioned the harms scent marketing can cause for allergic people.

Concerning the question, Emma mentioned that the use of scent marketing seems like manipulating and she doesn't like to be manipulated by the store, and thus, she would not visit the store. However, in the later questions she mentioned, that if she thinks about The Body Shop - store that has strong scents, she thinks that it is actually a really good method. Thus, she also considered scent marketing-usage as a brand-building tool to be a positive thing for companies, despite failing to present this opinion in the particular question.

Table 13. The effects of scent marketing to shopping decisions towards the store that is publicly using scent marketing.

Decision to shop at a store that uses scent marketing	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Would not affect	x	x	x		x
Would shorten the time spent in store if scent is too strong	x				
Affects because relative has allergies		x			
Would avoid store if scent is bad and strong			x		
Would feel like they're trying to fool me to buy				x	
Worries on allergic people					x

The interviewees were asked if they had any concerns on scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool.

The respondents were quite unanimous in their answers. Each of the interviewees admitted that they are not really concerned about the use of scent marketing as brand-building tool in store environment.

Well, I don't know if it is any worse than a sign that says "Buy three for the price of two" and then they aren't actually any cheaper than if bought separately. So no, if the scents don't cause allergies. Milla

Well not really, maybe only its' effects on allergic people. Tiia

Quite unanimously was also mentioned the concern towards allergic people. Four out of five interviewees mentioned that the only concern they really have is scent

marketing's effects on allergic people or to people who are over-sensitive towards chemicals.

One of the interviewees mentioned that she is concerned about scent marketing usage in store environment if it is used subliminally, since she personally does not like manipulative or subliminal marketing.

If it is done secretly and then I would somehow find out about it then I would be annoyed. But if I think about, for example The Body Shop, which I think is so clear example, it doesn't annoy me there that much I actually think that it is a really good way. **Emma**

Increased use of chemicals also worried one of the respondents along with dangers that it poses for allergic people.

I don't really have any other concerns, except what I've already mentioned, the allergies and then if it increases the use of chemicals. **Saara**

Table 14. Concerns towards scent marketing usage in retail environment when used as a brand-building tool.

Concerns on scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Not really	x	x	x	x	x
Allergies	x	x	x		x
Manipulatively use				x	
Increasing use of chemicals					x

5.5.1 Summary of scent as a brand-building tool

Scent marketing as a brand-building tool was seen very positively by the respondents. Four out of five claimed it possibly to be a good marketing method and one admitting that it can be positive but failed to see the necessity of the method.

Most of the respondents did not consider the scent to affect their decision to shop at a store. There were however few exceptions to this, such as if the scent was bad or too strong. Personal preferences and life situations were also evident and issues such as a relative's allergy forbids one of the respondents to buy anything that is scented or to shop at scented environments.

The main concern that was evident was the effects on allergic people. Related to the allergies was also the concern on the possibility that scent marketing increases the use of chemicals, which the respondent does not personally see as a good thing. Besides this, the respondents didn't really have other concerns towards scent marketing usage as a branding tool. One of the respondents also confused the branding tool to subliminal usage of scent; thus, the manipulative use of scent was mentioned as a one concern.

5.6 Subliminal use of scent marketing

The opinions of consumers' towards scent marketing's subliminal use were also studied. The interviewees were asked about their opinions on subliminal use of scent marketing, whether they have any concerns on the subliminal use of scent marketing and would the use of subliminal scent marketing affect their decision to shop at a certain store that is using it.

The earlier questions have already shown that it seems that subliminal use isn't as acceptable as the use of scent marketing as a branding-tool. Two, Essi and Tiia, respondents stated that they don't mind if a store uses scent marketing subliminally.

*Well, I don't mind, but others might mind about it more. **Essi***

*Well, they use everything else subliminally on people, so in that sense there isn't anything wrong in it. **Tiia***

Essi also mentioned that she thinks it can be effective, but it is a subjective experience for the consumer, and its effectiveness depends a lot on the individual.

Well, it probably is very effective, but I could imagine it depends a lot on the individual. Essi

Agreeing with Tiia, Milla also sees subliminal use of scent marketing just as a one marketing method that is no worse than some other marketing method.

Well, I don't know if it is any worse when it is done with a scent, instead of creating the illusion through visual or hearing image, it is so called fooling whether it is done through olfactory sense, hearing sense, visual sense, taste sense, so I can't say if it would be worse than any other image created through marketing. Milla

One of the respondents was against the subliminal use of scent marketing, since she believes that it is manipulative and fools people.

Well, it makes me feel like I'm being fooled. It is like manipulating. Emma

Saara admitted the practise to be a questionable, but she believes that people want to have the memories and find it nice when a product reminds them from, for instance, a childhood. Also, she does not believe that in the end the scent can have a drastic effect on consumer's purchasing behaviour.

The first thing that comes into my mind, is that is a bit questionable, but then again people probably want to have those memories and it is actually a nice thing that some product reminds them, for example, from their childhood. If you think about it in long-term, it might have an effect on impulse purchase decision, but if it is thought for a bit longer, then I don't think the scent really can guide the behaviour that much. Saara

Table 15. Opinions of interviewees towards scent marketing's usage subliminally.

Subliminal use of scent marketing	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Could be effective, but user experience is subjective	x				
Don't mind	x		x		
Doesn't differ from other marketing methods		x	x		
Manipulative, fooling consumers		x		x	
Don't like it				x	
A bit questionable, but I guess we want to be fooled					x
Don't believe it can really affect a lot on buying decision					x

The interviewees were also asked if they have any concerns towards scent marketing usage subliminally. The answers were quite unanimous. Four out of five interviewees said that they don't really have concerns on the use of scent marketing subliminally.

Well, I don't know, I don't think it really can affect so strongly that it could create really big problems. Saara

Well, not really, when it is subliminal, people can't know what has happened in someone else's past, so the kind of memories and emotions they create, you can't really affect those. Tiia

Like Saara, Milla also thinks that the scent can not really affect that much on people that it could have very negative results.

I don't think that anyone spends a fortune for some certain product only because it smells something certain or brought memories from your childhood, I don't really think this could have really serious results. Milla

Like most other respondents, Essi also said that she does not really have concerns on the subliminal use of scent marketing. However, she stated that it could make shopping with kids a bit more difficult, because it is not as easy for children to control their impulses as it is for adults.

Emma was the only one who was completely against the subliminal use of scent marketing because she does not like manipulation of consumers.

I want to decide myself and, like, make the decisions in a way that I am not being manipulated. Emma

Table 16. Concerns of respondents towards scent marketing's usage subliminally.

Concerns on scent marketing usage subliminally	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Not really	x	x	x		x
Shopping with kids is more difficult	x				
Prefers the use of brand-building			x		
Don't like subliminal use				x	
Can't have very disastrous effects		x			x

The interviewees were asked about their decision to shop at a store that is using scent marketing subliminally. Again, the respondents were quite unanimous in their answers. Four out of five interviewees answered that subliminal use of scent marketing would not affect their decision to shop at a certain store.

Well, if I know what I want and I'll go there, it's hard to make me change my mind.

Essi

Three of the respondents said that they make their purchasing decision based on other things, for instance, the price of the product, thus the scent would not make them buy.

Well, maybe again other things come first and at least that's what one thinks that in the end other things affect more into the purchasing decision. Saara

Saara mentioned also that subliminal use of scent marketing has both good and bad sides; on the other hand it is nice addition to the store atmospherics, but affecting on consumer's purchasing decisions is not something that she would want to support.

Milla also agreed on that in the end the subliminal use of scents would not affect her decision to shop at a certain store. However, she believes that the first reaction could be that the store is trying to lure its way to the customer's purchasing decision through the scent.

If there were good products then I don't think it would really matter, but the first reaction could be that they are trying to sell something for me even though I don't want to buy. Milla

One of the respondents admitted that subliminal use of scent marketing would affect negatively to her shopping behaviour in a store that is using subliminal scent marketing.

Yes, it would affect. I wouldn't go there. Emma

Table 17. The effects of subliminal scent marketing usage on shopping behaviour.

Effects of subliminal scent marketing usage on consumer behaviour	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
No effects	x	x	x		x
First reaction could be that they use deceptive marketing		x			
Buying decisions are based on other things, e.g. price	x		x		x
Would not go tot the store				x	
Would be annoyed				x	
Subliminal use is contradictory, both good and bad sides					x

5.6.1 Summary of subliminal use of scent marketing

The opinions towards subliminal use of scent marketing were not as positive as towards scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool. The answers showed the individual opinions which people have towards different marketing methods. Two respondents saw subliminal use of scents as manipulative and questionable marketing where as two other respondents did not really mind about the subliminal use of scents. The subjective experience was also mentioned, which highlights the individual experience of scent on consumers.

The knowledge of subliminal use of scent marketing would not affect on the shopping decision of most of the respondents. Only one admitted that she would not want to go to a store that is using subliminal scent marketing and would be annoyed of its usage. As is mentioned in the theory, scent marketing does not have the ability to make people buy what they do not want to buy. This was also evident in the answers; three respondents said that they make their buying decision based on other things than the scent of the store, such as price.

Similarly to the use of scent as a brand-building tool, the respondents did not really have concerns on the subliminal use of scent marketing. Again, two respondents did not really believe that the subliminal use would have disastrous effects on consumers since they believe that other factors are more important to consumers than the scent, thus, they did not really have concerns on it. Again, personal preferences were evident as dislike towards subliminal use and personal preference for the brand-building purposes of scent was mentioned on the question relating to the concerns towards subliminal use of scent.

5.7 General view of scent marketing

To find out how the respondents see scent marketing as a marketing method the interviewees were asked if they consider scent marketing to be deceptive marketing and whether scent marketing differs from other marketing methods.

As for the question if scent marketing is deceptive marketing, two respondents claimed the marketing method to be a subjective experience for the individual consumer and the deceptiveness depends on the individual's personal experience.

Well, it's deceptive in that case if the person is easily misguided, then you might go more easily along with the scents. Essi

It can confuse some people if somewhere, like in H&M, if there suddenly is some scent. Tiia

Apart from the subjective experience, Tiia claimed that she does not really consider scent marketing as a deceptive marketing.

Two respondents considered scent marketing to be deceptive only in situations where the scent does not match with the product's attributes.

If you think in a way that I'm buying some ready baked products from the grocery store and in the shelves it smells like freshly baked products and I hold the product package in my hands and think that at home I'll eat these and enjoy and then they taste dry and old. Milla

It depends about the situation and how it is used and how much it really relates to what the product does. Saara

Only one of the respondents answered that scent marketing is deceptive marketing when it is used subliminally.

Table 18. Opinions on whether scent marketing is deceptive marketing.

Deceptive marketing	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
Subjective experience	x		x		
Only if the product and scent don't match (e.g in food)		x			x
Not really			x		
If it's subliminal				x	

The interviewees were also asked if scent marketing somehow differs from other marketing methods. One respondent considered scent marketing not to be so direct marketing method when compared to other marketing methods.

Well, it is more indirect. **Essi**

Two respondents thought that scent marketing is a new and unknown marketing method for people. Along with its newness, Milla thinks that people don't really understand that scent is a marketing method.

Well maybe it is still probably a new thing for people that they don't connect it, that a certain scent has a marketing purpose. **Milla**

Two respondents said that scent marketing differs in a way from other marketing methods, since it is such a subjective experience for each consumer. Different scents mean different things for people and it varies between people how much each sense affects you.

I don't know, maybe, it depends on the person a little bit that which for example of your senses is the one that affects you the most. **Saara**

One respondent said she does not see scent marketing differing from other marketing methods as long as it is not used subliminally, since all the other

attributes of the store, for instance colours and the placement of shelves, are designed to market the products.

Well, no, if it is explicit... In a similar way all the colours and shapes and shelve placements and everything are done while thinking about the marketing. Emma

Consumers' inability to avoid the marketing method, scents ability to affect emotions more than other marketing methods and the need for constant new developments for the method to work were also mentioned as attributes of why scent marketing differs from other marketing methods.

Table 19. The opinions of respondents on whether scent marketing differs from other marketing methods.

Differences compared to other marketing methods	Essi	Milla	Tiia	Emma	Saara
More indirect	x				
It's new, and unknown to people		x			x
It is probably not understood as being a marketing method		x			
Consumers can't avoid it			x		
It's more subjective experience for consumers			x		x
No, if it isn't used subliminally				x	
Affects more on emotional level					x
Needs a constant development to work			x		

The last question of the interview asked respondents to formulate their final opinion on scent marketing.

I don't mind as long as it does not cause any harm for me because I know that it has not changed my shopping behaviour. Essi

If you do not think about the fact that some few percentages will get symptoms from it, then I think scents can be used in marketing. It is no worse than other methods. Milla

Well, I still think that even if the scents were minimalistic and they should not cause any symptoms, there still are people to whom it causes something. I don't see it necessary, if they want to start to develop this it is fine by me, but I just am not convinced about it. Tiia

Well, it is a good thing if it is clear for example the cosmetic stores, but in my opinion for example in grocery store the scents should be natural scents from the products. It is good in the cosmetic stores and also maybe in clothing stores, but the subliminal use is a bit like it makes me feel like the retailers think I am an idiot. Emma

Well, maybe carefully and cautiously and with respect towards consumers. Not like subliminally, that is a bit like already crossing the line, but in a way that consumers are aware of what is being done that is okay, and it is sometimes refreshing and nice, but in a larger scale I do not want it, neutrality works well. Saara

5.7.1 Summary of general view on scent marketing in retail environment

Generally consumers seem to think that scent marketing is not deceptive marketing if it is used openly and approached honestly by the companies. Scent marketing is seen as deceptive marketing in situations where the scent promises something else than the product itself is. However, this is true with any kind of marketing, if the promise is false, it is somewhat deceptive marketing. Subliminal use also is considered to be deceptive use of scent marketing.

The answers showed that when it comes to scent marketing, it is a subjective experience. Some consumers consider it to have deceptive elements where as others do not. Subjectivity was also considered to be a differentiating factor when compared to other marketing methods. Scents are seen to more personal than for examples pictures, thus, people have more subjective experience on scent marketing and it is also seen to affect consumer emotionally more than other methods. Consumers also see scent marketing to be a new method, which is not so known by consumers, thus, there might be a lack of understanding the method and connecting a scent to being a marketing method.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The final chapter presents the conclusions of the research. Theoretical contribution and main findings are presented first. Research questions are answered and managerial implications are discussed. The limitations and future research topics are presented.

6.1 Theoretical implications

The purpose of the study was to research the Finnish consumers' opinions towards scent marketing usage in retail environment.

In order to lay the foundation to the theoretical framework olfactory sense and its functions were explained. This part explained the olfactory sense's connection to human emotions, mood and memory, while also noting the negative sides it has. There was a need to explain the olfactory sense's physiological aspects, since scent marketing relies heavily on the unique abilities of the human olfactory sense. After this, the theoretical framework explained the main topic of the research, scent marketing. Scent marketing was divided into two sub-topics based on how scent marketing is mainly used in retail environment: scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool and subliminal scent marketing usage.

The research questions were concerned with the opinions of consumers' towards scent marketing usage subliminally and as a brand-building tool, how these affect the consumers' buying behaviour and does the buying behaviour differ between these two scent marketing methods.

The first sub-question studied the opinions of consumers' towards scent marketing usage subliminally.

How do the consumers see the subliminal aspects of scent marketing?

There is a lack of research on the topic, but based on consumer's reactions to the use of subliminal advertising, such as strong reactions from public and laws forbidding subliminal advertising, it can be assumed that consumers would have a negative reaction towards subliminal use of scent marketing. The respondents' did have negative thoughts about the subliminal use of scents and it was not seen as acceptable as scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool. Subliminal scent marketing usage was seen as manipulative and questionable marketing practise. However, the respondents acknowledged the positive sides of subliminal usage of scent marketing. Based on the answers given by the respondents, consumers do not really believe that subliminal usage of scents can really have a very strong affect on a consumer and would somehow manipulate a consumer to buy or do something that they do not want to do. This is in line with theory, which suggests that scent can influence your behaviour but they do not make a person to do something that the person does not want to do. Contradictory to expectations based on the consumers doubt towards subliminal advertising, the consumers seem to have quite positive take on towards subliminal usage of scent marketing. Four out five respondents claimed that the use of subliminal scent marketing would not affect their buying decision. The answers showed in multiple questions that consumers believe that they make their buying decisions based on other factors than the scent, such as price of the product. Scent, even though seen as a nice element, would only be a determining factor in the buying decision when it is bad. In this case the scent would affect negatively on the buying decision and the consumer would not buy the product. The respondents did not have serious concerns on the subliminal use of scents in the store environment. Thus, it can be concluded that consumers see subliminal use of scent marketing a rather positive thing, since they do not believe that it has the power to make them buy something that they do not wish to buy.

The second sub-question was concerned with the usage of scent marketing as a brand-building tool.

How do the consumers see scent marketing when used as a brand-building tool?

The opinions of consumers towards scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool were quite positive. Scent marketing as a brand-building tool in the Finnish markets is very rare, and for example one of the most famous brands using scent marketing in brand-building, Abercrombie & Fitch, does not have a store in Finland. Four out of five respondents claimed that scent marketing as a part of the brand could be good for the brand, and one respondent agreed on the possibility that it is good even though she still questioned its necessity. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, scent marketing is used in brand-building in such a way that a company creates a certain scent that is then added on to their stores and to their products and eventually the consumers start to recognize the brand based only on the scent. The risk in this, however, is that if the scent is not associated to the brand by consumers, the method is useless for the company. This was noted by one of the respondents. The use of scent marketing as a brand-building tool would not have effects on the consumers' decision to shop at a certain store if the scent is at a moderate level and is not considered to be a bad scent by the consumer. In some cases a pleasant scent might also be something that the consumer expects such as in a flower shop or even the main reason to buy the products for instance in cosmetic stores. The consumers do not really have concerns towards scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool. The concerns are mainly related to allergies; how does the scent affect people with chemical allergies or to people who are over-sensitive towards scents and chemicals? The effects of scents to allergic people have also been a concern and an issue of criticism presented towards scent marketing as already mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis.

The third sub-question was concerned with the differences of opinions towards scent marketing usage as subliminally and as brand-building tool.

How do consumer opinions on scent marketing differ when scent marketing is subliminal and when scent marketing is build to be part of the brand itself?

The main difference between subliminal use of scent marketing and scent marketing usage as a brand-building tool is that consumers are more accepting towards scent marketing usage as brand-building tool. Although both methods

were seen quite positively, scent usage as a brand-building tool did not evoke as much comments and discussion in the consumers as scent usage subliminally did. When used as a branding-tool, scent is visible and consumers know that it is just a marketing method, and thus, is seen more acceptable. Subliminal use of scents was seen somewhat deceptive and manipulative, as was already expected. Unlike the use of scent for brand-building purposes where a scent is more acceptable marketing method and in some cases even expected as a part of the product or the brand, the consumers believe that the subliminal use of scents does not have a dramatic effect on an individual's buying behaviour, since purchasing decisions are often based on other factors such as price of the product. The main concern in both methods was the effects on allergic people. Only one of the respondents stated that they would not go to a store that uses subliminal scent marketing, where as a store that uses scent in brand-building would not stop any of the respondents to visit a store, thus, there seems to be preference towards scent used as a brand-building tool instead of subliminally.

The main research question was more general and concerned with the Finnish consumers' opinions and perceptions towards scent marketing.

What are the opinions and perceptions of the Finnish consumers' towards scent marketing usage in retail environment?

Theoretical framework was constructed around the main research question and in sub-questions a distinction between the main topics of scent marketing was explored. As has already been established scent marketing is seen in quite positive light by consumers and the usage for brand-building purposes is more acceptable than the subliminal use of scent marketing.

Scent marketing needs congruence between the environment and the scent in order to be effective marketing method. If there is incongruence between the environment and the scent, consumers will most likely have negative reaction towards the environment. The consumers acknowledged this even though the respondents found it hard to imagine a situation where there is an incongruent

scent in the environment, thus, the importance of congruence should not be underestimated.

According to consumers different retail environments are more suited for the use of scent marketing than others. Some consumers see cosmetic stores as a good environment where as other consumers see the use of scents in cosmetic store a nuisance that causes headaches for consumers. Grocery stores are considered a good choice for scent marketing where as others find it disgusting that the scents are not natural scents of the products but artificial scents. Scents are a subjective experience for an individual that is affected by personal history, cultural, physiological attributes and other factors. Consumers also mentioned the subjective experience in their responses noting that individual experiences are different and for some consumers a certain scent is a positive experience where as for other consumers it might be a negative experience. The scent in the sales environment also affects the consumers' decision to shop at the store. A bad or a too strong scent affects negatively on the consumers' willingness to shop at the store since it increases unpleasant feelings in consumers. A good scent in turn can have the opposite effect, relating to the fact that scents have an effect on consumers' mood states; an unpleasant scent affects negatively on mood and a pleasant scent affects positively to the mood.

Subjective experience was also mentioned when discussing on whether scent marketing is deceptive marketing. Scent marketing is seen as deceptive if it is being used subliminally and in cases where the product does not meet the attributes that are promised by the scent, such as in bakery products. Subjectivity also is considered when consumers compare it to other marketing methods. A scent has a direct link to a consumer's memory and emotions, which make it a lot more subjective and personal experience for each consumer; something that other marketing methods lack. Consumers also believe that scent marketing is a new marketing method and unknown for consumers, thus it might be harder for people to recognize the scent as a marketing method in a store.

To conclude, consumers see scent marketing as an interesting, new possibility for retailers. As in any other marketing method, there are also negative sides on it, which the consumers are aware of, and thus, the use of scent marketing also opposes some risks for retailers.

6.2 Managerial implications

The empirical research of the thesis showed that consumers are quite positive towards the use of scent marketing. For retailers and other marketers this is a positive result of the research, since scent marketing has been a marketing method that companies prefer not to speak about because it is often believed that consumers would be highly against the method.

The consumers' attitude towards scent marketing usage as a brand-building method was more acceptable than for the subliminal use. In order to avoid negative publicity and negative consumer attitude towards the brand, companies should be open about the use of scent marketing. In order to avoid the risks of scent marketing, a company should be open about its use of ambient scents, such as explaining to consumers that scent is used for instance to increase the pleasantness of the store atmosphere. Publicly admitting the use of scent marketing might take away the element of surprise, but it dispels the shadow over the method and makes consumers more acceptable towards it.

Scent marketing can also be interesting opportunity for certain retailers. Scents are often associated to cosmetics, which was also evident in the empirical research. However, cosmetic stores often have a lot of products, which emanate scents naturally. When combined, these scents create a confusing and bad scent that is often too strong leading to an unappealing environment to shop. With effective usage of scent marketing, these strong and confusing mixtures of different scents can be hidden, and in turn, increase the pleasantness of the retail environment. Also, cosmetic stores are often expected by the consumers to smell like something, thus a congruent and simple scent would also match the

consumers' image of the store, making it a better solution than the scents which emanate from the products naturally.

One of the main concerns towards scent marketing was how it affects people with allergies or who are oversensitive towards chemicals. Retailers and companies can address this issue with an open approach towards scent marketing. Explaining the methods how scent marketing is used and that the chemicals used in scent marketing meet the regulations and are not harmful can reduce the risks of scent marketing, and in turn, make consumers more acceptable towards the use of scents in retail environment.

6.3 Limitations

The research was conducted among the Finnish consumers, and thus, is only applicable in the Finnish markets. Scents have cultural meaning where as national culture has an effect on the consumer's attitude towards advertising. This creates a situation where the results of the study can not be transferred directly into another country and another culture. It should also be noted, that not all Finns are ethnically similar and have similar cultural background, as Finland also has sub-cultures, such as the Sami people, or the more recent cultural groups created by increased immigration. Due to the cultural background of these groups, their opinions and perceptions might differ from the sample group's opinions and perceptions and should be noted as a limitation of the study.

6.4 Directions for future research

Scent marketing is a new marketing method and there is a lack of research on many different areas of the method. This research has shown that consumers seem to have a positive opinion towards the use of scent marketing. A larger scale research on consumer opinions of the topic could give more information on the use of scent marketing both for companies and consumers. Currently, it seems that there are a lot of misunderstandings on the scent marketing. Companies seem to think that consumers would not like the use of scent marketing and

consumers in turn are worried about its effects, especially on allergic people. With a larger research that would provide information on what consumers think about the use of scent marketing, companies could be more willing to use the method, which could give the industry a boost in the Finnish markets.

For the industry to grow in the Finnish markets, a research on how scents affect consumers and whether it can increase the sales are needed. There aren't really researches on how much scent marketing has affected the sales, thus, companies lack the information of scent marketing's benefits. A method that is difficult to justify is also difficult to execute, thus, factual data on scent marketing's effects on sales could increase companies willingness to use scent marketing.

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