

The Power of Power

- An observational study on how power affects the service encounter

Abstract - Researchers in most areas agree upon the fact that power influences in all interpersonal relations; when two parties interact, some sort of balance of power will always be formed, which in turn will affect the parties' emotions. From a consumer marketing perspective, this may be applied to the service encounter, causing emotions affecting the store's overall result. Power has been studied to a limited extent in marketing; instead it is often substituted with perceived control. By doing an observational study of 206 customers in five The Phone House stores, with complementary surveys in 81 cases, we found however that perceived control and power cannot fully substitute each other, but they are both of importance to the service encounter. The findings imply that the customer has more positive emotions, if either the customer or the sales clerk possesses more power than the other. Furthermore, the customer is more satisfied the more dominance she takes in the interaction. Hence, one can argue it is in the interest of all stakeholders that the sales clerk tries to influence the interaction in the way that one part will possess more power than the other. Thus, if the customer does not act dominant, the sales clerk should step in and take a dominant role in the interaction.

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**“The fundamental concept in social science is Power,
in the same way that Energy is the fundamental concept in physics”**

- Russel 1938 (p. 10)

A special thanks to:

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For his dedication and guiding and especially for always keeping his door open

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All Participants

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The human beings' influence on one another has always been an interesting phenomenon, in all different kinds of relationships. And of course, this is also an important notation from a customer marketing perspective, especially since the relationship between the customer and sales clerk is seen as the supplier's most important contact with the customer (Verbeke & Bagozzi 2000).

Relational research, however, is generally more developed among psychological scholars, whereby many for a long time have been interested in the aspect of power. Researchers in most areas agree upon the fact that power influences in all interpersonal relations; when two parties interact, some sort of balance of power will always be formed. It is shown that one cannot have a gratifying interaction without feeling in control (Schutz 1998), and feeling out of control is often assumed to arise negative emotions. Nevertheless, this is a topic ignored by most marketing researchers.

The information regarding how the balance of power affects the sales encounter is limited, but there are reasons to believe that the power balance do impinge the interaction between sales clerk and customer, in the same way it does in other relations. If this is true, that power also affect emotions in a customer setting, this implies that power is something that both marketers and businesses should know about. This becomes even more important, as today's society has changed to focus more on long-term customer relationships, rather than individual purchases (Sherman et al. 1997). As happy customer tends to be more satisfied (Oliver 1996), and satisfaction in turn leads to repurchase and loyalty (Hom 2000), the customers' emotions could be seen as one key to success.

Consequently, power develops in every interaction and it causes emotions to arise, therefore one could assume that power will effect emotions in a service encounter as well. Thus, this research is a first step to reveal how power will affect the customer in a retail setting.

1.2 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Lighting (Baker et al. 1992), waiting time (Baker & Cameron 1996), sex of the service provider (Fischer et al. 1997), smiling (Abel & Abel 2007) and so forth, are all examples of dimensions proven to affect the customers' experience of a store visit. In addition, so is the behaviour of the sales personnel (Bitner et al. 1990). However, marketers have focused mainly on studying the tangible¹ aspects of the sales personnel's behaviour and have disregarded from generic concepts

¹ Tangible attributes refers to e.g. smiling, gender etc.

of relational research. Hence, the scarce research regarding the balance of power in a store environment, suggest a relatively big knowledge gap. Since power has been shown to affect other interactions, there is reason to believe that the same idea applies to the interpersonal encounters in a retail setting. In an interaction between two acquainted, one will within a minute possess more dominance than the other (Rosa & Mazur 1979; Fisek & Ofshe 1970). Ma & Dubé (2010) found in their research of a restaurant, that the customer has a higher probability of being satisfied if one of the two parties had more power than the other, vis-a-vis if both parties were on the same level. Hence, their results do not go in line with the old expression saying *the customer should always be the king*, as the customer are equally satisfied when the waitress² is dominant. Based on these findings, we sought to investigate how the possession of power affects the customer in retail setting. Try to imagine the following episode; *you are a 35-year old metropolitan guy who just bought a renovation project, completely unaware of how a hammer should be used. Walking into a local building supplier to buy everything you need to turn the wrack into a castle – how would you like to be treated?* Maybe would you appreciate if the sales clerk took the dominant part and told you what you need, or maybe you rather try to explain it to him yourself. There are reasons to believe that the customer want the sales clerk to actually express her opinion, tell the customer what to do and give strong recommendations as the sales clerk often is an expert in the area. There are also reasons to assume that the customer want to have the control and be the dominant part in the interaction, as all relational research is supporting the fact that being dominated is interlocked with negative emotions (Schutz 1998).

The purpose of this story is to show that this issue does not have a univocal answer and it is not obvious what approach the sales clerk should use. We like to stress the fact that this is not a paper about different frank sales techniques, rather it is about the distribution of power in the interaction and how this affects the customers' emotions and in turn satisfaction and purchase behaviour. To find answers to our questions, we have collaborated with The Phone House, doing a study in their stores.

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate whether the distribution of power has an impact on the customers' emotions and satisfaction. That is, to if and how, above-mentioned factors are affected depending on which of the customer or the sales clerk who possesses the most power in

² We will henceforth refer to the feminine object, but it corresponds to both sexes

the interaction. In addition we seek to investigate the outcome if the power is equally distributed between the two objectives.

1.4 DELIMITATION

Due to the limited scope of a bachelor's thesis there are some delimitations that we would like to highlight.

First, we will not comprise the level of the customers' expectations into this research. Expectations before a purchase has shown to affect the satisfaction with the product (Cardozo 1965; Ziethaml et al. 1993), hence there is reason to believe that the expectations of the interaction will interfere with the satisfaction of the service. The Phone House provides a typical purchase situation where it is expected to have a high degree of personal interaction; hence, the outcome might differ in other industries, due to different expectations of the interaction.

Secondly, there might be a delimitation that only one firm participates in the research. The Phone House might attract a special group of customers and the purchase pattern might differ from other types of industries, such as clothing or provisions. In addition, only stores situated in Stockholm are included in the research, which further delimitates the customer group. Therefore, the fact that only one firm is included in this study might cause a homogeneous sample group.

Lastly, there are several factors in a store that arise emotions. The power balance might be one of these factors. In this research, we will not clear from the other factors that might interfere, such as look, gender or personal chemistry. Furthermore, with regards to the extent of this research we have been forced to disregard from certain dimension of power, most important; the nonverbal cues. We will hence solely study the vocabulary cues, which however is a method used before (Ma & Dubé 2010).

1.5 CONTRIBUTION

Power is a fundamental part of every human interaction, yet it is a somewhat neglected area among marketing researchers. Findings in this study might bring valuable knowledge in how the sales clerk should behave, which in turn can contribute to the overall outcome of the customer experience. This research should be seen as first step to reveal the mysterious of power and its impact in the context of the service encounter. How emotions and satisfaction are affected by the distribution of power has not yet been discovered, as the concept of perceived control has been dominating this field of research. Hence, our findings will be interesting from both a managerial and a consumer perspective. Furthermore, inevitably, this research will clarify whether one can use perceived control as a measure of power.

1.6 CLARIFICATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

1.6.1 Power

Philosophers around the world have for centuries debated about the meaning of the word power and there are a variety of definitions, which we will further develop in the theoretical framework. We have tried not get caught in the labelling in our attempt to clarify this concept, rather receiving a comprehensive picture of the construct. Furthermore, we have chosen to not base our research on solely one theory; we have however assumed that power is an ability and *not* a trait of character.

1.6.2 Service Encounter

We have based our use of the expression service encounter on Shostack's well known definition as "a period of time during which a consumer directly interacts with a service" (Shostack 1985 p. 243), used by e.g. Bitner (1990). This implies a situation where aspects such as the personnel, the physical facilities and other tangible elements are included. In our definition we will disregard from all elements except from the verbal interaction with the personnel.

1.6.3 The Phone House

The Phone House is owned by The Carphone Warehouse (UK) and Best Buy (US) and is the world's largest retailer of mobile phones and telecommunications. With a turnover of 1.4 billion SEK 2009/2010 and one hundred operating stores in Sweden, it is accounting for 14 percent of the Swedish mobile market. The Phone House sell mobile phones and subscriptions from the world's market-leading operators and distributes primarily through sales channels such as stores, telemarketing and corporate sales (The Phone House 2011).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to study the main problem of this thesis, several areas of interest need to be studied. By presenting theories regarding the service encounter, power and emotions, we seek to illustrate what acknowledged scholars previously have defined, which will help us developing hypotheses in order to answer our overall research question.

2.1 THE SERVICE ENCOUNTER

The economy is changing; what used to be focused on mass production and commodities is today more focused on the service around these things (Fornell et al. 1996), implying that service is one of the most important thing in today's retail setting. Bitner et al. (1990 p. 71) stressed the importance of the sales clerk by stating, "the service encounter frequently *is* the service from the customer's point of view". This is not a new topic, already in the beginning of the twentieth century, Strong (1925) introduced a discussion about whether it was more important to get satisfied customer than selling something. Ever since, several researchers have touched upon this topic (see e.g. Bursk 1947; Gwinner 1968).

Authors in proceeding articles have argued about appropriate ways to behave as a seller in order to increase the chance of target achievement, such as satisfied customers and increased sales (Solomon et al. 1985). It is often argued that the seller should, to be successful, adjust its mode of procedure to every unique customer (Weitz 1979). Still, researchers have tried to assess specific selling techniques often associated with success. Some of the techniques Jobber (2007) has highlighted are; asking questions, providing product information, acknowledging the viewpoint of the customer, agreeing with the customer's perceptions and supporting the customer. Furthermore, if the employee is positive in the service encounter, this will positively affect the customer (Pugh 2001).³

To further understand the sales personnel's role in the encounter, Babin et al. (1995) formulated three types of sales-persons' stereotypes and examined how these affected the customers' emotions. The stereotypes were; pushy (smiles constantly, loud voice, very direct etc.), typical (smiles often, direct and product oriented etc.) and atypical (quiet voice, unclear and consumer oriented etc.). The pushy seller was associated with relatively high scepticism and helplessness, whereas the typical seller was associated with relatively high interest/arousal. These findings

³ However, it is not only the sales clerk who influences the customer, also the customer's behaviour has been examined to affect the service employees' mood (Zimmermann et al. 2011).

implies that there might exist a connection between dominance and emotions in a retail setting, why we further like to investigate the underlying dimensions of power and thus dominance.

2.2 POWER, DOMINANCE AND CONTROL

At first sight, it might seem like there are almost endless to say about power. Since the theory regarding power is both extensive and difficult to define, we will in this paragraph try to explain the main concepts. It should be noted that researchers are quite ambiguous in their definitions, why we have tried not to get caught in the labelling. Instead we seek to provide a comprehensive overview of the conclusions previous researchers have found regarding power, and that to some degree could be connected to marketing. Furthermore, we like to stress the fact that we have chosen not to include some well-known theories regarding power, since we did not find them contributing to the overall research question. Hence e.g. Lukes' "Three faces of Power" (Lukes 1974) and Komter's theory about cultural aspects (Komter 1989) has been disregarded from.

In the field of marketing and the subject of customer relationship, the construct of power is relatively unexplored and in earlier marketing research it is the construct of control (or rather perceived control) that has been used to the greatest extent (Ward & Barnes 2001; Hui & Bateson 1991). However, in psychology it is the construct of dominance that is well studied. To get a broad view of the construct of power, we therefore had to include findings about both control and dominance.

2.2.1 *Power*

Power has been a topic discussed by philosophers and scientists around the world in thousands of years, still, no univocal concept have been found to explain this ambiguous construct. Hence, power is an elusive concept, which is further confirmed by Dunbar & Burgoon (2005). Collectively in all findings about power though, is that power is a relational concept between two, or more, parties.

One of the most famous definitions of power is Weber's, which is used and interpreted by many researchers (e.g. Swedberg 2005 p. 205; Lukes 1974), and directs to the apprehension that in a social context, the one who possesses the most power is the one who is able to implement her own ideas despite resistance. This definition has ever since been used in many similar interpretations by a range of prominent researchers (Parson 1968; Parson & Henderson 1965). Today, a more general view of power from a communication perspective, is defined as the capacity to produce intended effects, and in particular, the ability to influence the behaviour of another person (French & Raven 1959; Rollins & Bahr 1976; Burgoon et al. 1984; Burgoon et al.

1998). Another example is Foucault's (1982) explanation of power as something one cannot own or possess, rather something that occur in a personal interaction.

Latent or Examined

To further demonstrate the researchers' conflicting notions about the phenomena of power, it should be elucidated that the researchers have not yet agreed whether power should be seen as something latent, or if it must be examined (see e.g. Dahl 2007), i.e. if it is in a person's nature versus something one can become by actions.

According to Burgoon & Dunbar (2006) power is an ability and like other abilities one can choose to exert it or not. On the basis of this, scholars have attempted to understand what distinguish those who more often exert power, from those who do not. Galinsky et al. (2003) has for example demonstrated that powerful people show less empathy (the more power one has, the less one takes on the perspective of others), and are more likely to take action (i.e. being the one to take action against an annoying stimulus). Komter (1989) further demonstrates that powerful people do not always know about their ability, thus individuals with greater power may also express that power unintentionally.

In addition to theories about power as an ability that can be exerted, Bourdieu (1996) emphasize the fact that having power is a relative expression. One can have power because of knowledge and expertise in one area, but when moving to another area, the same person can be powerless. Another way to look at relative power, are theories regarding the zero-sum concept; the amount of power in a relationship is definite, and divided by the different parties, i.e. the more power part A has, the less power part B has (Bratton et al. 2005). To understand power as a construct to exercise rather than an ability, French & Raven (1959) identified five different sources to acquire power; reward-, coercive-, legitimate-, expert- and referent power. By having an advantage relative to the counterpart, one would automatically become the *leader* in the interaction.

The Weberian form of power⁴ implicitly says that one part have ascendancy in the power relationship. In addition, recent findings have shown that it is unlikely to find a partner who is at the exact equal level in power, implying that one is always more powerful than the other (McDonald 1980)⁵. Ma & Dubé (2010) have tested the dyadic relationship in a restaurant environment and showed that the client is generally more satisfied if the provider and client

⁴ The ability to get someone to do something she or he otherwise would not do (Swedberg 2005)

⁵ New finding shows that some couples are relatively equal though (Dunbar 2004)

complement each other. Hence, when the client and provider had the same level of dominance, it generally dampens the client's satisfaction (Ma & Dubé 2010). This has however not been tested in a retail environment, still trend analyses of the consumer market are not afraid to call attention to the customers' ever increasing power (Dolléus 2009; Andersson 2009; NewHope 2011). This naturally leads us to our first hypotheses, assuming that power is relative⁶:

H:0

A: In a meeting between a customer and a sales clerk in a store environment, there will be significant more meetings where one of the two parts has more power than the other part.

B: In a meeting between a customer and a sales clerk in a store environment, there will be significant more meetings where the customer possesses the most power.

C: In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, the customer is more satisfied if one of the two parts has more power than the other part.

D: In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, if the customer have a high level of *power*, the customer is more satisfied.

2.2.2 Dominance

In contrast to power that, according to some theories, is an ability that can be latent (Komter 1989), dominance must be manifested (Dunbar & Burgoon 2005). Dunbar and Burgoon expounded Rogers-Millar & Millar (1979) view of dominance to "context- and relationship-dependent inter-actional patterns in which one actor's assertion of control is met by acquiescence from another" (Dunbar & Burgoon 2005 p. 208).

Dominance is said to be one of the basic mechanisms of social interaction and to have fundamental implications for communication and social interaction (Burgoon & Dunbar 2006). After only a minute of conversation, a hierarchy of dominance is developed (Rosa & Mazur 1979; Fisek & Ofshe 1970). There is an abundance of studies about dominance and how this is expressed. Researchers have found key factors in the way to talk and act that gives a person higher probability to be dominant, hence dominance is often explained to be expressed in verbal and/or nonverbal cues.

At the *nonverbal level*, several studies have identified different ways of acting to assess dominance. Nonverbal cues are much more than just body language, and are (often) divided into

⁶ An assumption that will be continuous throughout the paper

seven general codes (Whaley & Samter 2007 p. 39-55); kinesics, haptics, proxemics, physical appearance, vocalics, chronemics and artifacts. The typical nonverbally dominant communicator would use most kinesics and vocal cues (Dunbar & Burgoon 2005). Kinesics cues⁷ behaviours that are proved to be associated with dominance are among others body lean, gesturing, smiling and eye gaze (Burgoon et al. 1984; Kimble & Musgrove 1988). Vocalic cues, such as the amount of talking time, speech loudness, interruption, speech tempo, and pitch, have also been proved to have an impact on the perception of dominance (Lamb 1981).

At the *verbal level* there are different ways to group dimensions of power (Schutz 1998; Frieze & McHugh 1992; Falbo & Peplau 1980). These different kinds of grouping are based on studies of close relationships and might not always be applicable on a service encounter. However, problem solving, compromise, insults, threats, and physical force are all examples of verbal cues that influence dominance (Fitzpatrick & Winke 1979; Klein & Johnson 1997)

Measuring dominance

Since dominance is an interesting phenomenon in interpersonal relationships, researchers have tried to develop methods to measure it, both on the individual level (e.g. Altemeyer 1998 p. 72) and situation-based (e.g. Wiggins 1991).

A practical measure to affirm the level of dominance in an interaction is the Interpersonal Circumplex Model (ICM). The ICM is constructed after two fundamental human needs; agency and communion. Agency is demonstrating the human's need for control and mastery, and communion reflects the human need for affiliation with others (Bakan 1966; Wiggins 1991). Agency has two anti-poles, dominance and submissiveness, while the anti-poles in communion is quarrelsomeness and agreeableness. Moskowitz (1994) described these anti-poles with clear examples of actions in an interaction, e.g. dominance can be described as, *one asked the other to do something* or *one expressed an opinion*. These expressions has been used as measures in other studies where the interpersonal behaviour been researched (Ma & Dubé 2010).

2.2.3 Control

Control is defined as “the need to demonstrate one's competence, superiority, and mastery over the environment” (White 1959). Greenberger et al. (1989 p. 31) and Ward & Barnes (2001)

⁷ Kinesic cues is defined as “all forms of body movements excluding physical contact with another” (Burgoon & Dunbar 2006)

defined control as “an individual's beliefs, at a given point in time, in his or her ability to effect a change, in a desired direction, on the environment”. In addition Averill (1973 p. 287) claimed that control could be operationalized in three ways; behavioural control, decisional control and cognitive control.

Control is one of three interpersonal needs that Schutz (1998) claimed that human social behaviours are driven by and further stated that it is necessary to feel in control to have gratifying interactions with other people. This implies that control is an important block in the interaction between customer and sales clerk. To be a consumer includes some uncertainty and the customer is somewhat dependent on the sales clerk, i.e. what room she will get at a hotel. It is further assumed that a customer losing control is more likely to feel stress and uncertainty, which leads to dissatisfaction (Namasivayam & Hinkin 2003).

Even though it is desirable to measure the actual control this has been shown to be difficult to measure though (Faranda 2001), hence the most common measurement is perceived control. Perceived control has subsequently been used as a proxy measure of actual control, which some researchers have shown is preferable (Ajzen & Madden 1986; Terry & O’Leary 1995). Perceived control is defined as “the *belief* that one can determine one’s own internal states and behaviour, influence one’s environment, and/or bring about desired outcomes” (Wallston et al. 2007 p. 5). Perceived control has been identified as a powerful construct for understanding behaviour (Skinner 1996 p. 549-571). This leads us to our next hypothesis:

H:1

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, there will be a significant relation between perceived control and power, in the manner that the more power the customer has the more she will perceive control

Perceived control, customer emotions and service experiences

Perceived control is hence a state of mind that has interested researchers in marketing as well as researchers in other areas (e.g. in medicine Langer & Rodin 1976). Psychological research has shown that people that feel in control tend to have more positive emotions (Langer & Saegert 1977; Proshansky et al. 1972). This inspired Hui & Bateson (1991), who through a test in a commercial environment found strong evidence that perceived control influenced the customers’ emotions arisen from a service experience. These findings are further supported in Ward & Barnes' (2001) research, where they demonstrated that consumers in a retail environment, who felt in control, both were in a better mood and more involved.

As Söderlund (2007) brings forth in his article, there is no consistent apprehension about the relationship between perceived control and satisfaction. Some researchers found no substantial correlation (Gotlieb et al. 1994), while some found (although weak) (Faranda 2001). Furthermore Söderlund (2007) interpreted the theory of Schweizer et al. (2006) about consumer confusion, that a great product variety creates frustration and confusion among customers, thus control cannot be granted a positive effect.

H:2

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, if the customer has a high level of *perceived* control, the customer is more satisfied.

2.3 CUSTOMER EMOTIONS

Emotions play a significant role in humans' everyday life. In numerous studies have been made regarding emotions and their potential impact on different situations. In this paragraph we will try to clarify the concept of emotions, and further lead you through the emotions expressed in a consumer-based environmental setting and the emotions expected impact on the consumer satisfaction and behaviour.

2.3.1 Definition of Emotions

Emotions may not be perceived as so difficult to define. Still, philosophers around the world have for centuries appraised this issue, trying to find an explanation of why certain emotions appear and their effects on human relationships (Ben-Ze'ev 2000). Through a comprehensive review of various interpretations of emotion, Kleinginna & Kleinginna (1981 p. 355) developed following definition;

Emotions is a complex set of interactions among subjective and objective factors, mediated by neural/hormonal systems, which can (a) give rise to affective experiences such as feelings of arousal, pleasure/displeasure; (b) generate cognitive processes such as emotionally relevant perceptual effects, appraisals, labelling processes; (c) activate widespread physiological adjustments to the arousing conditions; and (d) lead to behaviour that is often, but not always, expressive, goal-directed, and adaptive.

Kleinginna & Kleinginna (1981 p. 355)

A consistently perception about emotions is its characteristic as a *state of mind that we cannot control* (Söderlund 2003 p. 28), and we cannot alone determine whether it should occur or not.

Emotions are said to appear as a consequence to a stimuli; and the response differ among individuals (Söderlund 2003 p. 42). Furthermore, some scholars claim that more than one emotion could be generated after exposure to stimuli (Polivy 1981). In order to understand emotions however, one needs to distinguish it from other *states of mind*, such as physiological concepts (hunger, fatigue, nausea etc.), which instead should be seen as constructs that may be contributing to the emotions to arise (Söderlund 2003 p. 32-33).

A fundamental approach to emotions, which later formed the basis for the classification of the same concept, is the notation that each individual emotion has a *valance*; i.e. the emotion is seen as either negative or positive. There is however disagreement on how to apply this apprehension; where some scholars see this as the *only* difference between emotions resulting in the use of only two categories (positive/negative, pleasure/arousal etc.) of emotional state (Mehrabian & Russell 1974; Robert J. Donovan & John R. Rossiter 1982). Others however, are convinced that in order to understand the implication of emotions, one must consider them as separate constructs (Holbrook & O'Shaughnessy 1984) since they might not arise from the same stimuli (see e.g. Söderlund 2003 p. 23).

2.3.2 To Measure Emotions

In marketing, the idea of a two-category-approach, i.e. positive versus negative emotions, has been frequently used (Shaver et al. 1987; Westbrook & Oliver 1991). Thus measure to capture these dimensions has been developed. Authors in preceding articles have frequently used surveys to measure emotions, sometimes also a more scientific approach where physiological indicators for measuring reactions (such as pupil size, blood pressure, sweating and breathing) have been used (Cohen & Areni 1991).

Mehrabian and Russell are often seen as the ones that laid the foundation of the theory of emotions in consumer marketing with their Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance-scale (PAD) (Mehrabian & Russell 1974). Donovan & Rossiter (1982) later used this measure to study environmental factors (such as interior design, store layout, lighting, colour, music), and (Sherman et al. 1997) explored the role of store environment and its role on customer emotional dimensions.

A common denominator of this early research is the presumption of bipolarity; i.e. in the presence of positive emotions, negative emotions will not occur. These earlier theories have been questioned by various scholars (e.g. Westbrook 1987; Aaker et al. 1988), claiming that the measures not to be fully adequate to incorporate into consumption behaviour. This has resulted

in a number of different researchers trying to develop a more accurate measure of emotions (Aaker et al. 1988; Batra & Holbrook 1990). Richins (1997) later identified a set of consumption emotion descriptors (CES) that has been used by many scholars. By developing a set of reliable emotions most frequently experienced in (three) different consumption settings, she was able to develop a framework of easily understood and useful emotions to use in surveys (see appendix I for further review of her conclusions).

2.3.3 Emotional Expressions with focus on a Consumer Experience

From a consumer marketing perspective, focus has for long been on consumers' emotional response to advertising (see e.g. Derbaix 1995). Emotions are an important component of the advertising response (Westbrook & Oliver 1991; Westbrook 1987; Mano & Oliver 1993), shown to affect e.g. the liking of the ad (Murry et al. 1992), viewing time (Olney et al. 1991), attitude (Holbrook & Batra 1987), and serve as a major basis for the consumer readiness to act (Söderlund 2003 p. 32).

The transferability of findings regarding emotions in an advertising response to customer based interactions have however been discussed. It has been shown that emotions associated with advertising are secondary rather than direct, why it should be easier to attract more extreme emotions in staged advertising than in a store (Aaker et al. 1988). In contradiction, it has been demonstrated that emotions have a greater tendency to occur in interpersonal relations (Ekman 1992; Ben-Ze'ev 2000). In addition, the emotions tend to differ depending on the situation, i.e. a situation with a great degree of personal involvement, it is likely to generate emotions with higher intensity than in context with lower involvement (Richins 1997). Furthermore, human interaction in a purchase situation has shown to arise stronger emotions than the product itself (van Dolen et al. 2001).

Since it is not obvious that one can apply findings regarding emotions in advertising to a customer setting, an increasing interest for more in-depth research regarding these emotions have occurred, which is however a topic still pretty unexplored. Some researchers have however determined a relation between pleasure, arousal and different consumer behaviours (Donovan & Rossiter 1982; Baker et al. 1992; Donovan et al. 1994; Sherman et al. 1997). These findings include e.g. increased desire to stay in the environment, increased spending of money (Donovan & Rossiter 1982), increased intention to purchase (Baker et al. 1992) and a higher degree of impulse buying behaviour (Mattila & Wirtz 2001). As mentioned above it has been shown that to be a customer includes some uncertainty. Furthermore, customers feeling less in control are

more likely to feel stress and uncertainty, which in turn leads to dissatisfaction (Namasivayam & Hinkin 2003).

There are dimension in the characteristic of human affecting emotions; such as age and gender. Children tend to have stronger emotional reactions than elder (Greenfield 2000), and women tend to feel more negative than men in a purchase situation (Derbaix & Pham 1991).

With this information about emotions *and satisfaction* and previous statements about power, following hypothesis is developed:

H:3

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, the customer's emotions will depend on who assesses the most power of the two parts.

To further understand emotions, the characteristic need to be clarified; a noted feature of a separate emotion is its short duration of time (Ben-Ze'ev 2000; Ekman 1992), another is its ability to affect other emotions to arise and to leave traces in memory (Cohen & Areni 1991). Furthermore, positively charged emotions are likely to have shorter duration than negatively charged (Ben-Ze'ev 2000).

Furthermore, Oliver (1996) discovered emotions to impact consumer satisfaction, in that manner as, positive emotions increase satisfaction, while negative emotions decrease satisfaction (Menon & Bansal 2007). There are two fundamental aspects why it is important for a store to have satisfied customers; the short-term outcome of today's business, and the forward-looking in order to create long-term sales. Outcomes of satisfaction feelings may involve intent to repurchase, word of mouth and complaints (Hom 2000).

2.5 SUMMARY OF THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Earlier research, discussed above, have lead us to believe that there exist a relation between power, emotions and satisfaction in a store environment, which has lead us to the following hypotheses:

H:0

A: In a meeting between a customer and a sales clerk in a store environment, there will be significant more meetings where one of the two parts has more power than the other part.

B: In a meeting between a customer and a sales clerk in a store environment, there will be significant more meetings where the customer possesses the most power.

C: In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, the customer is more satisfied if one of the two parts has more power than the other part.

D: In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, if the customer have a high level of *power*, the customer is more satisfied.

H:1

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, there will be a significant relation between perceived control and power, in the manner that the more power the customer has the more it will perceive control.

H:2

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, if the customer has a high level of *perceived* control, the customer is more satisfied.

H:3

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, the customer's emotions will depend on who assesses the most power of the two parts.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN

The overall purpose with this thesis is to evaluate whether the balance of power in an interpersonal encounter has an impact on the customer's emotions and satisfaction. During the framing of the research design, it was however revealed that few before had studied power in this manner. Perceived control have rather been frequently used as an interpretation of power, why this thesis also inevitably will evaluate the methodology of previous studies. Thorough review of existing research and findings, yield a deeper understanding that enabled us to develop hypotheses; giving this paper a deductive approach (Malhotra & Birks 2007, p. 160). Since knowledge about power and emotions in a marketing research context is rather poor, literature have been collected from a wide variety of research fields, such as philosophy and management, and later thoroughly been comprised in the theoretical background.

The study was conducted in collaboration with The Phone House and was implemented in five⁸ of their stores in the area of Stockholm, Sweden in the beginning of May 2011. The number of stores was chosen in order to get as representative sample as possible. Furthermore, the stores were chosen in cooperation with The Phone House on the basis of having a high number of visitors and no difficulties (as lack of personnel etc.) in their operations that could affect the outcome. The study was built upon two parts, which were carried out simultaneously: observation of the customer in authentic environment, followed by asking the customer to fill out a questionnaire. This approach allowed us to gather necessary data to reject or support our hypotheses. A pre-study was made in order to test the questionnaire and the method of the observational study.

However, before any of the studies were conducted, four deep interviews were held to define the problem more precisely, develop hypotheses and gain insights in order to formulate an approach to the problem. Thus, the research design of this thesis is built upon a combination of an exploratory- and conclusive approach (Malhotra 2010 p. 102-104), with more focus on the latter.

3.2 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

We began our search of knowledge by supplementing our data collection of previous research with four in-depth interviews (for explanation see e.g. Malhotra & Birks 2007 p. 207). By using

⁸ Four if not including the pre study

a qualitative research methodology we sought to create a deeper understanding of the phenomena, and thereby facilitate, and complement the forthcoming quantitative research.

Four potential customers (age 24-53) were interviewed one by one. By combining open questions and brief case-scenarios, we tried to acquire a deeper apprehension about attitudes and feelings toward a store visit and especially the encounter with the sales clerk. Further without revealing the purpose of the thesis, we tried to determine the level and position of power, and attitudes associated with it, in various situations described by the respondent.

The interview length was on average 41 minutes and three major conclusions were drawn from the dialogue; (1) the participants all indicated a lack of control when experiencing poor service, (2) power connected to the sales clerk was associated with both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and (3) joy, frustration, anger, anxiety and anticipation were emotions often described to occur in a sales encounter.

3.3 FINDING A COOPERATION PARTNER

In order to achieve realistic results of our study, the first step was to find a suitable industry, and in turn store that would like to cooperate with us.⁹ Through a small test, using the method of *mystery shopping*¹⁰ (Kotler et al. 2005 p. 469), we were able to receive a proper image of the retail environment (Grove & Fisk 1992), and find an industry best suited for our purpose.

A noticeable difference in service was by this test possible to demonstrate, since 19 different stores in different retail industries were tested. To obtain reliable results an industry with already high level of interaction between customer and personnel was required. Hence, based on the amount personal contact, it became a natural step to focus on the telecommunication market where we found The Phone House as an eligible partner.

3.4 DESIGN OF THE CONCLUSIVE RESEARCH

Our initial idea, in order to understand the underlying factors and effects of the balance of power in an interpersonal encounter, was to conduct a causal research¹¹. By influencing the sales clerk behaviour, it would be possible to evaluate the outcome generated by differences in dominant

⁹ Naturally, we would like to be able to apply the results to all kinds of purchase situations, but we are aware of the fact that the choice of store may influence the results.

¹⁰ Mystery shopping is a method, generally used in service context, where consumers and/or sales persons are observed in their natural environment in the store (see e.g. Kotler et al. 2005 p. 469; Grove & Fisk 1992)

¹¹ Causal research refers to a study trying to examine evidence of a cause-and-effect relationship (Malhotra & Birks 2007 p. 69-71)

behaviour. Due to the limited opportunities to get into such a partnership with a store¹² however, this idea had to be rejected. Instead we chose, after thorough consideration and discussion with our mentor, to use a descriptive approach where a combination of survey and observation would give us an equivalent comprehensive image of the experience (Malhotra & Birks 2005 p. 265).

3.4.1 Basic Ideas about the Survey

Survey techniques are a well-known method of recording information.¹³ It is used in order to achieve information regarding e.g. consumer behaviour, intentions, attitudes, motivations etc. and is based upon the use of structured questionnaires given to a sample of the population (Malhotra & Birks 2005 p. 265).

A technique of *simple random sampling* was used, which is based on the fact that each person in the chosen element has a known, and equal probability of selection (Malhotra 2010 p. 382), which in reality meant that each person leaving the store were intercepted and asked to fill out the self-administrated questionnaire. A self-administrated questionnaire was used to emphasize the level of anonymity thereby increasing the probability of receiving as honest answers as possible without the respondent feeling pressured. However, when necessary (illness, reading problem etc.), we read out the questions to the respondent.

In order to increase the response rate, we used a number of well-known methods for reducing the number of refuses, such as keeping the questionnaire as short and easily understood as possible, emphasize the anonymity and handing out gifts in connection with the enquiry (see e.g. Malhotra & Birks 2005 p. 279). Furthermore, we tried to use as ordinary words as possible, avoiding ambiguous words and tried to avoid leading or biased questions (Malhotra 2010 p. 347-348).

Furthermore, in this research we used mostly a *structured data collection*, using a formal questionnaire, where most questions were scale measurements and in some few cases multiple choice or dichotomous (see e.g. Malhotra 2010 p. 344-345). For further review of the administrated questionnaire see appendix II and 3.4.2.

We finally want to stress that the academic frameworks used in this thesis are mainly in English. Since direct translation might interfere with the implications, gradation of content rather than strict words have sought to be maintained.

¹² A strong fear to harm sales and reputation arose as reasons

¹³ Constituting of around 31 percent of the worldwide investment on research methods 2005 according to Malhotra & Birks 2005 p. 265.

3.4.2 Basic Ideas about the Observational Study

To be able to measure the level of power in an interaction, we chose to use an observational study to capture aspects where a survey fails to. In contrast to other research methods, an observational study allows the researcher to observe natural behaviour in a systematic manner. Without interfering with the studied objects, it is possible to receive an unfeigned picture of the situation (Malhotra & Birks 2007 p. 181-182).

To use observational studies are also in line with previous discussion regarding the method of measure the level of power (see e.g. Ma & Dubé 2010; Dunbar & Burgoon 2005). Even though some researchers have found that perceived control is a good indicator of dominance in an interaction (Ajzen & Madden 1986; Terry & O'Leary 1995) every scholar do not agree. Particularly for dominant behaviour some researchers have shown that participants and observers not necessarily perceive the same behaviour in exactly the same way (Burgoon & Dunbar 2000).

The observational study was compassed by one of the researchers, pretending to be a customer and strolling around or sitting down at appropriate places in the store, always keeping a distance of one to two meters distance to the observed encounter, making sure not to interrupt or disturb the interaction. Every person entering the store was a target for observation. Only one customer could be observed at a time though, why a random sample decided who were observed.

A predefined formulary, where we had specified in detail the aspects we wanted to observe (Malhotra & Birks p. 283-286), made it possible to afterward assess the summed occurrence of different dominant aspects, a method previously used by e.g. (Abel & Abel 2007; Ma & Dubé 2010; Pugh 2001). Using a predefined formula minimize the risk of bias in the recording and enhance the reliability of the data (Malhotra & Birks p. 283). Furthermore, we used a *disguised observational method*. As people are unaware that they are being observed, the probability to record a reliable behaviour increases (Malhotra & Birks p. 284). Inevitable, the sales clerks were aware of our presence, thus in order to not to prejudice the outcome the true explanation was held secret.

One can question the ethical dilemma with these methods (Jorgensen 1989). Observing other people without their awareness may be seen as violating their rights to privacy. However, we justify our choice to use this method with the contribution to the academic research and the fact that the observed persons are completely anonymous.

3.5 PRE STUDY

Since the technique to use both observational study *and* a questionnaire, are pretty complex we found it appropriate to do a pre-study before the main study was conducted. This is also in line with what many scholars advocate (see e.g. Malhotra 2010 p. 354). The pre-study was examined in the middle of April, in one of The Phone House's store in Stockholm, in order to explore areas of improvement. Questions we needed to answer were e.g. how the service encounter could be observed without disturbing the interaction, the observer's ability to capture the different phases in the discussion and how the participants perceived the questionnaire.

During the pre-study, we received some insights that along with thorough consideration made us revise both the questionnaire and the formation of the observational study. Regarding the questionnaire, the participants found it too comprehensive and somewhat too personal. Further, conclusions we could draw from the pre-study were that pretending to be a customer will not be an issue since the stores are relatively small, and it is not perceived as odd to browse around on your own. A second conclusion we could draw was that the main study is going to be time consuming, as the number of visitors was limited and the response rate low.

The observations were conducted from a distance of approximately two meters. This was proven to be successful, as it was close enough to remain the quality of the observation, but yet so far it would not interrupt the interaction. When the customer left the store, the customer was asked to finish a survey of two pages by the other researcher.

In the pre-study, 14 people were observed whereby four agreed to complete the survey.

3.6 MAIN STUDY

In terms of methodological design, the main study was very similar to the pre-study. However, the pre-study gave us good insights in areas of improvement, in order to get most out of the study, why we made certain changes in line with conclusions described above. The study was executed between the 27th of April and 10th of May 2011 and were performed during every day of the week during different times of the day, in order to reduce the risk of time period specific interference. Furthermore, we aimed of having equal number of responses from each store, but due to great differences in response rates this was not possible. In addition to this, the response rate was substantially *lower* than anticipated; every person leaving the store were asked to participate, but statistics showed that almost 71 percent¹⁴ of the approached refused to answer. In

¹⁴ A number significantly higher than what The Council for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR) estimated; a 45 percent refusal rate (www.cmor.org) (Malhotra 2010 p.433)

total, 59 hours in the store rendered 83 completed surveys, representing a response rate of approximately 1.4 per hour. Refusals were mostly explained by the lack of time or other time-related factors, and two examples mentioned often were: *I need to go home and make dinner for my kids* or *No, I've been in there for so very long, so now I don't want to talk anymore*.

The number of observations were however substantially higher; 206 conversations were recorded as a whole, whereby 81 could be linked to a completed survey.

3.4.2 The Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 34 short questions. Consistent throughout the questionnaire all scales were built upon a seven-point interval scale with two bipolar labels, a so-called *semantic differential scale* (Söderlund 2005). By this method, respondents indicate what best correspond to their perception of the statement (or question) by marking a box on a scale with two bipolar adjectives, such as *good* or *bad*. To control the tendency of responses (so that no answers can be made without reflection), some questions were constructed in an inverse way i.e. the positive implication of the statement were sometimes placed on the right side of the scale, sometimes on the left (Malhotra & Birks 2007 p. 350).

The questionnaire was divided into five parts with the intention to measure (1) perceived control, (2) purchase, (3) customer emotions, (4) satisfaction and (5) demographic variables.

Perceived control: The first part of the questionnaire concerned the customer's perception of control in the encounter between him and the sales personnel. Questions earlier used by i.e. Namasivayam & Hinkin (2003) and Söderlund (2007) were applied in order to create a measure of perceived control¹⁵. Were we felt there was a lack of sufficient amplitude, we complemented with own developed questions¹⁶.

Following questions was used in order to measure perceived control:

(1) *I was the initiator of what happened* - (2) *I was in command* - (3) *The sales person did what I said* - (4) *I controlled what happened* – (5) *I felt inferior to the seller* – (6) *I was often interrupted by the sales clerk* – (7) *The sales clerk told me what I should buy*. Answers were made on a seven point scale, ranked from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*.

Hence, before any calculations could be made, question five to seven had to be reversed, since they were asked in an inverse way. Then the internal consistency was measured with Cronbach's

¹⁵ See appendix II, question 1-4 in the questionnaire

¹⁶ See appendix II, question 5-7 in the questionnaire

Alpha (α). Since the measure was considerably higher excluding question seven ($\alpha = 0.741$) an index was made with question one to six ($\alpha = 0.803$), by calculating the mean for all. This index is henceforth referred to as perceived control.

Additional questions about the overall perception of the personnel further completed this section.¹⁷

Purchase: Questions were used in order to investigate whether the participant had purchased anything, and in turn whether it was planned or not.¹⁸

Customer emotions: The third part of the questionnaire intended to evaluate the customer's emotions that aroused during the visit in the store. Richins' (1997) framework, described above (section 2.3) was used. Since the telecommunication market could be derived to her category of *recreational products*, emotions Richins (1997) shown to often arise in these service settings were included. However, some emotions that we did not find appropriate in this setting were neglected¹⁹ in order to keep the questionnaire at a comfortable level.²⁰ In order to achieve highest possible reliability, statistic scholars often advocate the use of several different parameters to measure one dimensions; i.e. to measure the level of anger, one should evaluate the level of frustration, anger and irritation (Richins 1997). However, in order to maximize response rate, we chose to measure one a specific emotion only ones in order to keep the form as short and concise as possible. The emotions included were (14) *Excitement* – (15) *Joy* – (16) *Pride* – (17) *Contentment* – (18) *Optimism* – (19) *Relief* – (20) *Peacefulness* – (21) *Worry* – (22) *Anger* – (23) *Surprise* – (24) *Eager*. The participants were hence asked to indicate on a seven-point scale to what degree they felt the emotion, from *not at all* to *very much*.

With these emotions, a factor analysis indicated two groups to be created; Positive (emotion 14 to 20) and Negative (emotion 21 to 22). A reliability analysis demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.922 and 0.791 respectively; hence a merging of means created two indexes henceforth referred to as positive versus negative emotions. Since surprise and eager did not strongly co-vary, those were used as separate constructs.

Satisfaction: In order to measure satisfaction, the well-established American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) model was used (Fornell et al. 1996). This construct consists of three

¹⁷ For further review of specific questions, see appendix II Question 8 - 10

¹⁸ For further review of specific questions, see appendix II Question 11 - 13

¹⁹ For a further review of the emotions not included, see appendix I

²⁰ Time constraint was by far the most used reason to refuse contribution, why we, in order to maximize response rate, wanted to keep the questionnaire as short as possible, yet not disregard from the most important emotions.

dimensions; perceived quality, perceived value and customer expectations. These were measured with the following questions; (25) *How satisfied are you with the visit overall?* – (26) *How well did the visit correspond to your expectations?* – (26) *Try to imagine a visit that is perfect in every way. How close, or far, do you think this visit was compared to that ideal?* The participants were asked to indicate the answer on a seven-point scale ranged from *not at all* to *very much/close*. These questions could hence be used to create an index, by comparing their overall mean for each participant. By grouping question 25 to 27 a Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.883 was measured, hence an index henceforth referred to as satisfaction was created.

Two additional questions were included in this section. We applied The Net Promoter Score (Reichheld 2003); a gauge to measure customer loyalty, as in turn can be seen as an indicator of company growth²¹. Furthermore, a question regarding if and how the visit changed the customer's perception about The Phone House was included.²²

Demographics: The last part of the questionnaire intended to examine the demographic variables of the participants. With information concerning age, gender, income, civil status and level of education, we sought to receive a comprehensive picture of the sample group.²³

3.4.3 The Design of the Observational Form

The observations (n=206) were based on the Interpersonal Circumplex Model (ICM) to determine the level and direction of power in the interaction between customer and sales clerk. The ICM consist of two parts; agency and communion, where focus in this paper merely been on agency, as communion is not in the scope of this paper.

Agency consists of two anti-poles: dominance and submissiveness. Moskowitz (1994) have developed a list of typical behaviours that can be derived into these two categories, the Social Behaviour Inventory (SBI). Example of such behaviours could be; *one is interrupting the other* (dominance) or *one is asking the other for permission to do something* (submissive). The SBI items were slightly modified and tested to fit our research, see further appendix III for a full review of this scheme.

In this observational study, we used separate schemes for the customer's and the sales clerk's action, hence the observation consisted of four parts: (1) customer dominance, (2) customer submissiveness, (3) sales clerk dominance and (4) sales clerks submissiveness. The observer

²¹ For further review, see appendix II Question 28

²² For further review, see appendix II Question 29

²³ For further review, see appendix II Question 30-34

marked every time an occurrence under SBI happened, thus every meeting ended up with a number of marks for the customer as well as the sales clerk individually, both in the dominance and the submissiveness dimension. If an incident happened several times, the observer marked the number it happened, hence, an observation could consist of an infinite number of marks.

As, according to Rosa & Mazur (1979), who stated that the balance of power will be clarified just after a couple of minutes interaction, the observations were limited to the first ten minutes of the meeting between the customer and the sales clerk. Situations that arose thereafter were thus not recorded. The time keeping however was based upon the whole encounter. Inevitably, situations occur where the whole conversation were not possible to overhear. In those cases, the observations were deleted in order to ensure reliable quality of the study.

To analyse the observations, it was necessary to create a new variable explaining the dimensions of power: As described above, both the sales clerk and the customer received scores depending on their behaviour. The scores could be divided into two parts; dominance and submissiveness. In the data set we have created four new variables, which is the sum of the points of every type of action; the Customer Dominance Score (CDS), the Customer Submissiveness Score (CSS), the Sales Clerk Dominance Score (SDS) and the Sales Clerk Submissiveness Score (SSS). To calculate the aggregated outcome of the interaction, we compared the dominance score and submissiveness score for both parts individually. By subtracting the scores from customer from the sales clerk's scores, the Dyadic Power Score (DPS) was compiled. Henceforth, when referring to power, it is the Dyadic Power Score we direct to.

$$\text{DPS} = (\text{SDS} - \text{SSS}) - (\text{CDS} - \text{CSS})$$

With this in mind, the DPS can adopt both negative and positive integer values. A negative value implies that the customer had the most power and a positive value implies that the sales clerk had the most power in the interaction.

From the DPS we created three segments to be able to address the data in different manners. The Equal Power Group (EPG) consisting of all interactions with DPS of -2 up to 2, the Customer Power Group (CPG), who consisted of all interactions with DPS of -3 and below, and finally the Sales Clerk Power Group (SPG), which consisted of the interactions with DPS of 3 or higher. The highest measured DPS was 12 and the lowest -8. Hence, three almost equal groups could be formed; where CPG consist of 73 respondents, EPG of 69 and SPG of 64 respondents.

Figure I – The Dyadic Power Scale

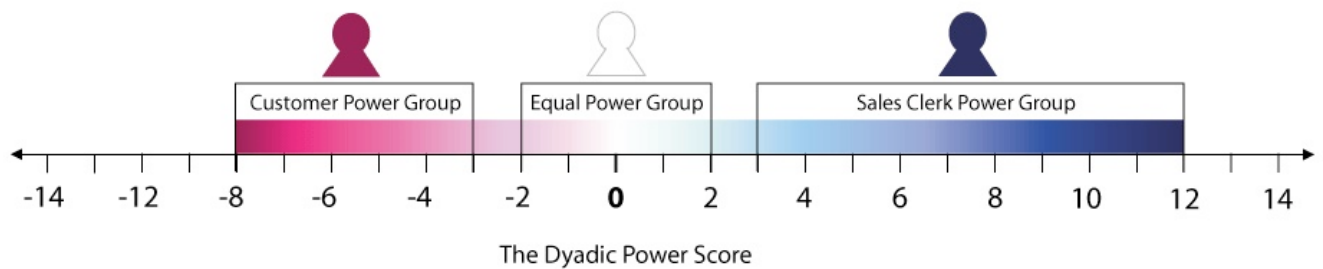


FIGURE I ILLUSTRATES THE SCALE OF THE DYADIC POWER SCORE AND THE THREE SEGMENTS FORMED ON THE BASIS OF IT

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

There are especially two variables, which define the quality of a research: validity and reliability. Simply put, reliability investigate whether you get the same results using several different methods of measurements (Söderlund 2005 p. 134), while validity examine that you are measuring what one intends to measure (Söderlund 2005 p. 149).

Starting with reliability; in the questionnaire we used the method of several different questions to explain one dimension, in order to render consistent results. In all cases when desirable, this was however not possible; when measure specific emotions, we prioritized to measure several emotions rather than having a high reliability on few emotions. Internal consistency was then verified by Cronbach's Alpha (α) (Malhotra 2010 p. 321-323; Malhotra & Birks 2007 p. 358). An Alpha above 0.7 was used to indicate adequate reliability.²⁴

The observational study could be seen as the most critical part of our research, since the limited amount of resources meant that only one researcher could do the observations. It would have been desirable to have several researchers observing the same encounter for comparison. To still ensure the reliability, we did a small test to secure the quality of the observations (n=13). Before this test was made, every point at the observation sheet was thoroughly discussed and visualised with examples. The test was designed so that both researchers, individually, observed the same 13 customers. A comparison of the outcome showed that the marks correctly responded in 93

²⁴ Opinions differ among scholars, which value that should be used to indicate a satisfactory internal consistency. Some argue above 0.7 while some believe that as long as it is over 0.6 it is satisfactory (e.g. Malhotra & Birks 2007 p. 358)

percent of the cases.²⁵ No pattern in the error could be found; hence the reliability of the observation must be seen as relative high. (See appendix IV for review of the results.)

Continuing with validity; to do *both* observations and survey, did not only render information that would not be possible to collect with only one method, but it also became a measure to test the validity of the research; viewed from two perspectives. First and foremost, by the participants who participated in both parts, we were able to evaluate the reliability in observations made without a matching questionnaire. Questions such as age, gender and purchase, were compared, and since their consistency was quite high (94 percent)²⁶, we considered it as an accurate measure for the remaining (unpaired) observations as well. Secondly, the question regarding perceived control in the questionnaire became inevitably, to some degree, a measure of the validity of our observed *actual* control. We did not count on them to be exactly equal, but if they were *completely* different, one might start to wonder if it at all measures the same thing. However, albeit quite low (corr. = -0.249, sig. = 0.025), the customers' perceived control was shown to have a relation to the observed value. We believe thus this to be a valid measure since the difference might be due to other factors as will be discussed below (see paragraph 5.1.1). Rather, we believe this to highlight the importance of different methods when analysing ambiguous terms.

Receiving fairly wide sample, with equal distribution of gender and an age range between 12 and 80, we consider the sample group to be quite applicable. However it may not fully represent the Swedish population, since the research was executed in Stockholm solely and in one particular kind of store.

One should also note that The Phone House recently has been negatively presented in the media (e.g. SVTPlay 2011; Duner 2011), which could have affected the customers' expectations and impressions of the visit. This notion was developed since some participants chose to express their opinion regarding this matter in connection with the distribution of the survey.

3.8 METHODS OF ANALYSING THE DATA

Before any test was possible to make, all answers from both the observational study and the survey were coded into the statistical software PASW 19.0 (2010). This was further used to analyse the collected data throughout the study. Several different tests were made to answer our hypotheses, including both parametric and non-parametric tests.

²⁵ One should note that this is not the pre-study; this was only a small test to confirm validity in the measure

²⁶ Those differences are due to small age errors, purchase and gender had a hundred percent reliability

Mean comparison, such as ANOVA, Independent T-test, Paired Sample T-test, Wilcoxon signed-rank test and Kruskal-Wallis test,²⁷ were used. So was also, bivariate correlation (both Spearman²⁸ and Pearson) and Factor analysis.

The p-value could be seen as a function of the number of the sample; as the data consist of quite few respondents, a significant level of 10% has been accepted consistently throughout the paper.

²⁷ Wilcoxon Signed-rank test and Kruskal-Wallis test was used when no normal distribution could be assumed

²⁸ Spearman Bivariate Correlation was used when no normal distribution could be assumed

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This part will lead you through the results of our research whereby we attempt to answer the hypotheses we developed earlier in the paper. This paragraph is further divided into three parts: (1) general overview of the collected data, (2) the distribution of power, and (3) the effect of the power. We will further like to highlight the fact that only results contributing to the purpose of the thesis to some extent have been included. Throughout this paragraph, we use abbreviations for mean (m), standard deviation (σ), p -value (q) and sample size (n).

4.1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLECTED DATA

The total sample of observations ($n = 206$) contained of 52.5 percent male and 47.5 percent female.²⁹ The sample group had an age range between 12 and 80 years old, with a mean (m) of 39.8 and a standard deviation (σ) of 14.8 and median of 38.³⁰ The average customer spent 10 minutes and 23 seconds interacting with the sales clerk ($\sigma = 13$ min).³¹ 81 of the 206 observations could be paired with a matching questionnaire. The sex- and age distribution of these respondents were not significantly different from the total sample, but they spent an average of slightly more time in the store ($m = 11$ min, 12 sec, $\sigma = 15$ min).

Using a Paired Sample T-test, the observations showed that there was no significant difference between the mean of Customer's Dominance Score (CDS) ($m = 3.76$ $\sigma = 2.57$) and the Sales Clerk's Dominance Score (SDS) ($m = 3.74$ $\sigma = 2.76$) where $q = 0.211$. Neither did the Customer Submissiveness Score (CSS) and Sales Clerk Submissiveness Score (SSS) have any significant difference in mean, where CSS is equal to 0.28 ($\sigma = 0.68$) and SSS to 0.33 ($\sigma = 0.71$) where $q = 0.844$. In appendix III the expressions in the interactions and their level of appearance are displayed. The mean difference between CDS and CSS, and the difference between SDS and SSS are 3.48 and 3.40 respectively. Furthermore, 40 percent of the observed customer bought something ($n=120$)³².

²⁹ As the gender groups are very similar in size, no weighting has been made from this variable

³⁰ The age was estimated in those cases the observed did not want to participate in a survey and therefore did not confide age

³¹ We do like to emphasize that this is the time spent in interaction with a sales clerk, and not complete time spent in the store

³² Since the idea to observe this dimension arose during the study, this was only observed in the last two thirds of the time period; why the number of respondents is only 120. A question whether the customer bought something was always present in the questionnaire

In addition, there was a slight difference in CDS between participants responding to the questionnaire versus only observed. Where the first mentioned had a significant higher CDS, that is persons filling out the survey acted more dominant in the sales encounter ($q = 0.03$).

4.2 DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

In this section we will look at the distribution of power among the total sample. We will also compare those to the observations with a paired questionnaire to see whether there are any differences.

H:0

A: In a meeting between a customer and a sales clerk in a store environment, there will be significant more meetings where one of the two parts has more power than the other part.

Can find empirical evidence to support this

B: In a meeting between a customer and a sales clerk in a store environment, there will be significant more meetings where the customer possesses the most power.

Cannot find empirical evidence to support this

The Dyadic Power Score (DPS) ranged from -8 to 12 among the total sample, with a mean of -0.08 and a median of -1 ($\sigma = 4.24$). In 51 percent of the observations the DPS were negative, (i.e. the customer possessed the most power in the interaction). In 4.8 percent the DPS were zero and in 44.2 percent the DDS were positive (i.e. the sales clerk possessed the most power). The distribution is further displayed in figure 2 below.

Figure II – The Distribution of the Dyadic Power Score

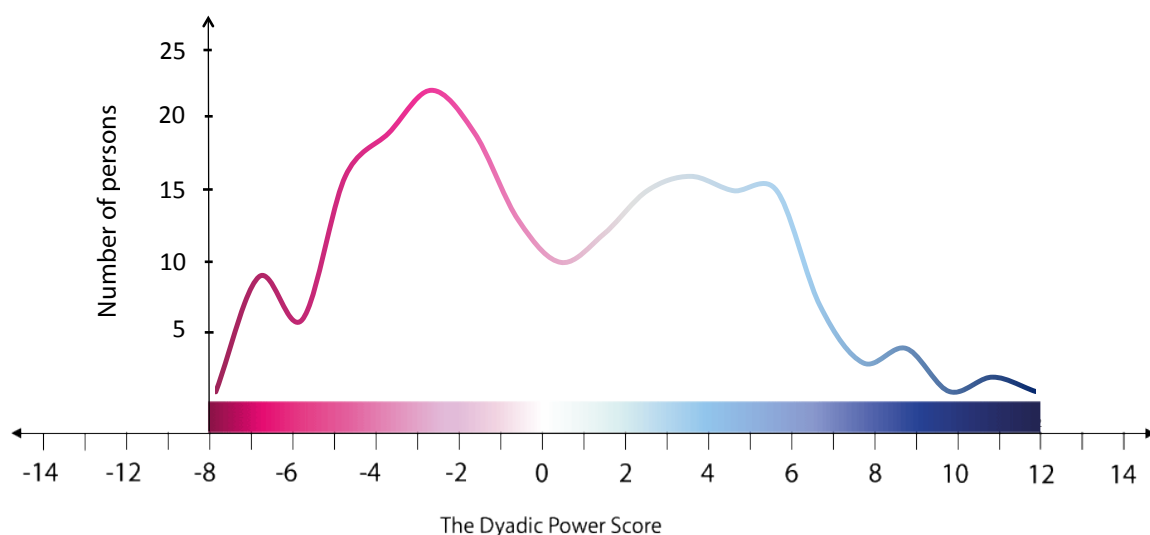


FIGURE II ILLUSTRATE THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE DYADIC POWER SCORE. DEMONSTRATING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE CORRESPONDING TO EACH STEP ON THE DYADIC SCALE

Taking a look at the figure above, the DPS is not following a normal distribution, further confirmed by a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test³³ ($q = 0.000$). Hence, when referring to the Dyadic Power Score or the power groups, only non-parametric tests were used. Furthermore, as will be demonstrated later, it is not common that neither of the persons in the interaction has more dominance than the other part.

As mentioned in paragraph 3.8.2, the observations are divided into three segments; where 73 (35.4 percent) of the observations belong to the Customer Power Group, 69 (33.5 percent) to the Equal Power Group and remaining 64 (31.1 percent) to the Sales' Clerk Power Group. When only taking into account the paired participants (that is, both observed and completed a survey) 19 respondents belonged to the Equal Power Group (23.5 percent), 36 (44.4 percent) to the Customer Power Group and 26 (32.1 percent) to the Sales Clerk Power Group. Hence, when referring to participants where *any* part has the power, the sample size is equal to 55.

In order to investigate our first hypothesis (H0A), a Paired Sample T-test was used on all observations ($n=206$). By merging the Customer Power Group and the Sales Clerk Power Group ($n=137$), and then comparing it with the Equal Power Group ($n=69$), we could find empirical evidence that this hypothesis would be correct. Thus, there were significant more meetings were one of the two parts possessed more power than the other ($q = 0.000$).

By comparing the Customer Power Group ($n=73$) and the Sales Clerk Dominance Group ($n=64$), with the same test as above, we were able to test our second hypothesis (H0B). It was shown that these two groups were *not* significantly different in size ($q = 0.443$). Hence, we cannot find empirical evidence to support hypothesis 0B.

H:1

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, there will be a significant relation between perceived control and power in the manner that the more power the customer has the more it will perceive control.

Can find empirical evidence to support this

As the DPS was shown not to be normal distributed, henceforth only non-parametric tests were used when this scale was included. Using Bivariate Spearman correlation, it was shown that perceived control and power have a negative relationship ($r = -0.249$, $q = 0.025$, $n=81$). This implies that the more power the sales clerk possess the less the customer perceive control.

³³ A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test gives information on whether the curve is significantly different from a normal distribution or not

Furthermore, comparing power with each individual dimensions of perceived control, it was further found that there exists a negative relation between power and the proposition *I was the initiator* (question 2 in the questionnaire)³⁴, that is, the more power the customer had, the more it felt like the initiator ($r = -0.237$, $q = 0.033$, $n=81$).

With this result we can find empirical evidence to support hypothesis 1.

Figure III – The Distribution of Perceived Control

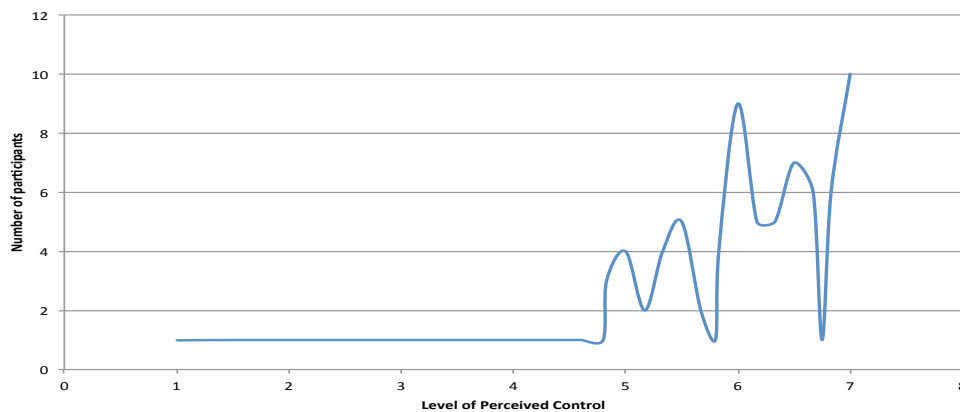


FIGURE III ILLUSTRATE THE DISTRIBUTION OF PERCEIVED CONTROL AMONG THE SAMPLE. AS ONE CAN SEE IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THE PATTERN OF THE DPS. 45 PERCENT INDICATES A VERY HIGH PERCEIVED CONTROL, I.E. 6-7 ON A SEVEN-POINT SCALE

4.3 WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF POWER AND PERCEIVED CONTROL?

4.3.1 Power and Emotions

In this part we elucidate the effect the power and perceived control have on emotions and satisfaction. In the following test, only the paired observations will be used, hence the sample size is equal to 81.

H:3

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, the customers' emotions will depend on who assesses the most power of the two parts.

Can find empirical evidence to support this

By using Bivariate Spearman Correlation we sought to analyse whether there existed a relation between power and the specific emotions. Only two emotions showed a significant correlation; the more power the customer had, the more optimistic it felt ($r = 0.227$ $q = 0.064$, $n=81$), and in addition, the less power the customer had, the more worry it felt ($r = 0.248$ $q = 0.043$, $n=81$).

³⁴ For further review, see appendix II

When evaluating each separate emotion between the segments, some differences were however revealed. Using the K Independent Kruskal-Wallis test³⁵, it was shown that the Customer Power Group and the Sales Clerk Power Group, on a significant level, did to a greater extent feel joy, pride, contentment, optimism and peacefulness. The Sales Clerk Power Group did also to a greater extent feel worry. Table 1 deploys the emotions with significant differences among the segments.

Table I – Mean values of the Emotions of the Power Groups

	Customer Dominance	Equal Dominance	Sales clerk Dominance	q - value
Excitement	$m = 4.66 (\sigma = 1.88)$	$m = 3.84 (\sigma = 1.61)$	$m = 4.72 (\sigma = 1.34)$	0.083
Joy	$m = 5.09 (\sigma = 1.65)$	$m = 4.05 (\sigma = 1.72)$	$m = 4.96 (\sigma = 1.25)$	0.052
Contentment	$m = 5.56 (\sigma = 1.58)$	$m = 4.26 (\sigma = 1.94)$	$m = 5.42 (\sigma = 1.53)$	0.031
Optimism	$m = 4.81 (\sigma = 1.88)$	$m = 4.20 (\sigma = 2.11)$	$m = 4.70 (\sigma = 1.06)$	0.069
Worry	$m = 1.78 (\sigma = 1.22)$	$m = 2.69 (\sigma = 2.21)$	$m = 3.00 (\sigma = 2.16)$	0.093

TABLE I ILLUSTRATES THE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN MEAN BETWEEN THE THREE GROUPS. GREEN COLOR INDICATES THE HIGHEST MEAN FOR EACH SPECIFIC EMOTION, WHILE RED INDICATES THE LOWEST

Recall the index of positive emotions from paragraph 3.4.2; where excitement, joy, pride, contentment, optimism, relief and peacefulness were formed to one construct. A K-Independent Kruskal-Wallis test showed that positive emotions were strongest for the Sales Clerk Power Group ($m = 4.89, \sigma = 1.31, n=26$), second strongest for the Customer Power Group ($m = 4.86, \sigma = 1.36, n=36$) and weakest in the Equal Power Group ($m = 3.9, \sigma = 1.64, n=19$). Between all groups, the significant level was accepted ($q = 0.044$). Taking a closer look however, evaluating the pair wise difference by the Mann Whitney U test, it was revealed that there was no significant difference between the Sales Clerk Power Group and Customer Power Group. Both of these however, were significant different from the Equal Power Group ($q = 0.043$ and $q = 0.022$ respectively). In addition, a Bivariate Correlation Pearson test showed that SDS correlated with optimism ($r = 0.341, q = 0.005, n=81$).

When it comes to negative emotions (worry and anger, $\alpha = 0.788$), it was also shown to be significant different from each other ($q = 0.048$), whereby the Sales Clerk Power Group again presented the highest mean 2.64, ($\sigma = 1.79, n=26$). The weakest tendency for negative feelings was for the Customer Power Group ($m = 1.69, \sigma = 1.16, n=36$). Using Mann Whitney U test, the difference between above-mentioned two groups was further shown to be significant ($q = 0.012$). A Bivariate Pearson correlation, showed that negative feelings had a correlation with SDS in the

³⁵ This test was used since no normal distribution could be assumed

meaning that the more dominant the sales clerk was, the more negative emotions the customer had ($r = 0.211$, $q = 0.061$, $n=81$), and especially a significant greater extent of worry ($r = 0.211$, $q = 0.061$, $n=81$). Furthermore, negative emotions also correlated with the DPS ($r = 0.255$, $q = 0.022$, $n=81$) and perceived control ($r = -0.286$, $q = 0.010$, $n=81$).

To summarize the hypothesis, looking at different perspectives of emotions, we could identify some significant relationships with different measurements of power. Hence, we can find empirical evidence to support the hypothesis 3.

In addition, before going in to how power affects satisfaction, we would like to highlight the strong connection between emotions and satisfaction. All emotions except from pride, correlates with satisfaction. The higher level of joy, excitement, contentment, optimism, relief, peacefulness, surprise and eagerness the customer felt the more satisfied she was. In contradiction, if the customer felt anger and frustration, she was less satisfied (appendix V).

4.3.2. Power and Satisfaction

H:0

C: In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, the customer is more satisfied if one of the two parts has more power than the other part.

Cannot find empirical evidence to support this

D: In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, if the customer has a high level of power, the customer is more satisfied.

Can find empirical evidence to support this

A Spearman correlation shows that the DPS correlated with satisfaction ($r = -0.190$ $q = 0.09$, $n=81$), which implies, that the more power the seller possess, the less satisfied the customer is.

Comparing the Equal Power Group with a merge of the other two groups, a Mann-Whitney U test demonstrated that the customer *tend* to be more satisfied if someone had the power in interaction, in relation to if neither had. This was however not significant ($q = 0.357$, mean differ from 5.3 to 5.8, $n=19$ respectively $n=62$). Furthermore, taking a closer look at all three groups, there is still no significant difference in between them ($q = 0.225$). Yet, we like to highlight the differences in mean; Customer Power Group ($m = 5.96$, $\sigma = 1.09$, $n=36$), Sales Clerk Dominance Group ($m = 5.52$, $\sigma = 1.20$, $n=26$), Equal Power Group ($m = 5.29$, $\sigma = 1.7$, $n=19$). We consider it however highly likely that this could be rectified with a slightly larger sample group, since, as said before, the p-value is an equation of the size of the sample.

To epitomise power and satisfaction and their related hypotheses, we were not able to find any sufficient empirical evidence to support H0C. However, a tendency seemed to prevail, why this

hypothesis are not entirely to be rejected. Furthermore, we did find empirical evidence to support H0D.

If we take a closer look at only the behaviour of the customer, it turned out that the more dominant the customer acted, the more satisfied it was, thus CDS and satisfaction had a correlation of 0.243 on a significance level ($q = 0.029$, $n=81$). This was further demonstrated with an Independent T-test, where very satisfied customers³⁶ ($n=46$) had significantly higher CDS compared to those not indicating a high level of satisfaction ($n=35$) ($q = 0.106$).

Figure IV – Emotions and Satisfaction

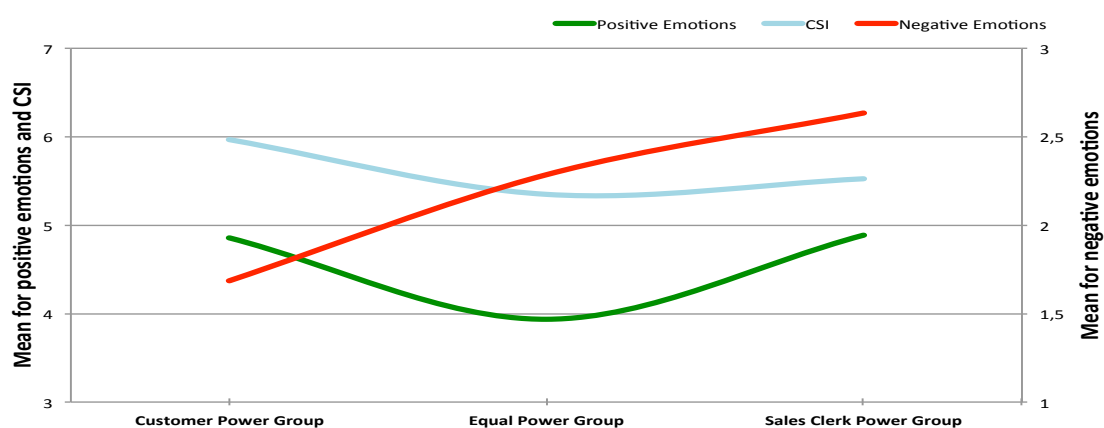


FIGURE IV ILLUSTRATES THE MEAN DIFFERENCE AMONG EACH POWER GROUP. THE LEFT Y-AXIS SHOWS THE MEAN VALUE FOR THE POSITIVE EMOTIONS AND SATISFACTION, WHILE THE RIGHT SHOW THE MEAN VALUE FOR THE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS.

H:2

In a meeting between customer and sales clerk in a store environment, if the customer has a high level of perceived control, the customer is more satisfied.

Can find empirical evidence to support this

We can find empirical evidence for the relation between perceived control and satisfaction. Using Bivariate Pearson correlation, a relation of 0.259 at a significance level ($q = 0.020$, $n=81$), indicating the higher perceived control; the more satisfied the customer was. Perceived control also correlated with other questions linked to satisfaction, as *To what degree are you willing to recommend this store to friends and family?* ($r = 0.221$, $q = 0.049$, $n=81$). In addition it was, using the same method, displayed that the overall attitude to The Phone House increased with a higher level of perceived control ($r = 0.219$, $q = 0.096$, $n=81$).

³⁶ Very satisfied indicate 6-7 on a seven point scale

4.3.3 Additional Results

A minor different in SDS appears among the different stores. The customers are acting similar in every store, there is a difference in the sales clerk's action though, and some stores having a strong significant different in mean SDS ($q = 0.01$, $n=206$)³⁷.

Power has no relation to gender according to this research. Power is however related to the time of the interaction, where the sales clerk is more dominant the longer the interaction is ($r = 0.299$, $q = 0.009$, $n=206$).

An independent T-test showed that the persons who bought something were more satisfied than the person's who did not buy anything ($m = 6.01$ $\sigma = 0.87$ and $m = 5.38$ $\sigma = 1.5$ respectively, $q = 0.023$, $n=120$). The time of the interaction did not correlate with satisfaction though.

³⁷ In one of the stores the number of surveys was very low, due to this a Shapiro-Wilk test was made which confirmed normal distribution.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There prevail an on-going discussion whether power could be latent or if must be examined, that is, if it is a trait of character or something one can become by actions (Dahl 2007; Burgoon & Dunbar 2005; Bourdieu 1996). We are, in line with Foucault (1982), of the opinion that power is something that appears in an interaction and that to a great extent can be influenced by the participants. Hence, sales clerk can decide how to behave and thus influence the distribution of power in the interaction. The following discussion is built upon this assumption.

5.1. DISCUSSION

5.1.1. The Distribution of Power is not Unilateral

In loving relationships, couples where both possess the same level of power are very rare (McDonald 1980). According to our findings, this seems to prevail in the customer environment as well; in most of the interactions one of the two, customer or the sales clerk, will possess more power than the other. On the basis of psychological research, this finding may not come as a revolutionary conclusion. For marketers however, not missing any chance to point out the consumers' ever increasing power in the consumption environment (e.g. Dolléus 2009; Andersson 2009; NewHope 2011), our results should be noteworthy. We cannot find any empirical evidence to support the idea that the power is unilateral in this relationship. Hence, it is not obvious whether it will be the sales clerk or the customer who assesses the most power in the interaction.

This notion among marketers, that customers receive more and more power, may be derived from the fact that the *perception* of control has primarily been used to assess the level of power.³⁸ Our findings reveal that people tend to perceive control to a very high extent, a level much higher than what we observed. These two facts in combination; that researchers are using a proxy, and customers overestimating their power, gives further understanding for how predications like these can appear. To claim that perceived control is an accurate measure of power is however nothing we agree with; in our study we found a small, but significant, negative relation between perceived control and power (i.e. the more power to the sales clerk has, the less perceived control the customer has). But the weak correlation implies there must be something more to power and control than just the perception of it. Hence, we like to treat them as two separate constructs.

³⁸ This might be due to the fact that handing out surveys is a much more cost- and time efficient method of research design, compared to e.g. observations or experiments

5.1.1. Why is Power Important?

What we do know is that power is a fundamental part of every human interaction, so important that the psychologist Schutz (1998) claims that it is necessary to feel in control to have gratifying interactions with other people.

In a retail setting, it has been shown that customers who are losing control are more likely to feel negative emotions, such as stress and uncertainty (Namasivayam & Hinkin 2003). Our findings are to some extent consistent with this result; as demonstrated in figure 2, that the more dominance the sales personnel express, the more negative emotions the customer feel. However, we can also show that a dominant sales clerk in a high degree contributes to positive emotions. Thus, these results are not one-dimensional. Furthermore, positive emotions were higher when the power balance was biased in some direction, compared to when it was equal.

Figure IV – Emotions and Satisfaction

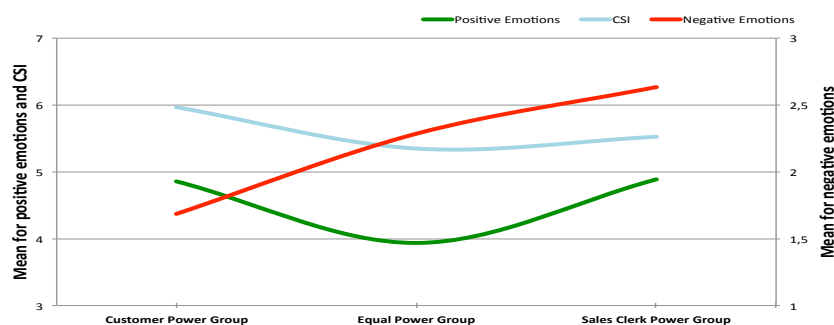


FIGURE IV ILLUSTRATES THE MEAN DIFFERENCE AMONG EACH POWER GROUP. THE LEFT Y-AXIS SHOWS THE MEAN VALUE FOR THE POSITIVE EMOTIONS AND SATISFACTION, WHILE THE RIGHT SHOW THE MEAN VALUE FOR THE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS.

With this figure in mind, one should note that the most important thing is not *who* has the most power, but that actually one does. This implies that if the business aiming for positive customers, the sales clerk should make sure that someone has more power than the other in the interaction. Recalling, scholars trying to assess characteristic of good selling techniques, they focus primarily on things indicating a humble approach. Asking questions, agreeing with customers' perceptions, supporting the customer etc. are all examples of such approaches (Jobber 2007 p. 556). With our findings in mind, these techniques are however only suitable for dominant customers who take the power themselves. If the customer does not take the power, we believe that the sales clerk should go against these well-known techniques and thus take the power; to make sure the distribution is not equal. However, there will still prevail a certain risk connected to this choice, since also negative emotions have a tendency to increase.

It is interesting to see that the satisfaction, to some degree, follows the same pattern as for positive emotions. This since the Equal Power Group have a tendency to be least satisfied, while the Customer Power Group stands for the highest satisfaction mean. We like to stress the fact that this was not significant, but we find it for highly possible that this is due to a small sample size. Nevertheless, a significant correlation between the level of power and satisfaction was however demonstrated. This means, that the more power the customer have the more satisfied it is. Taking a closer look at figure 2, it may be easier to understand their relationships.

Taking a step back, looking at other scholars, there prevails an established connection between emotions and satisfaction (e.g. Oliver 1996). This was also confirmed by our research. There exist a strong correlation between satisfaction and positive emotions, as well as (however not as strong) with negative emotions. One can thus look at this as a causal relationship; power affect emotions, which in turn affect satisfaction. Hence, we suggest power to be one, of several, aspects one might want to consider in a retail setting.

5.1.3 Why is Perceived Control Important?

The fact that perceived control affect emotions and satisfaction is not novelty, neither in psychology (Langer & Saegert 1977), nor in marketing (Hui & Bateson 1991). Interesting however, is the fact that emotions have a stronger connection to perceived control than to power. Maybe as a sequel of this, satisfaction also had a stronger correlation with perceived control than with power. The importance of the customer to *believe* she is in control is hereby determined.

Interpreting the effect of this result does raise a few thoughts: to *feel* in control is more important to the customer than to actually *be* in control, while power is a part the sales clerk actually *can* control. However, what the customer perceive, is according to our findings not always what actually occur, which in addition also have been demonstrated by earlier researchers (Burgoon & Dunbar 2000). Our findings demonstrate no perfect correlation between perceived control and power; hence one cannot solely use perceived control as a measure of power.

5.1.4 Summary of Discussion

Our findings show that the customer does not always have the power when it comes to verbal communication in a service encounter. We further found that power is an (somewhat) important dimension; since it demonstrated a relation to both emotions and satisfaction. The sales clerk can, in the context of verbal communication, to a high degree affect the outcome why she should use this knowledge in order to maximize customer satisfaction. In addition, we found that perceived control cannot fully substitute the measuring of power.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study give valuable insights to a subject previously not explored, which from a numbers of stakeholders' perspective could be turned into something applicable. With a deeper understanding about the underlying factors affecting an interpersonal interaction, one can maximize the benefits for the customers as well as the company. Not only is this useful in a broader perspective, but it also render concrete examples in how to act as a sales clerk.

We stated from beginning, this would not be a thesis about different sales techniques, however it gives precious apprehension in how to adapt different verbal expressions in different situations. It is also easy to apply our findings, as verbal expressions are relatively easy to embrace and to change. Furthermore, the individual customer can to a higher extent be treated in the way she wants to be treated. A satisfied and happy customer is not only desirable from a managerial but also from an economic well-being perspective. In addition, this study states that measure power could not be substituted with measure of perceived control. Hence one, in future researches, must separate these constructs in order to evaluate the correct dimension and hence implications.

5.3 CRITIQUE OF THE STUDY

Taking a step back, looking on the implemented study with some perspective, there always appear things one might like to add or done differently. Beyond the delimitations established before the start of the study, there are certain things, subsequently found, that we now like to highlight.

First, the choice of industry can have impacted the results. At The Phone House, a customer naturally has an interaction with the personnel, which in turn typically hold valuable product knowledge of a product that can be seen as quite technical. Expert is according to French and Raven (1959), one of the sources to acquire power; implying sales clerk to lead off with more power. In an industry where the sales clerk not necessarily has as much expertise, the result *might* have been slightly different. Second, we like to highlight the sample group; since the high level of refusal to answer the questionnaire, one can wonder if some important aspects were missing. One thing to note is the fact that participants agreeing to answer the questionnaire had a tendency to collect more dominance scores, than people that were observed but refused to answer the questionnaire. The Dyadic Power Score did not differ however, but one can question whether this might have interfered with the results. Lastly, as the method was extremely time consuming, the sample size was quite small. As all know, the level of significance depends to a high extent on the size of the sample, why more significant relationships might have been able to found with slightly more participants.

5.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

This research should be seen as a first step to reveal the mysterious of power and its impact in the context of a service encounter. Given the limited knowledge in this specific research field, a world of potential is now ahead of us.

Who are the customers who feel anger and worry when the sales clerk possess the most power in the interaction? With our findings in mind, we believe there is no univocal answer to how the sales clerk shall behave. Thus, it would be really interesting to examine how to apply this to different customer groups, since there is reason to believe that different kind of customers perceive a dominant sales clerk differently.

Our study solely focused on verbal cues. We thus suggest that further studies also should take non-verbal cues into consideration. Further aspects, such as gender, age and length, might also affect the power balance in a service encounter and could be accounted for in future research.

Perceived control was shown to be very important for the customer's satisfaction and emotions, hence, it is important to acquire knowledge about the phenomenon. Therefore, we suggest future research to focus on what causes perceived control to arise. We demonstrated that power is not the only denominator, why more aspects could be added.

The fact that the Sales Clerks' Dominance Scores were different among the five stores, although the Customer Dominance Score follow the same pattern, implicates that the sales clerks to behave different in different stores, although the customers do not. It would therefore be interesting to take a closer look at what causes this difference. Is it a culture in each store affecting this, is it the individual sales clerk that acts more dominant or is it a coincident? Maybe, this reinvigorates the on-going discussion about adapting to the customer, and to what extent the sales clerks actually accommodate their behaviour to the specific customer.

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7. APPENDIX

APPENDIX I – AN OVERVIEW OF RICHINS' CONSUMPTION EMOTION SET

Type of purchase	Sentimental objects	Recreational products	Vehicles
Exemplification of product	e.g. jewelry, gifts	e.g. store equipment, mountain bike	
Emotions most frequently to appear	Nostalgia, love	Excitement, eagerness etc.	

FIGURE 1 RICHINS CLASSIFICATION OF THREE DIFFERENT PURCHASES CAUSING DIFFERENT EMOTIONS

The Consumption Emotion Set

Anger	Love	Envy
Frustrated	Loving	Envious
Angry	Sentimental	Jealous
Irritated	Warm hearted	Loneliness
Discontent	Peacefulness	Lonely
Unfulfilled	Calm	Homesick
Discontented	Peaceful	Romantic Love
Worry	Contentment	Sexy
Nervous	Contented	Romantic
Worried	Fulfilled	Passionate
Tense	Optimism	Surprised
Sadness	Optimistic	Surprised
Depressed	Encouraged	Amazed
Sad	Hopeful	Astonished
Miserable	Joy	Gulity
Fear	Happy	Proud
Scared	Pleased	Eager
Afraid	Joyful	Relieved
Panicky	Excitement	
Shame	Excited	
Embarrassed	Thrilled	
Ashamed	Enthusiastic	
Humiliated		

FIGURE 2 RICHINS CLASSIFICATION OF DIFFERENT EMOTION CONSTRUCTS WHERE THE BOLD LETTERS INDICATING ONE OVERALL EMOTION, FURTHER BUILT UPON AN INDEX OF THE UNDERLYING EMOTIONS

APPENDIX II – THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Customer Survey The Phone House

Date: _____ **Time:** _____ **Store:** _____

Dear,

You have been chosen to participate in a study to improve The Phone House and its customer relations. The survey is of course completely anonymous and your responses will only be used for a statistical purpose. We thus hope you feel comfortable to answer as honestly as possible. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us. Please, note that there are questions on both sides of the paper.

Thank you very much for your time!

Recall your meeting with the sales clerk, to what degree do you agree with the following statements?								
		1=Strongly disagree				7=Strongly agree		
1	I was the initiator of what happened	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
2	I was in command	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
3	The sales person did what I said	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
4	I controlled what happened	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
5	I felt inferior to the seller	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
6	I was often interrupted by the sales clerk	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
7	The sales clerk told me what I should buy	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
To what degree do you agree with the following statements?								
		1=Strongly disagree				7=Strongly agree		
8	The sales clerk influenced my decision (even a decision not to buy)	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
9	The sales clerk was pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
10	I was treated in the way I wanted to be treated	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
Please specify								
11	Did you buy anything?	Yes		No	If no, please move on to question 14			
12	Did you buy something you had not planned to buy?	Yes		No				
		1 = Not at all likely				7 = Very likely		
13	How likely is it that you will return any of the products you bought today?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
To what degree did you feel...								
		1=Not at all				7=Very much		
14	Excitement	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
15	Joy	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
16	Pride	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
17	Contentment	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
18	Optimism	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
19	Relief	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
20	Peacefulness	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
21	Worry	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
22	Anger	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
23	Surprise	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
24	Eager	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
Please specify								
		1=Not at all				7=Very much/Close		
25	How satisfied are you with the visit overall?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
26	How well did the visit correspond to your expectations?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
27	Try to imagine a visit that is perfect in every way. How close, or far, do you think this visit was compared to that ideal?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
28	To what extent are you willing to recommend this store to family and friends?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
Var god ange								
		1=Impaired the attitude				7=Improved the attitude		
29	How did this visit contribute to your overall attitude towards The Phone House	1	2	3	4	5	6 7	
Please specify								
30	Age	_____				Year		
31	Gender	Female				Male		
32	Average income a year	_____				in Swedish Kroner		
33	Highest education	Elementary School University				Upper Secondary School Higher degree		
34	Civil status	Singel Co-habit				Married At parents		

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX III – THE OBSERVATIONAL STUDY FORM

Dominant Expressions	Average points per observation	
	Sales Clerk	Customer
1 Gave the other information	0,76	1,07
2 Asked the other to do something	0,04	0,11
3 Asked whether the other has done something	0,04	0,01
4 Gave advice to the other	0,50	0,01
5 Set a goal for self or the other	0,00	0,01
6 Expressed an opinion	0,51	0,48
7 Took the lead in planning or organizing	0,19	0,19
8 Assigned self or the other to a task	0,04	0,02
9 Made a suggestion to the other	0,25	0,04
10 Told the other what he/she would do	0,44	0,25
11 Took the initiative	0,35	0,51
12 Interrupted	0,04	0,03
13 Told the other what she should do	0,26	0,09
14 Tried to get the other to do something else	0,00	0,00
15 Went straight to the point	0,09	0,50
16 Opposed to the other	0,06	0,21
17 Took most space in the interaction	0,16	0,21
Total	3,74	3,76

TABLE 1 ILLUSTRATES THE DOMINANT EXPRESSIONS USED IN THE OBSERVATIONAL SCHEME. QUESTIONS 1-10 ARE RECEIVED FROM MOSKOWITS (1994) SBI-SCALE

Submissive	Average points per observation	
	Sales Clerk	Customer
1 Let the other decide what he/she wants to do	0,02	0,00
2 Apologized for something that was not his/her fault	0,05	0,00
3 Gave in to the other	0,01	0,00
4 Spoke to the other only when the other spoke to him/her	0,01	0,03
5 Requested approval for doing something to self or other	0,00	0,01
6 Did not say to the other what he/she wanted directly	0,00	0,00
7 Went along with the other's request	0,01	0,01
8 Waited for the other to act or talk first	0,07	0,13
9 Avoided giving recommendations to the other	0,00	0,00
10 Did not argue/discuss with the other	0,00	0,00
11 Did what the other asked	0,01	0,00
12 Let the other do all the talking.	0,02	0,05
13 Spoke in an uncertain voice	0,00	0,02
14 Asked if she should do something	0,11	0,01
Total	0,33	0,28

TABLE 2 ILLUSTRATES THE DOMINANT EXPRESSION USED IN THE OBSERVATIONAL SCHEME. QUESTIONS 1-12 ARE RECEIVED FROM MOSKOWITS (1994) SBI-SCALE

APPENDIX IV – RESULTS FROM THE TEST-OBSERVATIONS

The results from the test of the observational form are illustrated below. Corrected marked observations refer to when both observers marked the same expression; incorrect refers to when only one marked.

Customer	Correct marked observations	Incorrect marked observations	Mistakes	Conformation
1	10	2	17%	83%
2	7	0	0%	100%
3	4	0	0%	100%
4	12	2	14%	86%
5	11	1	8%	92%
6	4	0	0%	100%
7	6	0	0%	100%
8	8	0	0%	100%
9	9	1	10%	90%
10	5	1	17%	83%
11	5	1	17%	83%
12	4	0	0%	100%
13	11	1	8%	92%
Sum	96	9	7%	93%

APPENDIX V – CORRELATION BETWEEN SATISFACTION AND SPECIFIC EMOTIONS

Emotion	Correlation	p-value	Effect size
Excitement	0.406	0.000	0.165
Joy	0.536	0.000	0.287
Pride	0.178	0.159	0.032
Contentment	0.585	0.000	0.342
Optimism	0.505	0.000	0.255
Relief	0.449	0.000	0.202
Peacefulness	0.384	0.000	0.147
Worry	-0.288	0.018	0.083
Anger	-0.369	0.001	0.136
Surprise	-0.234	0.035	0.055
Eager	0.194	0.116	0.038

TABLE 3 ILLUSTRATE THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE SPECIFIC EMOTIONS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

APPENDIX VI – SCHEDULE OVER STUDY

Day	Store	No. Of Hours	No. Of observations	No. Of surveys
Apr 27	Sveavägen	8 h	19	9
Apr 28	Gallerian	8 h	38	14
May 3	Gallerian	5 h	20	9
May 4	Gallerian	6 h	33	14
May 5	Västermalmsgallerian	8 h	22	5
May 6	Fältöversten	6h	8	6
May 7	Sveavägen	5 h	17	3
May 7	Fältöversten	4 h	11	6
May 7	Fältöversten	5 h	19	6
May 7	Gallerian	4 h	19	11

TABLE 4 ILLUSTRATING THE TIMEPERIOD OF THE STUDY. INCLUDED IS ALSO NUMER OF HOURS SPENT IN STORE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS