

Communicated Consumer
Co-creation

Consumer Response to Consumer
Co-creation in New Product
and Service Development

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Communicated Consumer Co-creation: Consumer Response to Consumer
Co-creation in New Product and Service Development

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*To
My Family*

Foreword

This volume is the result of a research project carried out at the Department of Marketing and Strategy at the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE).

This volume is submitted as a doctor's thesis at SSE. In keeping with the policies of SSE, the author has been entirely free to conduct and present her research in the manner of her choosing as an expression of her own ideas.

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Lidingö, June 2016

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Japanese consumer goods brand Muji invites consumers to come up with new product ideas, allows consumers to further develop and vote for the ideas, and subsequently develops the selected products together with users in Muji's online user community (Nishikawa et al., 2013).

This example demonstrates that consumers are increasingly taking on responsibilities and performing tasks that firms and organisations were previously solely responsible for. When firms and consumers collaborate in new product or service development, it is called consumer co-creation.

At a fundamental level, consumer co-creation takes place when two or more parties collaborate to create something of value. Often, these parties are a firm and its consumers. The value can take many forms. For example, if consumer co-creation takes place in a new product development process, the value can be found in the new product (e.g. Poetz and Schreier, 2012; Nishikawa et al, 2013), but also in the co-creation experience itself (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Gebauer et al., 2013) and the consumer insights that the brand reaps from the collaboration (e.g. Ogawa and Piller, 2006; Terwiesch and Xu, 2008; Hienerth et al., 2014; Dahlander and Piezunka, 2014).

Consumer co-creation is becoming increasingly common in both practice and academic research (e.g. Adamczyk et al., 2012; von Hippel et al., 2012; Gemser and Perks, 2015). In practice, firms such as Lego (Hienerth et al., 2014) and Dell (Bayus, 2013) have engaged in consumer co-creation. Academically, research has focused extensively on the consumers who participate in consumer co-creation and how they can contribute to new prod-

ucts and services (e.g. Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; O'Hern and Rindfleisch, 2010; Hoyer et al., 2010; Gemser and Perks, 2015).

Interestingly, the marketing effects of consumer co-creation have not received as much academic attention. Regardless of a firm's reasons for engaging in consumer co-creation, the activity is likely to affect consumers' responses to the brand and the co-created product or service. This holds for both participating and non-participating consumers. Non-participating consumers do not themselves participate in the co-creation, however they tend to constitute the broader market of the co-creating brand (e.g. Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). In fact, this majority are consumers who will come into contact with consumer co-creation through co-created products and co-creating brands' marketing communications.

As an example, McDonald's Sweden ran a campaign called 'My Burger' during three consecutive years from 2012 to 2014 (e.g. McDonald's; McDonald's Sverige, 2013; McDonald's, 2013). The campaign was centred on a contest where consumers were invited to invent and select the hamburgers that McDonald's subsequently served in the restaurants. The selected hamburgers and their creators (i.e. the participating consumers) were advertised through a range of media (e.g. in restaurants, traditional advertising, and online). In this way, the non-participating consumers found out about the consumer co-creation that had taken place and were presented with the resulting new products (i.e. new hamburgers).

This example demonstrates that, in order to run a successful campaign, firms need to consider both the participating and the non-participating consumers. Research on the response of non-participating consumers to (communicated) consumer co-creation has identified that they are likely to evaluate the product and brand more positively than if the brand had developed the product internally (Fuchs and Schreier, 2011; Schreier et al., 2012; Fuchs et al., 2013; Dahl et al., 2015). Combining the extant research on consumer co-creation and real life examples such as the 'My Burger' campaign, however, produces several new research questions. Generally, we do not know much about the response of participating consumers to consumer co-creation in, for example, long-term service co-creation, and research has not compared the marketing effects of consumer co-creation on

both the participating and non-participating consumers. Two relevant research questions are therefore:

- How do participating consumers respond to long-term service co-creation?
- Do participating and non-participating consumers respond similarly to consumer co-creation?

Research has also largely ignored the actual advertising of consumer co-created new products and services, and there are gaps in our knowledge about the marketing effects that stem from who the participating consumers are, how they co-created and what type of product or service the co-creation resulted in. Combined, these gaps can be formulated into three research questions:

- Are the effects found in previous research on the non-participating consumers' responses to consumer co-creation generalizable to all types of products and brands?
- How do non-participating consumers respond to marketing communications of co-creation campaigns that include information about participating consumers?
- Do marketing effects differ for different types of consumer co-creation activities?

These are the research questions I deal with in this thesis, as I aim to extend current knowledge of consumer response to consumer co-creation in new product and service development. I will explore these questions in several different empirical contexts. Long-term service co-creation is, for example, explored in a healthcare context where patients can co-create their healthcare over several years. The second research question, the comparison between participating and non-participating consumers' responses, is particularly interesting in an innovation contest setting where, in fact, there

are two types of participating consumers: those who win and those to lose. The three research questions that focus on the responses of non-participating consumers all deal with the marketing communication of consumer co-creation. These questions open up for research on specific factors that affect the responses of non-participating consumers, such as product complexity and brand familiarity.

I explore the research questions primarily by conducting experiments to isolate and explore a number of factors that help explain how non-participating consumers respond. I also include a qualitative study of how consumers enact and experience service co-creation to provide a broader view of consumer responses to consumer co-creation.

Primarily, I aim to extend current research on consumer behaviour and marketing communications by including consumer co-creation as a form of stimuli that provokes consumer responses. Secondly, I aim to extend the literature on new product development by including the non-participating consumers' responses as marketing effects, and thus a form of success metric, for consumer co-creation in new product and service development. That is, by exploring the responses of non-participating consumers, my research on consumer co-creation will indicate how consumer co-creation can increase the chances of new product/service success.

This thesis draws on research in consumer behaviour and marketing communications (e.g. Erdem and Swait, 1998; van Osselaer and Alba, 2003; Escalas and Bettman, 2003; White and Dahl, 2006; 2007; O'Hern and Rindfleisch, 2009; Schreier et al., 2012; Dahl et al., 2015), as well as the literature on new product development (e.g. Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; von Hippel, 2005; Adamczyk et al., 2012; Poetz and Schreier, 2012, Gebauer et al., 2013, Dahlander and Piezunka, 2014) to provide a marketing perspective on consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

1.1. Consumers and consumer co-creation in this thesis

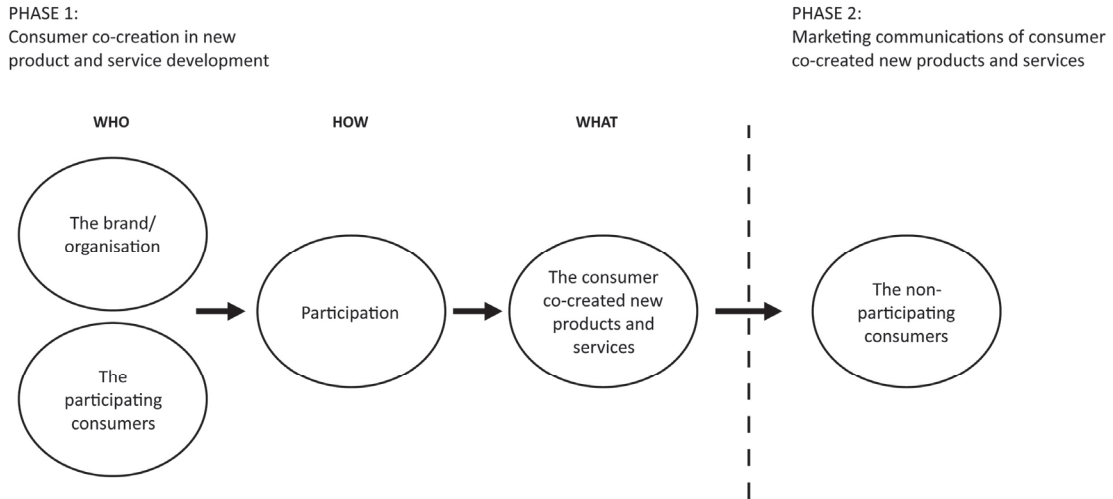
As mentioned above, I describe consumer co-creation broadly as what takes place when two or more parties collaborate to create something of

value. This initial definition can encompass a wide variety of co-creation, and it connects consumer co-creation in new product and service development to the many different views of co-creation that exist, and that will be briefly discussed in Chapter 2. For the purpose of this thesis, and to better define consumer co-creation in new product and service development, I have created a narrower definition. It is based on O'Hern and Rindfleisch's (2009) distinction between consumer co-creation through contribution and/or selection, as well as Prahalad and Ramaswamy's (2004) discussion of value.

Consumer co-creation is a collaborative new product or service development activity in which consumers actively contribute and/or select the content of a new product or service offering, and where all active parties create and extract value from the collaboration.

In this thesis, I am concerned with both participating and non-participating consumers and their responses. As such, I explore how they respond to the consumer co-creation defined using the narrower definition. To do this, I have divided consumer co-creation, as included in this thesis, into two interrelated phases, illustrated in Figure 1. Each of the phases has a different focus with regards to consumer responses to consumer co-creation.

Figure 1. The two phases of consumer co-creation in new product and service development.



The first phase of consumer co-creation centres on new product and service development. This phase focuses on the research on consumer co-creation as a strategy for developing innovative products and services. This phase of consumer co-creation is defined in the second, narrower, definition above.

The second phase concerns the marketing communications of the consumer co-created new products and services and the non-participating consumers' responses to these.

The two phases are, of course, interrelated. The brand/organisation and the participating consumers co-create and the result of the collaboration is a new product or service, which in turn can be communicated externally to the non-participating consumers. Viewed this way, important questions to consider include who has co-created, how they co-created and what they co-created. The answers to all three questions are found in the first phase. Taken together, they impact on the responses of non-participating consumers in the second phase.

Throughout this thesis, I combine and explore these three questions. Together, they form a contribution in terms of their impact on our knowledge about consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

1.2. Purpose of this thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to further our understanding of consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

Specifically, this thesis extends the academic literature on the marketing effects of consumer co-creation by exploring factors that affect and explain the responses of non-participating consumers to marketing communications that present consumer co-created new products and services. This is coupled with research on the response of participating consumers to consumer co-creation. As such, I aim to provide both academically and practically-relevant research about how participating and non-participating consumers perceive consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

Connecting with extant research and practically-relevant measures, the consumer responses of interest in this thesis are the consumer attitudes, intentions and perceptions relating to the co-created new products and services, and the related brands. Empowerment is also explored in relation to the enactment of service co-creation.

This thesis consists of a collection of five articles. Together, they make a joint contribution to two areas of academic research; first and foremost the research on consumer behaviour and marketing communications, and secondly the research on new product and service development in which much of the current research on consumer co-creation has taken place. Across these five articles, this thesis explores consumer responses to the combination of three interrelated questions: who co-creates, how do they co-create and what do they co-create? The findings based on these fundamental questions contribute to discussion of the duality and perceived meaning of consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

1.3. Outline of this thesis

This dissertation includes five articles that are either published or are in review for potential publication in academic journals. Before the articles are

introduced in Chapter 4, a literature review for consumer co-creation is presented in Chapter 2, and the theoretical framework is introduced in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2 begins with a broader discussion of what co-creation is, followed by a presentation of consumer co-creation divided into the two phases of consumer co-creation: new product and service development, and marketing communications. The chapter ends with a brief overview of the discourses and areas of application for co-creation that lie outside the scope of this thesis.

Chapter 3 presents a theoretical framework that connects the five articles in this thesis to the two phases of consumer co-creation. The chapter thus presents the theories and factors that help explain consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

Chapter 4 introduces the five articles and the methodologies used to conduct the seven studies on which the articles are based. Chapter 5 involves a discussion of the contribution of this thesis to the research field, and Chapter 6 is a discussion of the contribution the thesis makes to practice. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of this thesis and suggested future research in Chapter 7, and a list of references used in this first section of the thesis.

Chapters 8 - 12 comprise the five research articles. This constitutes the second and last section of this thesis.

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Chapter 2

Literature review: consumer co-creation

The aim of the literature review is to create a sense of overview and highlight important research into consumer co-creation that is needed to understand consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

2.1. Consumer co-creation as a research domain and perspective

From a managerial point of view, consumer co-creation is a strategy that firms can use in order to more effectively produce better products and services that are perceived as valuable to both consumers and firms (e.g. Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Ogawa and Piller, 2006). In line with this I propose and subsequently use a definition that bridges the academic and the managerial view of consumer co-creation (based on O'Hern and Rindfleisch, 2009; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004).

Consumer co-creation is a collaborative new product or service development activity in which consumers actively contribute and/or select the content of a new product or service offering, and where all active parties create and extract value from the collaboration.

This means that my thesis is grounded in practically-relevant research on consumer co-creation in new product and service development; that is, the research is based on the fact that co-creation takes place between, for example, firms and consumers. Consumer co-creation, however, is also a perspective that has formed a sub-domain of research that spans several different domains of research such as marketing, innovation management and healthcare management. This shared understanding of consumer co-creation as a collaboration to create value opens up and allows for researchers in one field to make contributions to other fields (e.g. Prigge et al., 2015; Oliveira et al., 2015; Asch et al., 2014). This has given rise to a broad, rich and varied literature that describes and investigates the many different ways in which co-creation can take place and the consequences related to it.

Because the academic research domain of consumer co-creation is broad, it is described using a broad definition of consumer co-creation:

Consumer co-creation takes place when two or more parties
collaborate to create something of value.

This definition captures several different types of consumer co-creation and allows for different streams of research to fit within the domain of co-creation. The parties collaborating may, for example, be consumers, citizens, patients, firms, healthcare providers or other types of organisations. These parties collaborate to create something of value, and the value can be described as either practical, financial or emotional. For example, if consumer co-creation takes place in a new product development process, the value can be practical in that the products can solve consumers' needs (e.g. von Hippel, 2005). The value can also be financial because consumer co-creation can generate innovative and financially successful new products (e.g. Poetz and Schreier, 2012; Nishikawa et al., 2013) and firms can reap consumer insights from the collaboration (e.g. Ogawa and Piller, 2006; Terwiesch and Xu, 2008; Hienerth et al., 2014; Dahlander and Piezunka, 2014). There is also emotional value in, for example, consumers' enjoyment of the co-creation experience itself (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Gebauer et al.,

2013) and consumers' feelings of affect toward the co-created products (e.g. Norton et al., 2012; Atakan et al., 2014).

The research on consumer co-creation in new product and service development is strongly connected to the research on innovation. In particular, consumer co-creation and open innovation research share much of the same understanding about where relevant knowledge and competence is located, and they both acknowledge the importance of external sources of knowledge (e.g. Normann, 2001; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; von Hippel, 2005; Chesbrough et al., 2006; Huizingh, 2011).

Neither open innovation, nor consumer co-creation in new product and service development, are new, in that brands have used the input of external parties for innovation previously, as well as searching for external opportunities for commercialisation. In fact, closed innovation might actually have been the exception to a history of open innovation (Mowery, 2009). Whereas open innovation research is focused on innovation and, in particular, the processes that leads to innovation, however, consumer co-creation research has a broader take on 'openness' in that it recognises that other aspects can be co-created, such as experiences, and (non-innovative) products and services. Perhaps this is because the consumer co-creation literature predominantly has its background in the marketing literature, whereas open innovation literature is grounded in the innovation management literature.

This chapter will now move from the more conceptual level to the introduction of the research on the two phases of co-creation in this thesis: consumer co-creation in new product and service development, and the marketing communications of consumer co-created new products and services. Both phases will present the 'who', 'how', and 'what' of consumer co-creation.

2.2. Phase 1: Consumer co-creation in new product and service development

2.2.1. Who: the participating consumers

Research has demonstrated that suggestions from external contributors, such as consumers, are critical to innovation (Chesbrough et al., 2006) because they may lead to more effective problem identification and problem solutions (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Jeppesen and Lakhani, 2010; Poetz and Schreier, 2012). Traditionally, brands have used market research methods to learn about the two essential types of information that are needed in new product and service development: information about customer needs and how to best solve these needs (Thomke and von Hippel, 2002; von Hippel, 2005). However, it is often the customers themselves who possess this type of information and when market research methods fail in measuring these often tacit and idiosyncratic needs, the new products and services fail (von Hippel, 2005; Franke and Piller, 2004; Ogawa and Piller, 2006). Against this background it would seem that consumers are capable of co-creating successful new products and services, but scholars have not always been convinced this is the case.

Can consumers co-create successful products and services?

There is a particular stream of research within the field of consumer co-creation in new product and service development that deals with whether, when and how consumers can create products and services that are as successful as those of the professionals. Several studies (e.g. Kristensson et al., 2002; Kristensson et al., 2004; Magnusson, 2009; Poetz and Schreier, 2012; Nishikawa et al., 2013) have compared the quality and commercial success of consumer- versus professionally-ideated products and services and found that consumers can indeed outperform a brand's professionals in terms of, for example, product quality or degree of innovativeness.

At a basic level, all consumers can contribute to the co-creation of products and services due to their knowledge and experience of using or consuming the products, and based on their own preference insights. It has been acknowledged that listening too carefully to customers can have a

drawback in that they tend to place stringent limits on the strategies that brands can and cannot pursue (Christensen and Bower, 1996). This should however not be confused with involving ordinary consumers in the innovation processes. Research has demonstrated that consumers can come up with radical innovations because they can more freely make use of analogical thinking, and because they are not limited by knowledge of the current technology and organisational strategies (Magnusson, 2009; Kristensson et al., 2004; cf. Dahl and Moreau, 2002). In fact, there is even a specific category of consumers called lead users who not only experience the needs that the marketplace will perceive months or years later, but who also intend to fill the needs they experience, and may thus provide a brand with new product concepts (von Hippel, 1986). An extensive body of research has been built around the concept of lead users and how brands may best collaborate with them (e.g. von Hippel, 1986; 2005; Franke et al, 2006). However, as Essén and Östlund (2011) found, lead users are not always a suitable group with whom to co-create new solutions, depending on the brand's majority of consumers. Sometimes it may actually be better to collaborate with laggards instead of lead users (Essén and Östlund, 2011).

It is important to note that in many successful cases, a brand has relied on and integrated the knowledge of both consumers and professional product developers (Nishikawa et al., 2013; Leahy 2013). For instance, the majority of Muji's most successful new products have been co-created with both consumers and in-house professional product developers, through Muji's consumer community (Nishikawa et al., 2013). As Leahy (2013) summarised: "an effective approach to new product development or product refinement allows consumers to provide the 'what' (...) while the product designers provide the 'how'...". Whether the co-created products are deemed successful or not in this stream of research is based on financial metrics (e.g. Nishikawa et al., 2013) or expert evaluations (e.g. Magnusson, 2009; Kristensson et al., 2004). The responses of the non-participating consumers are missing. This is unfortunate, since their responses may actually predict market success.

What value do the participating consumers get from co-creation?

As mentioned above, participating consumers mainly extract value from the co-creation of new products through, for example, the experience itself (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Gebauer et al., 2013) where intrinsic rewards (e.g. Gebauer et al., 2013; von Hippel, 2005; Cova and Pace, 2006) and a desire to learn and master a task (e.g. Füller, 2006; Franke and Hader, 2014; Wagner, 2011) are at play. Participation can also result in consumer feelings of empowerment because it can induce a sense of control over the brand offerings (e.g. Fuchs et al., 2010). Extrinsic rewards such as winning a prize (e.g. Wagner, 2011; Adamczyk et al., 2012) can also matter, as can the resulting end products or services (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Kristensson et al., 2004; Nishikawa et al., 2013). With regards to the latter, it is interesting to note that the end product does not have to be exceptional per se; often what is important to the co-creating consumers is that the consumers have co-created it. For example, consumers who create products evaluate their self-made products more highly than comparable products made elsewhere (i.e. “the IKEA effect”; Norton et al., 2012). Atakan et al. (2014) found that consumers who ideated, or designed, a product actually identify with the final product and, as a consequence, they create an emotional connection to the product, evaluate it more highly, and are more likely to purchase it. This connection to a product takes place in both the ideation and the selection of the new product. Consumers who simply select the product to be marketed also develop a stronger product demand and feeling of ownership of the selected product (Fuchs et al., 2010).

It is important to note that there are limits to the positive effects described above, in that they do not always occur. For instance, Fuchs et al. (2010) found that if the outcome does not reflect consumer preferences, and if the consumers do not believe they have the relevant competence to select the best product, the positive effects of product selection disappears. These findings provide interesting grounds for conducting research in situations where the consumers have little or no choice but to co-create with an organisation. For example, services are often produced and consumed simultaneously, and certain services, such as healthcare services, may require the active participation of the consumer (i.e. the patient: Batalden et

al., 2015; von Thiele Schwarz, 2016). How do consumers who do not want to co-create respond?

Interestingly, consumers sometimes overestimate the value of their own ideas (Huang et al., 2014) and as such innovation contests may actually produce negative consumer responses (cf. Gebauer et al., 2013). From a marketing point of view, however, it is unclear how the marketing effects differ between the consumers who win the contest, the consumers who lost the contest, and non-participating consumers.

2.2.2. How: forms of consumer co-creation

Consumer co-creation can be done at the fuzzy front end of new product development, through the ideation or development of products, or during commercialisation and at the launch of the product through, for example, selection of which, out of many, products the consumers would like the brand to market and keep in their range (Hoyer et al., 2010; Fuchs and Schreier, 2011; Chang and Taylor, 2016). The first phase is called the fuzzy front end and it is the initial phase of new product development that precedes the formal new product development process (Smith and Reinertsen, 1991; Magnusson, 2009). Including consumers at this phase allows for a broader range of possible solutions, and improves the financial performance of a new product (Jeppesen and Lakhani, 2010; Kristensson and Magnusson, 2010; Creusen et al., 2013; Chang and Taylor, 2016).

Practically, consumers can be involved in a brand's co-creation activities through a number of different forms of collaboration. Much of the research in this area deals with crowdsourcing (e.g. collecting ideas from large groups of consumers (Howe, 2006; Ebner et al., 2009; Bayus, 2013), online user communities hosted and moderated by the brand (Dahlander and Piezunka, 2013; Cova et al., 2015a; 2015b), and innovation contests (e.g. Gebauer et al., 2013; Wagner, 2011; Füller, 2006; Adamczyk et al., 2012). These forms overlap and are often combined (e.g. 'crowdsourcing communities': Bayus, 2013). Research on crowdsourcing (e.g. Ebner et al., 2009; Bayus, 2013), online communities for new product development (e.g. Ogasawa and Piller, 2006; Nishikawa et al., 2013), and innovation contests (e.g. Wagner, 2011; Adamczyk et al., 2012) has argued that these are rather successful ways for brands to engage their consumers. The development of

both research and practice in these areas includes the realisation that brands can combine different types of consumer co-creation into an ecosystem where the different forms feed into each (Hiernerth et al., 2014). Academically, there is also a development in acknowledging the many difficulties associated with these strategies. Consumer co-creation may be experienced by practitioners as ‘herding cats’ (Cova et al., 2015a; Cova et al., 2015b), may incur a disproportionate increase in costs (e.g. Cassiman and Valtini, 2015) and they may find that many real life examples of online communities are likely to wither and die due to low or no user activity (Dahlander and Piezunka 2013). Interestingly, these negative findings are used to create a more balanced view of consumer co-creation, and help to provide suggestions for how to best mitigate the negative effects (e.g. Dahlander and Piezunka, 2013; Felin and Zenger, 2013; Gebauer et al., 2013).

Research on the different forms of consumer co-creation has to a large extent focused on how consumer co-creation can improve the new product development processes and create successful new products. This line of research can, however, be extended to include more focus on the marketing effects of the different forms of consumer co-creation, particularly with respect to consumer responses related to the brand. Further, a comparison between the marketing effects on participating and non-participating consumers, with regards to different forms of consumer co-creation, is missing.

2.2.3. What: new products and services

The academic research on which this thesis builds in terms of consumer co-creation in new product and service development focuses on innovative, new products, and to a lesser degree, innovative, new services. If a new product (or service) is innovative depends on the extent to which it differs from competing alternatives in a way that is meaningful to customers, and if it therefore reflects a meaningful uniqueness (e.g. Dewar and Dutton, 1986; Sethi et al., 2001; Fang, 2008).

There do not seem to be any particular limitations on the products and services that brands can co-create with consumers. Scholars have reported a wide range of products and services, including the improvement of Dell’s offerings (Bayus, 2013), household items including furniture (Nishikawa et al., 2013), fashion items such as t-shirts (Ogawa and Piller, 2006), LEGO

sets (Hienerth et al., 2014), mobile phone services (Kristensson et al., 2004), and, as previously described, new hamburgers in the McDonald's 'My Burger' campaign (e.g. McDonald's; McDonald's Sverige, 2013; McDonald's, 2013).

The research presented above helps explain one side of the commercial success of products that have been co-created. By engaging in co-creation activities, the participating consumers can create end products or services that are attractive to themselves and fulfil needs (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Poetz and Schreier, 2012). A brand may also gain from consumer co-creation, not just in the creation of a new innovative product or service (e.g. Nishikawa et al., 2013) but also because the participating consumers are more likely to purchase their co-created product (Fuchs et al., 2010), as well as engage in the marketing for the product through, for example, word-of-mouth (von Hippel, 2005; Roberts and Candi, 2014).

Most new products are incremental innovations, however, and these often fail not in the product development process but in the commercialisation of the offering (Aarikka-Stenroos and Sandberg, 2011; cf. Richtnér et al., 2014). This is a big and expensive problem as new products and services are important drivers of corporate growth, success, profitability and even survival of brands, especially in fast-paced and/or competitive markets (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1995; Wind and Mahajan, 1997). Thus, although much of the literature in consumer co-creation in new product and service development focuses on the creation of innovative products and services, it is the consumer responses and marketing effects that perhaps matter the most in securing new product/service success. This is apparent in the 'My Burger' example, where the co-created hamburgers are, at best, an incremental innovation, and the success of the new hamburgers are dependent on consumer responses. It is also the case for LEGO, where fans are engaged not only in co-creating new products but also in their marketing, in terms of, for example, blogging about the products, creating fanzines and even setting up businesses that use LEGO products for education purposes (Hienerth et al., 2014).

In other words, what is being co-created matters, but it is the combination of 'what' product or service, with 'how' and/or with 'whom' it is being co-created, that creates either positive or negative consumer responses.

This is also true for the responses of non-participating consumers, as discussed below.

2.3. Phase 2: Marketing communications of consumer co-created new products and services

There is a gap in the research presented above, in that it does not take into account whether the end product or service will be attractive to non-participating consumers. This is now slowly changing and there is a growing realisation that the market reaction to consumer co-creation and co-created products and services is important (e.g. Schreier et al., 2012). To my knowledge, the first article dealing with this perspective was by Fuchs and Schreier, in 2011. This is surprising, given that research into consumer co-creation that focuses on participating consumers and brands alone cannot guarantee the success of consumer co-creation projects. Because the majority of a brand's consumers will probably never co-create with the brand (e.g. Hunt et al., 2013; Fuchs and Schreier, 2011), it is important that these non-participating consumers find the co-created products and services attractive enough to buy, and that the co-creation has a positive effect on the brand, or else the brand's consumer co-creation is likely to be costly and unsuccessful.

Non-participating consumers respond to the 'who, how and what' of consumer co-creation. Research to date has focused on the responses of non-participating consumers to one or two aspects at a time. Chronologically, the research articles have moved 'backwards', starting with what was co-created and how it was co-created. More recently, who co-created it has also been included.

2.3.1. Who: the participating consumers

As mentioned above, the question 'who co-created it?' has recently gained more attention. Dahl et al. (2015) has demonstrated that social identity theory can explain why non-participating consumers sometimes respond favourably, and sometimes not, to consumer co-creation in new product and

service development. The underlying rationale is that consumers are also users. Their social identities connect to their user-identities and they thereby feel empowered by being vicariously involved in the co-creation process. Surprisingly, very broad categories of social identity suffice to produce such results. For example, Dahl et al. (2015) found that women constitute a user group specific enough to trigger social/user identity in non-participating women.

Who co-creates is also relevant in connection to what is co-created. For example, if the co-created product is a luxury fashion item, the participating consumers need to be described as artists or celebrities or otherwise legitimised by the brand (Fuchs et al., 2013). If not, non-participating consumers will respond negatively as ‘ordinary’ consumers are not perceived as credible sources of status signalling products. In other words, the communicated identities of the co-creating consumers matters.

2.3.2. How: forms of consumer co-creation

How consumer co-creation is carried out has not been a focus of this stream of research. In fact, the split between ideation and selection and their comparison with a combination of these two (i.e. ‘full empowerment’) in Fuchs and Schreier’s (2011) article is the only comparison between different forms of consumer co-creation that I can find. Fuchs and Schreier (2011) found that ‘full empowerment’ produces more positive responses among the non-participating consumers than do either ideation or selection separately.

Dahl et al. (2015) touch upon the ‘how’ in terms of highlighting the importance of the call for participation in consumer co-creation being perceived as open (as opposed to closed). This connects this area of research to Phase 1, where, for example, Mack and Landau (2015) have identified differences in the creativity and motivation of participating and non-participating consumers. Potentially, this explains the negative results found in Dahl et al. (2015): consumers who in Mack and Landau’s (2015) study would have self-selected to participate, missed the opportunity in Dahl et al.’s (2015) experiment, and thus reacted negatively.

2.3.3. What: new products

As does much of the research into Phase 1 of consumer co-creation, the research articles in Phase 2 also compare consumer co-created new products (i.e. 'what') with products originating from internal new product development. As such, the products included in this stream of research have been products that both consumers and professional new product development teams can design, such as t-shirts and muesli (Fuchs and Schreier, 2011). Importantly, Schreier et al. (2012) noted that complex products as a category do not produce the otherwise positive consumer responses toward consumer co-created products. This is because consumers are not perceived to have the relevant competence to create complex products. In line with this, Fuchs et al. (2013) noted that luxury fashion brands suffer from consumer co-creation because user-designed products are perceived to be of lower quality than professionally designed products. Consumer co-created products simply fail to signal high status.

The current research on non-participating consumers indicates that even non-participating consumers perceive that there is a value in the advertised consumer co-creation. Although it is never measured explicitly, this is indicated by their more favourable responses to the co-creating brands and the co-created products. This value may be derived from the perceptions that non-participating consumers have of consumer co-creation as something positive, based on the underlying idea that if more people, and more varied people in terms of knowledge and experience, are involved, the better the outcome (Fuchs et al., 2012).

Although the value of consumer co-creation is never questioned in the work cited above, there are limits (i.e. boundary conditions) to its positive effects. At a fundamental level, what is produced (e.g. product complexity: Schreier et al., 2012) and who is involved in co-creating the products (e.g. perceived expertise: Fuchs et al., 2013) create limitations to the positive effects. The social identification account (Dahl et al., 2015) clarifies the limitations of the vicarious empowerment of non-participating consumers, in that consumers who feel dissimilar to participating consumers in terms of, for example, gender or social group, do not perceive the user-designed products as more attractive (Dahl et al., 2015). As mentioned above, another limitation refers to the 'how' of consumer co-creation, in that the

brand's consumer co-creation should be perceived as an open invitation to all consumers, or else the non-participating consumers do not feel socially included (Dahl et al., 2015).

To summarise, the research in Phase 2 has focused on providing a baseline for the research area in that it has compared the responses of non-participating consumers to consumer co-created versus internally developed new products. What is missing here is a comparison between how the participating and non-participating consumers view consumer co-creation, as it is possible that the brand should emphasise different aspects of consumer co-creation to different groups of consumers. To further develop the research area, not only products but also services should be included, as should the actual advertising of new co-created products/services and co-creating consumers. Finally, although social identity theory has been proposed to explain the responses of non-participating consumers, there should be other theories and areas of literature that can further explain these responses. For example, Fuchs et al. (2013) found that how the participating consumers are communicated can impact consumer responses. However, the research never included pictures of the co-creating consumers (cf. Aydınoglu and Cian, 2014), which may have been able to give the non-participating consumers further clues in relation to perceived similarity and their reference groups (e.g. White and Dahl, 2006; 2007).

2.4. Consumer co-creation outside this theses

Fundamentally, all streams of research that include co-creation share the perspective that consumers can collaborate (with brands/organisations) to create something of value. Contexts and areas of focus, however, differ between the discourses and streams of research. Because there are limitations to the breadth of a doctoral thesis, it is not feasible to attempt to investigate every single aspect of co-creation and research related to it. There are, however, to my knowledge, a few particular fields of research relating to co-creation that I would like to mention here, as they are important and of growing interest to adjacent fields of research.

In this thesis, I focus on consumer co-creation between brands and consumers, although I also include consumer co-creation between organi-

sations, and patients as consumers to a much lesser degree. Co-creation, however, can also take place between firms (e.g. Normann and Ramírez, 1993, 1994; Laurin, 2013) as well as internally, within the firm through, for example, the ideation and selection of innovative ideas (e.g. Björk et al., 2010; Birkinshaw et al., 2011; Bergendahl et al., 2015). In such cases, the employees of a firm can participate in much the same way as consumers might have, which means that the firm need to advertise the internal co-creation to its employees and provide them with compelling reasons to participate, and rewards such as constructive feedback (e.g. Birkinshaw et al., 2011).

Another distinction made in this thesis is that only the consumer co-creation of products and services are included. Neighbouring research areas, such as user-generated content (e.g. Christodoulides et al., 2012) and co-created advertising (e.g. Steyn et al., 2011; Thompson and Malaviya, 2013) are not included here even though they do include co-creation between a brand and its consumers.

Co-creation is also included in the literature on value co-creation. This is a broad area of co-creation which posits that customers are not merely recipients of offerings, but co-creators who also create value (e.g. Prahalad and Ramaswamy; 2004; Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016). This stream of research includes not only “the innovation of the offerings but also human experiences” (Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016). The limitation of this thesis, however, is that it focuses on the co-creation of new products and services – not experiences. Of course, consumers who co-create will experience the co-creation, but in this thesis I limit this to consumer responses to the co-creation.

A particular stream in the literature on value co-creation is service-dominant logic (s-d logic) (e.g. Vargo and Lusch, 2004; cf. Ramaswamy and Ozcan, 2016). This thesis, however, is not grounded in s-d logic, as co-creation according to this logic is predominantly focused on value co-creation that can happen in an abundance of contexts where consumers can co-create with or without the brand or organisation (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; 2008). In much of the research on s-d logic, however, including the Nordic school, the focus appears to be on the value co-creation that takes place when the brand facilitates consumers in creating value in an interac-

tion with the brand (e.g. Grönroos, 2006; 2011; Skålén et al., 2015) and where the value is determined by the customers during or after the consumption of the product or service (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Lusch et al., 2007; Grönroos, 2006; 2011; Skålén et al., 2015). As this type of (value) co-creation is not something that a brand would normally include in its marketing communication, this view provides little support for the research in four of the five articles in this thesis (Articles 2-5). Theory on co-creation in a healthcare context does have some connections to s-d logic, as the healthcare sector is moving from a product to a service focus (Batalden et al., 2015). Reference to s-d logic is therefore included in Article 1, however, the article draws on the literature from several different areas and discourses, ranging from innovation management to sociology and healthcare, to provide a broader context than that of the particular perspective included in the literature on value co-creation.

Finally, some areas are excluded from this thesis, as they are not deemed to be consumer co-creation. As Prahalad and Ramaswamy noted in 2004, co-creation does not take place in self-service settings where the brand transfers activities to the customers. Neither does co-creation take place in meticulous market research, even though the consumers may very well have an impact through market research (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Research on self-service, automation of services, and market research is thus outside the scope of this thesis (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Mass customisation, including user toolkits (e.g. Franke and Hader, 2014), is also excluded because individual mass customised products tend to be produced for the individual buyer/user only and are therefore not marketed to non-participating consumers.

Chapter 3

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework below builds on and extends the two phases of consumer co-creation (illustrated in Figure 2). The framework aims to explain the marketing effects of consumer co-creation in new product and service development, with a focus on the empowerment of participating consumers, and the responses of non-participating consumers in terms of brand and product attitudes, purchase intentions and the degree to which they perceive the innovation ability of the co-creating brand.

The framework includes a number of moderators that affect consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development. It is these I focus on in the following presentation of the framework.

Starting with Phase 1, I begin with the aspect of ‘who’ by discussing consumer empowerment in relation to brand/organisation. I continue with a moderator related to the element of ‘who’: reference groups. Reference group affinity, as perceived by non-participating consumers, affects how they respond to marketing communications such as the ‘My Burger’ example, where the participating consumers are prominently displayed.

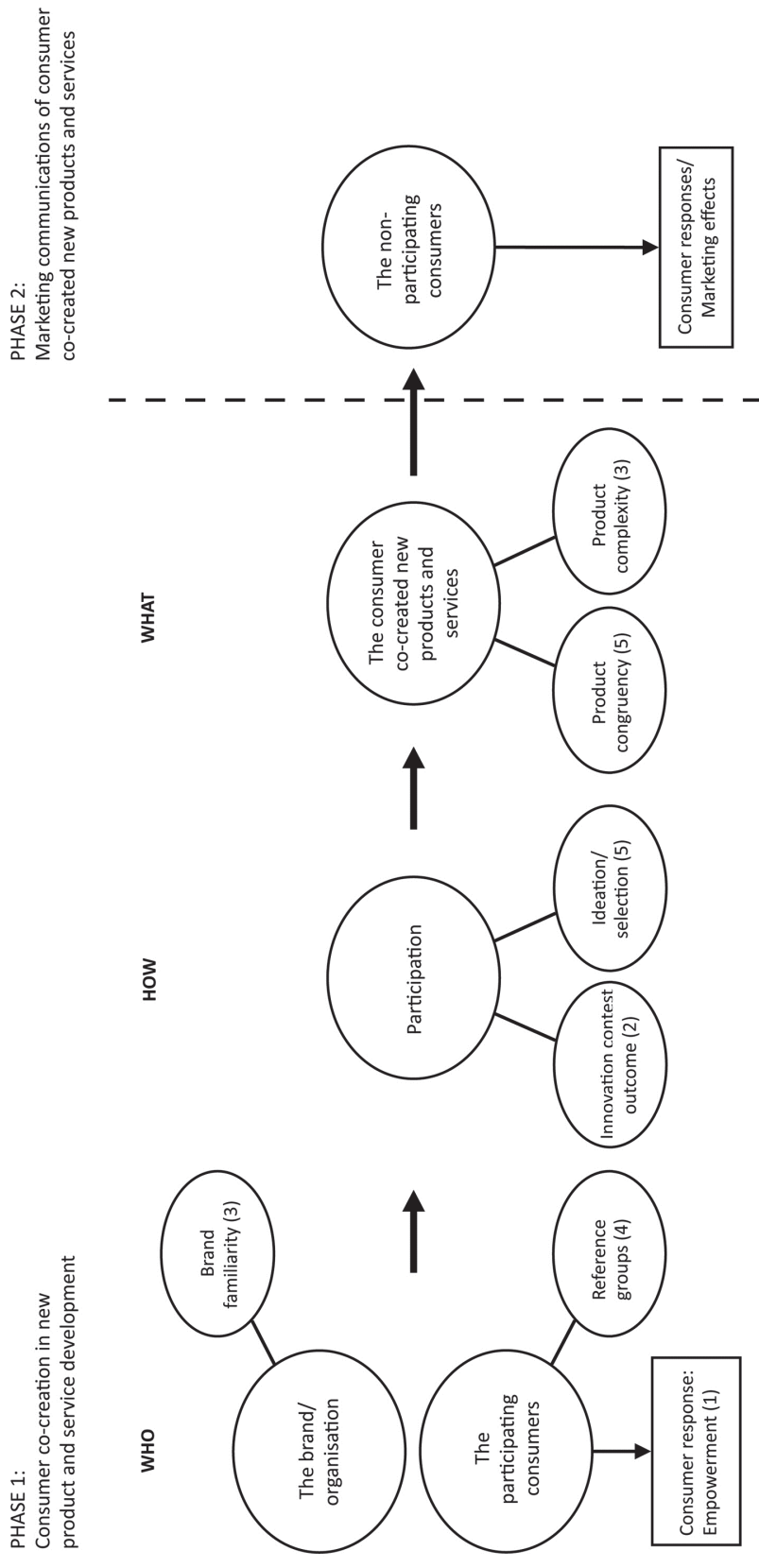
‘Who’ also involves the brand, and as such I next discuss brand familiarity in relation to product complexity (an aspect of ‘what’). These moderators are discussed together because they jointly impact on non-participating consumers responses to advertisements for consumer co-created new products and services.

Following with ‘how’ consumer co-creation can take place, my research has focused on the moderating effects of ideation versus selection, and in-

novation contest outcomes. I explore the way that these forms of participation affect consumer responses. The outcomes of innovation contests are discussed in relation to both participating and non-participating consumers, whereas ideation versus selection is used solely to explore non-participating consumers' responses. Ideation versus selection is a moderator that operates in conjunction with another moderator, product congruency, when affecting non-participating consumers. These will thus be discussed jointly.

The consumer responses measured in this second phase will not be discussed here, but in Chapter 4 under Methodology. The consumer responses measured in this second phase will not be discussed here, but in Chapter 4 under Methodology.

Figure 2. Theoretical framework. The number in parenthesis represents article number.



3.1. Who: Empowerment

Consumer co-creation is sometimes described as a form of consumer empowerment (e.g. Fuchs and Schreier, 2011), and many scholars argue that brands empowering their consumers should lead to win-win situations that benefit consumers and brands in terms of increased value (e.g. Bitner et al., 2000; Ogawa and Piller, 2006; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; von Hippel, 1986, 2005; Wikström, 1996). The psychological effects of empowerment have been perceived as particularly beneficial to both consumers and brands, because consumers develop a greater sense of ownership after having participated in empowering co-creation activities such as ideating or selecting products (Fuchs et al., 2010; Sawhney et al., 2005).

Empowerment is a construct that has been used in, for example, marketing, innovation and healthcare literatures. However, marketing and innovation on the one hand, and healthcare management on the other, have slightly different takes on empowerment. From a marketing and innovation perspective, co-creation is a form of empowerment because it provides consumers with a sense of control over the organisation's offerings (e.g. Fuchs et al., 2010). Patient empowerment, however, is specifically defined as "referring to the set of self-determined behaviours based on patients' individual needs for developing autonomy and competence with their disease (Prigge et al., 2015, cf. Fumagalli et al., 2015). Thus, in marketing relating to brands' production and new product development, empowerment deals with perceived power over the brand, whereas in a healthcare setting, empowerment is focused more on the patient's competence as an active (co-creating) entity. To some degree this division depends on the foundation upon which the construct empowerment is explored in the different streams of research. For example, Dahl et al. (2015) base their view of empowerment on social identification, and on Fuchs and Schreier's (2011) view of empowerment, which in turn was developed in reference to theory on political systems. Prigge et al.'s (2015) view of empowerment is instead conceptualised based on self-determination theory (e.g. Deci and Ryan, 1985) and is focused on explaining and predicting consumer behaviour.

It is somewhat problematic when consumer co-creation is perceived as a form of empowerment (e.g. Fuchs and Schreier, 2011), because it is then taken for granted that consumers will (want to) be empowered by taking on a more active role. It is important to remember that consumers may not want to co-create. For example, even though co-creation has been called the new paradigm in healthcare management (e.g. Batalden et al., 2015), patients may not wish to co-create and they may perceive themselves as having little choice but to actively participate in their healthcare. It is therefore unlikely that all consumers or patients should be empowered by having to co-create, whether they want to or not. Thus, consumer co-creation should not be described as being the same as consumer empowerment, but instead as a perspective and set of activities that can empower consumers. As such, research can investigate how consumer co-creation can be enacted to increase the chances that consumers will feel empowered, rather than exploited.

3.2. Who: Consumer reference groups

Consumer reference groups are typically divided into three groups of people; in-groups that are similar to the consumer; out-groups, which could be aspirational, or simply a group the consumer does not belong to; and dissociative out-groups (e.g. Escalas and Bettman, 2003; White and Dahl, 2006; 2007). The latter group is particularly interesting when exploring consumer responses to advertising that includes consumer co-created products and co-creating consumers, such as in the McDonald's 'My Burger' example described earlier. A dissociative reference group symbolises a group of people that a person wishes to avoid being associated with and identified as belonging to (White and Dahl, 2006). While in-groups and aspirational out-groups have a positive effect on the associated brand and product, dissociative out-groups have been found to negatively affect product choice and evaluations (White and Dahl, 2006; 2007). This can be explained from an identity-signalling perspective. Because consumers wish to avoid being mis-identified by other consumers, they communicate (i.e. signal) their desired identity with their brand choices (Berger and Heath, 2008). The brands that

consumers use for this purpose must be clearly different to those used by the dissociative out-group.

In advertising research, the literature on reference groups can be advantageously coupled with that of ‘person pictures’. Person pictures refer to marketing pictures that visually represent people (Aydinoğlu and Cian, 2014). The fact that advertising for consumer co-created products sometimes also includes images of the co-creating consumers is interesting in light of research indicating that person pictures can influence consumer responses to advertising (e.g. Poor et al., 2013; Aydinoğlu and Cian, 2014; Berg, 2015). In fact, there is even a ‘picture superiority effect’ (Nelson et al., 1976; Childers and Houston, 1984; Unnava and Burnkrant, 1991), which in the context of consumer co-creation means that pictures of co-creating consumers are expected to be more influential than text descriptions.

To date, the positive evaluations that non-participating consumers have made of consumer co-created products have been explored in research without the inclusion of pictures of the co-creating consumers. It has thus been left to the imagination of non-participating consumers to imagine the co-creating consumers. Judging from the positive evaluations, non-participating consumers are likely to have categorised co-creating consumers as an in-group, in line with the social identification account proposed by Dahl et al. (2015). Adding person pictures to an advertisement, however, makes it more difficult for non-participating consumers to simply assume that they are either similar or dissimilar to the co-creating consumers. Based on research on imposed imagery (Lutz and Lutz, 1978), it is likely that pictures of co-creating consumers will be especially imposing and interfere with the non-participating consumers’ own, self-generated visualisations of co-creating consumers (cf. Lutz and Lutz, 1978; Aydinoğlu and Cian, 2014). That is, non-participating consumers’ otherwise positive perceptions of consumer co-creation in new product and service development could be altered negatively by the visualisation of the co-creating consumers.

Marketing effects will probably be affected by the non-participating consumers’ brand relationships. Based on the congruence between a brand’s image and a consumer’s self-image, can consumers not only use products or brands to define and maintain their identity, they can also use products or brands to communicate a desired self-image to both them-

selves and others (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Belk, 1988; Escalas and Bettman, 2003; Escalas, 2004). Brands are thus symbolically representative of who consumers believe they are or want to be (Chaplin and John, 2005; Escalas 2004; Escalas and Bettman, 2003; Fournier 1998). Self-brand connection is a particular form of connection between a brand and a consumer's self-concept. By incorporating brands and brand associations such as user characteristics or brand personality traits into their self-concept, they form a self-brand connection (Escalas and Bettman, 2003).

When connecting the literatures on self-brand connection and reference groups, it becomes clear that co-creating consumers, as a reference group, should be able to affect non-participating consumers' self-brand connections with the co-creating brand (cf. Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Escalas and Bettman, 2003). How the co-creating consumer is perceived in terms of similarity and reference group affinity could thus provide a cue strong enough for the non-participating consumers to re-consider their relationship with the brand.

3.3. Who and what: Brand familiarity and product complexity

Schreier et al. (2012) found that non-participating consumers do not believe that ordinary consumers have the ability to co-create complex products. The level of complexity is defined as "... the extent to which consumers perceive a product to be difficult to design" (Schreier et al., 2012). By difficulty, they mean the extent to which expert skill and knowledge is necessary for successful design (Rogers, 2003).

Because advertised, or otherwise marketed, consumer co-created new products tend to be co-created by ordinary consumers (as opposed to lead users: von Hippel, 1986; 2005), it is important that the participating consumers come across as being competent, or as having the relevant abilities, to co-create the new product. The perceived ability of co-creating consumers is thus the degree to which non-participating consumers perceive that the participating consumers have the ability to create the product. If the co-

created product is perceived as complex, it is likely that the participating consumers won't be perceived as able unless they are described as, for example, experts, artists or specifically selected for the task (Fuchs et al., 2013).

This reasoning holds for examples of consumer co-creation where the brand is unfamiliar. However, if the brand is familiar, it should signal (Erdem and Swait, 1998) to the non-participating consumers that even a complex, co-created product under the brand's name should be of the same level of quality as the brand's other products (Montgomery and Wernerfelt, 1992).

The reasoning behind this is that the familiar brand functions as a signal, in line with signalling theory. Signalling stems from research in information economics where signals can function as mechanisms to solve problems under asymmetric information (Kirmani and Rao, 2000). Unobservable product quality, for example, can be communicated through an observable signal. Research has shown that both warranties and price can function as this type of signal, and that consumers use these to form evaluations and make choices between different offerings (Kirmani and Rao, 2000). Signalling has also been used to research advertising effectiveness where both advertising creativity (Dahlén et al., 2008), advertising expense (Kirmani, 1990; Kirmani and Wright, 1989) and advertising effort (Modig et al., 2014) have been found to signal greater effort on behalf of the advertiser. Signalling works in the consumer's reasoning that if the product and brand are not as good as the advertising claims, then the advertiser would not risk all the effort and expense to advertise falsely (Erdem and Swait, 1998; Rao et al., 1999).

Although the co-creation of complex products can have negative marketing effects, it seems that brand familiarity can mitigate these effects. Possibly, 'who' co-creates has a stronger effect on consumer responses than 'what' is co-created.

3.4. How: Consumer co-creation in innovation contests

Current research into innovation contests has predominantly taken place from an economic and a (innovation) management perspective, although there has also been an education and sustainability focus to the research (Adamczyk et al., 2012). However, collectively the research has mainly investigated how brands can successfully run contests (e.g. Adamczyk et al., 2012; Gebauer et al., 2013), and what makes consumers want to engage in contests (e.g. von Hippel, 2005; Füller, 2006; Gebauer et al., 2013). When connecting innovation contests with consumer co-creation from a marketing perspective, it becomes apparent that the innovation contests should have marketing effects for the brand and the consumer co-created new products. This should especially hold true for many of the innovation contests that are conducted for marketing rather than innovation purposes. McDonald's 'My Burger' campaign, for example, invited consumers to ideate and select new hamburgers, but the ingredients at the consumers' disposal were all pre-selected by McDonald's.

Recent research into innovation contests has found that self-selected participating and non-participating consumers differ in terms of skills, creativity and motivation (Mack and Landau, 2015). Combining this with research on consumers' attachment to their co-created products (e.g. Norton et al., 2012; Fuchs et al., 2010) it would seem that winners of innovation contests would respond positively to such activities, however, the majority of the participating consumers who lose the contest may instead feel that they have wasted their time (cf. Huang et al., 2014) and respond negatively (in line with psychological reactance: Thorbjørnsen and Dahlén, 2011).

For non-participating consumers, it is likely that the actual contest mechanism in innovation contests can create different responses compared to scenarios where the consumer co-creation of new products and services take place without the contest. The contest itself signals that there was a winner. For non-participating consumers, this indicates that they missed out on the possibility of winning the contest. As a matter of fact, by the time they find out about the winning co-created new product, the contest is

over and they missed the opportunity to participate. Dahl et al. (2015) found a prerequisite for non-participating consumers' positive evaluations of co-created products: the invitation to co-create must be perceived as open to all. The question is, does a missed opportunity to participate in an innovation contest translate into an open invitation or not, in the minds of the non-participating consumers?

3.5. How and what: Ideation, selection, and product congruency

Ideation refers to the new product development phase where, in this case, consumers come up with new product ideas. Selection refers to the later phase where consumers select which out of many products the brand should produce and market. Just as in the 'My Burger' example, many innovation contests are in fact built upon a combination of consumer ideation and selection. While ideation allows the brand to reap, for example, new product ideas, the selection mechanism relieves the brand of having to sift through and select the winner out of potentially thousands of ideas (e.g. Birkinshaw et al., 2011).

The products that consumers ideate and/or select can be either congruent or incongruent in relation to the brand. For example, when McDonald's launch a new hamburger it is a congruent extension because it is in line with the products already on offer. However, if McDonald's were to launch a dissimilar product, such as a "pizzafied" hamburger made out of pizza bread, the extension would be incongruent and not in line with consumer expectations. Whether a product is congruent or not can be explained by consumers' expectations about the kinds of products the brand is able to market (e.g. brand schema theory: Sujan and Bettman, 1989).

When combined, research into brand schema and congruency predicts that consumers will associate a brand's congruent new offerings with the brand, whereas incongruent new offerings will be sub-typed by the consumers and as such, be perceived as an exception (e.g. Sujan and Bettman, 1989). Despite this, incongruent new offerings can be positive for a brand in general. For well-known brands, congruency can reduce curiosity and

interest in the brand (Alden et al., 2000), whereas incongruent information can increase interest and simultaneously reduce consumers' variety-seeking tendencies, particularly for low-risk frequently purchased goods (Machleit et al., 1993).

In the context of consumer co-creation, the combination of product congruency and ideation/selection is likely to impact the non-participating consumers' responses. Because there are two sources of a new product or service in consumer co-creation – the participating consumers and the brand – the marketing effects should depend not only on how the products are perceived, but also on whether they are attributed back to the brand or the participating consumers (i.e. brand attribution: e.g. Keller and Sood, 2003; van Osselaer and Alba, 2000; 2003). The marketing effects should, in other words, be dependent on how the combination of product congruency and form of co-creation fit with the 'brand equity feedback loop'. Brand equity (Keller, 1993; 1999) is known to impact consumer responses to a brand's products and services, while at the same time, consumer perceptions of products and services, in turn, impacts brand equity in a dynamic process (e.g. Keller 1993; Balachander and Ghose, 2003; Pina et al., 2010). In order for positive marketing effects to take place, the 'right' combination of product congruency and ideation versus selection should be identified in order to strengthen non-participating consumers' responses to both product and brand.

Chapter 4

Introducing the articles

The main part of this thesis consists of the five articles upon which the conceptual discussion above is based. The articles explore consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

The thesis includes both participating and non-participating consumers. The first article is based on a qualitative study focusing on the participating consumers' (patients') responses to consumer co-creation in a healthcare context. The second article bridges participating and non-participating consumers in exploring and comparing their responses to an innovation contest.

The other three articles focus on non-participating consumers' responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development. Of these, Article 3 includes a comparison between consumer co-creation and internal new product development. This is the only article that is part of the research that provides a baseline with which we can assess the marketing effects of consumer co-created new products and services. Article 4 is focused on the marketing effects of the advertised participating consumers (in line with the 'My Burger' example), and finally, in Article 5 I compare the marketing effects of two forms of consumer co-creation (ideation and selection).

From a practitioner perspective, the five articles can be summarised as questions that can help guide readers of this thesis. The articles in this thesis point to a number of factors that influence consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development:

- Are the consumers briefed on the meaning of co-creation, are they properly trained to carry out the co-creation process, and is the result actually used? (Article 1)
- Did consumer co-creation take place within an innovation contest framework and communicated as such? (Article 2)
- Is the brand familiar or unfamiliar to the non-participating consumers, is the product perceived to be complex or not, and are the participating consumers perceived to have the relevant competence to co-create the product? (Article 3)
- Are the co-creating consumers perceived to be people like the non-participating consumers (in-group) or not (dissociative out-group), and how are these consumers portrayed in marketing communications? (Article 4)
- Was the consumer co-created product/service ideated or selected by the consumers, and is the end result perceived to be congruent or incongruent with the brand? (Article 5)

The five articles are introduced individually after the introduction to the methodologies used in each. The articles are summarised in Table 1, focusing on the theoretical and methodological aspects.

4.1. Methodology

4.1.1. Research designs

In this thesis I explore both participating and non-participating responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development. To do this I have combined both qualitative and quantitative methods. A combination of qualitative methods is better suited to exploring how participating consumers respond to consumer co-creation enacted over a long period of time. This allows for unexpected results to emerge in an explorative study. Experiments are used as a quantitative method to continue developing re-

search into the responses of non-participating consumers. This approach also allows for comparisons between groups, which is important when, for example, comparing the responses between participating and non-participating consumers.

Longitudinal, qualitative design

Consumer co-creation is not only relevant in a new product development context, but also in healthcare settings where patients co-create healthcare services with caregivers and organisations (e.g. Batalden et al., 2015; von Thiele Schwarz, 2016). This is partly driven by a realisation that healthcare services are indeed services, that, unlike products in general, need to be co-created (e.g. Batalden et al., 2015), but partly also driven by empirical evidence suggesting that informed and active patients co-create good healthcare at a lower cost (Wagner et al., 2001). Technological advances also facilitate co-creation to take place in the healthcare sector, both between caregivers and patients (e.g. von Thiele Schwarz, 2016; Batalden et al., 2015) and between firms, caregivers, and patients (e.g. Andersson, Rosenqvist, and Ashrafi, 2007).

Against this background, the longitudinal, qualitative study in Article 1 was inspired by grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The specific case that was included in the study, the Patient Self-Registration Service (PER) in Swedish rheumatology healthcare, was launched in 2003. The purpose of the e-service was for practitioners to empower patients by ensuring that patients' subjectively perceived health was documented and used in healthcare, as well as research.

The co-creation of healthcare services was examined between 2009 and 2013, and the complexities of the enactment of co-creation were captured. An exploratory approach was useful in this study because the purpose was to explore the participating consumers' (i.e. the patients') responses, and because the healthcare context should not be assumed to directly replicate the consumer market context (e.g. Asch et al., 2014).

Experimental design

Six out of seven studies in this thesis are conducted as experiments. This is in line with most advertising research. In fact, the use of experiments in marketing related research is increasing (Dahlstrom et. al., 2008).

Experimental designs provide researchers with control and the possibility to isolate specific effects (e.g. Kardes, 1996; Söderlund, 2010). Experiments are designed to allow for comparisons between groups (of respondents that have been subjected to different stimuli) and are therefore particularly suitable when exploring the marketing effects of consumer co-created versus internally developed new products and services. Between-subject designs were used in all six experimental studies.

Strengths and weaknesses of the research designs

This thesis covers more than one research design to better capture and understand consumer responses. This is in line with Dahlstrom et al.'s (2008, p. 139) note that "(v)ariety in research strategies, metrics, and methods provides the opportunity to qualify theoretical relationships and to refine marketing theory". For example, experiments capture short-term effects, but using qualitative methods such as grounded theory can capture long-term effects over several years. It can add nuance to research into consumer co-creation in new product and service development, where the empirical data often stems from short-term projects such as pilot projects or experiments (e.g. Magnusson, 2003; Matthing et al., 2006; Hoffman et al., 2010; Poetz and Schreier, 2012; Dahl et al., 2015).

It can sometimes be interesting to capture as much as possible of the complexities of the studied phenomena, and thus experiments may not be a suitable research design. This is why a qualitative research design is an interesting complement to experimental research designs.

A problem with the qualitative approach, however, is that important factors such as empowerment in Article 1 are not operationalised and measured (quantitatively). This makes it harder to conduct direct comparisons with other examples of consumer co-creation in other contexts. It would, for example, have been interesting to see if the findings from the qualitative study in Article 1 hold true for the long-term consumer co-creation of services outside a healthcare context (cf. Asch et al., 2014).

Experiments as a form of research design have also been criticized, however, the criticisms are often founded on misunderstandings or beliefs of the exaggerated advantages of other research designs (e.g. Kardes, 1996; Söderlund, 2010). For instance, experiments do have a limited focus in examining specific effects. Comparison, manipulation and control are necessary for investigating interrelated causes and effects (Kardes, 1996). Experiments do not include the complexities that are found in reality, but instead test hypotheses by, for example, exploring specific causalities and effects. Although it is not possible to test for everything in each experiment, series of experiments can explore several different aspects. This is what in effect happens when scholars build on their own or other's work by extending extant research (i.e. the cumulative aspect of science: Söderlund, 2010).

4.1.2. Stimuli development

The stimuli used in the experiments included scenario descriptions (Article 2), mock advertising (Article 3), introductory questionnaire texts with combinations of text and pictures (Article 4) and editorial publicity texts (Article 5). In Articles 3 and 5, stimuli sampling was used to better capture different versions of representative products and services. This strategy allows the experiment to better capture the conceptual category and to include variations (e.g. Söderlund, 2010), however, sampling increases the risk of having less control because each stimuli version may bring unplanned differences to the study that are not accounted for in the study design (Hunter et al., 1989). The way to counter this problem is by using the same strategy as for only one stimuli version per treatment: selecting the stimuli that best represents the conceptual category and that is as ecologically valid as possible (Jackson and Jacobs, 1983; Söderlund, 2010). Further, all aspects of the stimuli that are not specific to the manipulation should be kept as similar as possible between versions (Söderlund, 2010). These guidelines were followed in the six experiments of this thesis.

The ecological validity (Arndt, 1977) differs between the articles. Brands are often presented as anonymous to avoid the confounding effects of a respondent's previous experience of actual brands. Although this decreases the ecological validity (e.g. McQuarrie 1998), this procedure is

common in experimental designs to increase control (Söderlund, 2010). Articles 3 and 5 use anonymous brands for this purpose, whereas Articles 2, 3, and 4, include real brands. In Article 3, I compare anonymous with real brands to explore the previously proposed boundary condition for complex products (Schreier et al., 2012). In Article 4, real brands were used to allow self-brand connections to be measured.

4.1.3. Sampling and data collection

Qualitative study

The data collection in Article 1 differs from the other four articles as a result of the research design. A combination of observations, focused interviews, and archival data was used as the main source of data generation. The interviews ranged between 60 and 90 minutes and included open-ended questions as well as probes to foster deeper conversations when needed. All interviews were conducted between 2009 and 2013, thus spanning four years.

Care was taken to include a diverse set of patients with regards to age, gender, and severity of diseases, and the clinics where the observations were conducted were a rural clinic as well as a large university hospital. The interviewed practitioners represented the majority of county councils in Sweden. The geographical distribution ensured that attitudes were not mediated by particular locations.

Experimental studies

Sampling was conducted for the experimental studies using either a nation-representative cross-section of participants recruited via an online panel (YouGov; Articles 3 and 5), or by recruiting students (Articles 2 and 4). Student samples are a form of convenience sample that has been criticised because students are generally not believed to be a perfect representation of the overall population (e.g. Pham, 2013). There are, however, no guarantees that volunteers (e.g. respondents recruited via online panels) respond in line with the entire population of consumers, and psychological factors are not necessarily different between students and non-students (Söderlund, 2010). Further, in experimental designs, researchers are generally not interested in

the absolute effects but only in the relative effects between the groups in the experiment (i.e. differences between the manipulations) (e.g. Kardes, 1996; Söderlund, 2010). These relative effects are used to explain and understand causal mechanisms, not for prediction (Kardes, 1996). The critique about using student samples is thus relevant for surveys, but not necessarily for experiments. Either way, results obtained with college students have been found to closely correspond to results obtained with non-college students in field settings (Kardes, 1996).

One problem with student samples, however, may be hypothesis guessing. For example, students may be aware of the research interests of their teachers and may thus be able to infer the purpose of the study. In Article 4, a suspicion probe was used to detect students who had indeed correctly guessed the purpose of the study. These 13 students (out of a total of 109 students) were subsequently removed from the analysis.

When using student samples, the data was collected using paper-and-pen method in classrooms and in conjunction with classes. One rarely discussed benefit of using paper-and-pen lies in the notes that respondents may scribble on the questionnaires. For example, in Article 4, we found that students found it difficult to rate their attitude towards the co-creating consumer. Notes included comments such as “I don’t know, I don’t know the guy”. The specific construct was not used in the analysis, partly for this reason and partly because it didn’t provide a contribution (which may stem from the respondent’s reluctance to rate the co-creating consumer).

4.1.4. Measurements and data analysis

Qualitative study

As a result of the study design, no specific measurements were included. Empowerment (e.g. Fuchs et al., 2010; Fumagalli et al., 2015), however, emerged as a concept of importance (as discussed in the theoretical framework in Chapter 3).

The qualitative data in Article 1 was analysed in an open-coding process inspired by grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). It was combined with the performativity view of routines. This is a framework that originates in organisational research and allows researchers to analyse empirical data in three dimensions (Feldman and Pentland, 2003; Pentland and

Feldman, 2005). It also allows for long-term qualitative research to explore consumer responses to consumer co-creation over time, and it brings forth several layers of co-creation experiences. It provides an interesting way of dissecting the data between the software (i.e. artefact), the ostensive aspect (Latour, 1986), which correlates with the 'service blueprint' (Shostack, 1984), and the performative aspect (Latour, 1986) which correlates with the actual enactment of co-creation. This distinction is important in research that aims to understand how co-creation is experienced and practiced in organisations. For instance, managers tend to describe the ostensive aspect of routines, while practitioners (or in this case patients) engaging with the routines tend to describe performative aspects (Feldman, 2000).

Experimental studies

Psychological effects such as attitudes and intentions are often explored with experimental designs (e.g. Söderlund, 2010). In Articles 2 through 5, the main measures are brand attitude, product attitude and purchase intention. Including both brand and product attitudes is based on the fact that the studies are often presented in a brand or line extension context, where, for example, Nike is described as launching a new type of sports shoe (Article 3). It is thus relevant to measure the effects in terms of consumer attitudes and intentions towards both the brand and the specific co-created product, and compare this with the internal development scenario.

One aspect of a successful new product or service is that consumers actually buy it. Therefore, psychological effects such as consumers' attitudes and intention were included as dependent variables to provide indicators and predictors of success.

Brand attitude is included as a dependent variable in Articles 2 through 5. The specific measure, however, can be reported as brand evaluation (Article 2) or brand ratings (Article 5) to better conform to the publication. For example, in Research-Technology Management (Article 2), brand attitude was called 'brand evaluation' to facilitate for practitioners who form a large share of the publication's readership. Similarly, product attitude has also been called 'product ratings' (Article 5).

Table 1 below provides an overview of the five articles in this thesis, with a focus on the methodologies used.

Table 1: Overview of articles

Article	Type of co-creation	Theory/Literature	Number of studies	Study design	Stimuli	Sample	Dependent variables
1. Co-production in chronic care: Exploitation and empowerment	Service co-creation in healthcare	Empowerment	1 study	Explorative: Interviews and observations		n = 69 (interviews) n > 95 (observ.)	
2. Why user reactions question the value of innovation contests	New product development, innovation contest	Innovation contests	1 study	Experiment 4 scenarios (3 co-creation scenarios + control)	Stimuli texts/ scenario descriptions	n = 186	Brand evaluation (i.e. brand attitude), purchase intention
3. The effects of advertising consumer co-created new products: A brand alliance framework model can predict perceptions about co-created brands and their creators	New product development	Product complexity Brand familiarity Signalling theory	2 studies (complex vs. non-complex products)	Experiment: 2 (no/co-creation) x 2(un/familiar brand)	Mock advertisements, stimuli sampling	Study 1: n = 331 Study 2: n = 331	Product attitude, brand attitude, purchase intention, perceived innovation ability
4. Picturing the co-creating consumer: Consumer responses to pictures of co-creating consumers in marketing communications	New product development	Reference groups	2 studies (dissociative out-group vs. non-dissociative out-groups)	Experiment: 2 studies using a 2(text description) x 2(picture) design	Combination of stimuli texts and pictures of co-creating consumers	Study 1: n = 109 Study 2: n = 309	Brand attitude, self-brand connection
5. Consumers' response to other consumers' participation in new product development	New product/service development	Ideation/selection Product congruency	1 study	Experiment 2 (ideation/selection) x 2(product/service)	Stimuli texts, stimuli sampling	n = 386	Product and brand ratings (i.e. product and brand attitudes)

4.2. Article 1

Title: Co-production in chronic care: Exploitation and empowerment

Published in *European Journal of Marketing*, 50 (5/6), 2016

Third author, manuscript co-authored with Anna Essén and Sara Winterstorm Värlander

This article details the perceptions that chronically ill patients have of empowerment and exploitation stemming from their participation in the co-creation of their healthcare service. The focus was on the enactment of co-creation and the relationship between the participating consumers (patients) and the organisation (healthcare providers).

The findings indicate that patients' perceived empowerment and exploitation are mediated by three factors. The first involves the importance of establishing a clear reason why patients should engage in co-creation. For example, feelings of exploitation rather than empowerment are likely to arise if patients perceive the e-service as a strategy employed only to save time, and not also as a tool for patients to understand their own disease development. The second mediator highlights the importance of patient training and the fact that service providers should not assume that "simple" technology and its advantages are self-evident to users. Finally, the third mediator refers to what is called 'co-usage': how the doctor and patient use the e-service as a complement to their face-to-face interactions.

Relating this article back to the definition of consumer co-creation in new product and service development, this article provides an interesting perspective because it demonstrates how the value extracted from consumer co-creation can be perceived as both positive and negative. This duality corresponds well with how both participating (e.g. Chou et al., 2015) and non-participating consumers view the consumer co-creation of new products and services; it may be perceived as both positive and negative in relation to the firm and its brand, products, and services, and that the outcome depends on how the co-creation is enacted and communicated.

It is worth mentioning that we use the term 'co-production' instead of co-creation in this article. This is in line with the field of co-creation in healthcare services. Co-production can be described as a more specific

form of co-creation that focuses on the production (and simultaneous consumption) of services (e.g. Etgar, 2008; Jiménez et al., 2013). In the healthcare sector, co-production is also perceived as a delivery model for health services (Realpe and Wallace, 2010) where the sharing of information and shared decision-making is central (Realpe and Wallace, 2010; Bettencourt, Ostrom et al., 2002).

4.3. Article 2

Title: Why user reactions question the value of innovation contests

Submitted for possible publication in *Research-Technology Management* (in first round of review)

First author, manuscript co-authored with Micael Dahlén, Magnus Söderlund, and Anders Richtnér

In this article we explore the marketing effects of innovation contests by examining how consumers respond to the outcomes. Specifically, we compare the consumer responses of the consumers who win, lose or never participated in the innovation contest, as well as for a control group.

The results from the experimental study demonstrate that the only group of consumers who is truly more positive after an innovation contest are the winners. The consumers who lost the contest and the non-participating consumers both report much lower levels of brand evaluation and purchase intentions. In fact, their responses are much in line with consumers who are unaware of the contest.

This article attempts to bridge the gap between participating and non-participating consumers. Interestingly, the participating consumers who lose the contest are in fact participating but not necessarily co-creating consumers, since their co-creation efforts do not lead to the creation of a new product. This might explain why the focus on the co-created product and the contest reduces the potentially positive responses resulting from the participation, and why a focus on participation in terms of the experience and the intrinsic motivations might mitigate this effect (c.f. Füller 2006; Wagner 2011; Füller et al., 2011).

Non-participating consumers might actually perceive the new products that stem from innovation contests better if they are called ‘user designed’ (cf. Schreier et al., 2012) in marketing communications, instead of being described as winning submissions. In other words, practitioners might be able to mitigate the potentially negative marketing effects of the contest mechanism by directing attention to other aspects of the ‘how’ in consumer co-creation.

4.4. Article 3

Title: The effects of advertising consumer co-created new products: A brand-alliance framework model can predict perceptions about co-created brands and their creators

Published in *Journal of Advertising Research* 56 (1), 2016

Single-authored manuscript

In this article I explain how non-participating consumers make sense of advertising for co-created new products. To my knowledge it is currently the only paper that explores how non-participating consumers respond to the advertising of consumer co-created new products. In extant research, experiments have introduced respondents to stimuli consisting of predominantly background information, sometimes accompanied by images (e.g. Schreier et al., 2012).

In this article, I demonstrate that a familiar brand improves the non-participating consumers’ evaluation of the unknown “brand” (i.e. consumer co-creation) through spillover effects (Simonin and Ruth, 1998), as predicted by research into brand alliance (Rao and Ruekert, 1994; Rao et al., 1999; Simonin and Ruth, 1998). In the instance of an unfamiliar brand, however, consumer co-creation is evaluated more on its own merits because of the lack of brand familiarity. The product is then attributed back to the co-creating consumers. In this scenario, the perceived ability of the participating consumers plays an important role in determining whether the non-participating consumers should perceive their involvement as positive or negative in relation to the brand and the product. By using fairly complex products such as running shoes and laptops in the first study (and products

of low complexity in the second study), the results in this article indicate that the boundary condition for complexity (Schreier et al., 2012) only holds for unfamiliar brands.

This article highlights the importance of ‘who’ co-creates, in terms of both brand familiarity and the perceived ability of the participating consumers. For practitioners, this article demonstrates that co-creating brands that opt to advertise the consumer co-created products with information on the co-creating consumers should consider the co-creating consumers as a brand. It therefore becomes important to reveal the right type of information about these consumers, as will be discussed in Article 4 below.

4.5. Article 4

Title: Picturing the co-creating consumer: Consumer responses to pictures of co-creating consumers in marketing communications
Submitted for possible publication in *International Journal of Advertising* (in second round of review)

Manuscript co-authored with Hanna Berg, both authors contributed equally

Co-creating consumers are often displayed prominently, visually, in brands’ advertising for new co-created products. For example, McDonald’s ‘My Burger’ campaign included photos of the co-creating consumers. This visual strategy was used in several European countries that ran the ‘My Burger’ campaign, including Sweden. McDonald’s UK, however, did not present these consumers visually in their advertisement. Which strategy is best? In Article 4, we use a reference group perspective to demonstrate that consumer response to this type of advertising are affected by the combination of picture and text.

The most interesting finding in this article appears when the co-creating consumer is described as belonging to a dissociative out-group, but looks similar to the in-group (cf. White and Dahl, 2006; 2007). This has a significantly negative effect on consumer response, mediated by self-brand connection (e.g. Escalas and Bettman, 2003; Escalas, 2004). If the co creating consumer looks dissimilar to the in-group, however, there is no difference

in consumer response, regardless of whether the co-creating consumers are described as dissociative in text. These results are in line with the picture superiority effect (e.g. Unnava and Burnkrant, 1991).

This article highlights an important aspect of ‘who’ in consumer co-creation: the visualisation of the participating consumers (i.e. ‘person pictures’: Aydınoglu and Cian, 2014). It also demonstrates the risk that brands such as McDonald’s run when they include co-creating consumers in their advertising. McDonald’s is a brand with a large and varied group of users and it is therefore likely that at least some of the non-participating consumers will perceive the participating consumers as dissociative.

4.6. Article 5

Title: Consumer response to other consumers’ participation in product development

Published online/Forthcoming in *Journal of Marketing Communications*

First author, manuscript co-authored with Micael Dahlén

In this article we explore how consumer co-creation in ideation and selection impact on non-participating consumers’ responses towards the product and brand. In line with the ‘My Burger’ example, the empirical context was a hamburger restaurant.

The results demonstrate that congruent products and services fit better into the brand equity feedback loop process (e.g. Keller 1993; Balachander and Ghose, 2003; Pina et al., 2010) for selected offerings, because non-participating consumers expect the brand to produce congruent offerings and they thus more easily attribute these back to the brand. Brand attribution (e.g. Keller and Sood, 2003; van Osselaer and Alba, 2000; 2003) is thus an important aspect of brand equity in this scenario (Keller, 1993; 1999). For new product and service ideation, however, we found that incongruent offerings were perceived to be more unique than the congruent, and this increased the perceived brand uniqueness (e.g. Keller, 1993; 1999; Netemeyer et al., 2004). In this scenario, brand uniqueness thus functions

as an important aspect of brand equity, because it mediated the positive effect on the product, service and brand attitudes.

The article extends the theoretical work of Fuchs and Schreier (2011) by demonstrating that the two forms of consumer co-creation (ideation and selection) will have different effects on non-participating consumers' responses. This can help guide practitioners as to the type of co-creation process, or type of offering, that they should aim for. For example, if the brand is looking to involve its consumers in ideation, the findings in this article suggest that they should opt to proceed with an incongruent new product or service suggestion. In other words, this article demonstrates that the combination of the 'how' and 'what' of consumer co-creation affects non-participating consumer responses.

Chapter 5

Discussion of academic contributions

The purpose of this thesis is to further our understanding of consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development. By exploring how consumers respond to consumer co-creation in the two phases of consumer co-creation, this thesis extends the current body of research in consumer behaviour and marketing communications, as well as new product development.

With regards to the research on consumer behaviour and marketing communications, I add to our current understanding of consumer co-creation by including the responses of both participating and non-participating consumers. Much of the research in these fields has either focused on the first phase of consumer co-creation in new product and service development (i.e. the participating consumers: e.g. Poetz and Schreier, 2012; Atakan et al., 2014; Hsie and Chang, 2016), or largely ignored the first phase altogether in brands' marketing communications (and thus instead focused on the non-participating consumers' response to brand controlled communication). Looking at consumer co-created new products and services from the perspective of non-participating consumers, it is interesting how their perceptions and evaluations of the offerings are based on a multitude of aspects, ranging from pre-existing brand relationships to beliefs relating to the participating consumers. I hope to have extended current research by identifying and explaining some of the factors at play in current consumer marketing where the brand is no longer the sole source of new products and services.

With this thesis I also make a contribution to the research on new product development by highlighting the marketing effects of consumer co-creation in new product and service development. Much of the literature in new product and service development aims to contribute to brands' development of successful new products and services. It does so by focusing on brands' actions (e.g. Adamczyk et al., 2012; Cotterman et al., 2009; Dahlander and Piezunka, 2014) and how the brand should engage participating consumers so that they too can contribute to a successful new offering (e.g. Felin and Zenger, 2013; Chang and Taylor, 2016). This thesis goes one step further and suggests that new product and service development should also be researched from an external point of view where the non-participating consumer responses, in effect, are what makes or breaks the potential success of a new product or service.

5.1. The who, how and what of consumer co-creation

A thesis generally allows a broader scope of research than do specific individual research articles. In my thesis I have thus been able to combine and explore three questions that form a contribution in terms of their impact on our knowledge about consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development; who co-created, how did they co-create and what did they co-create?

In Chapter 2, I mentioned that extant research on the non-participating consumers' responses had not combined the three questions of 'who', 'how', and 'what'. Although the five articles in my thesis have not individually combined the three questions either, I will now take the opportunity to do so. The results of the synthesis are discussed in the next section, where I propose that the findings jointly point to the duality and meaning of consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

Starting with 'who', my research demonstrates that not only the brand, but also the co-creating consumers have an impact on non-participating consumers' responses because of the relationship and pre-existing perceptions of the non-participating consumers with regards to the brand and the

co-creating consumers. Using a brand alliance framework and signalling theory (Article 3), I explain that the non-participating consumers not only face the brand and the communicated, implied, or imagined users of the new product or service, they also face potentially more complex information because the communicated participating consumers may contradict their idea of who the brand is for. That is, the participating consumers could either amplify the brand or cause confusion, or even dismissal (Article 4). Indeed, ‘who’ is strongly connected to ‘why’ in that the inclusion of the co-creating consumers should make sense for the non-participating consumers. This is implied in the perceived ability of the co-creating consumers (Article 3) and their contribution to, for example, a unique offering (Article 5).

The ‘how’ and ‘what’ of consumer co-creation seem to play a lesser role individually because their importance is often found in connection with other aspects. For instance, the impact of ideation versus selection (i.e. ‘how’) comes from non-participating consumers’ different responses based on ‘what’ product or service was co-created (Article 5). The ‘what’ of consumer co-creation is, however, inextricably connected to ‘who’ in, for example, the complexity of the new product, where ordinary consumers must either be described as competent (Fuchs et al., 2013) or be backed by a familiar brand (Article 3) if they are not to be questioned by non-participating consumers.

5.2. The who, how and what of consumer co-creation give the duality and perceived meaning of consumer co-creation

Synthesising the research on participating and non-participating consumers in this thesis, two main findings that span the combined work appear. These point towards what is essential in consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

First, duality means that consumer co-creation in new product and service development can be perceived as both positive and negative, even simultaneously. This duality is best described in Article 1 on how patients

might actively co-create their healthcare so that it objectively looks successful. However, the patients might not be empowered by it and may even feel exploited in the process. The duality is also present in the non-participating consumers' responses where, for example, the same product and co-creation process might be perceived as either positive or negative depending on which reference group the participating consumers are perceived to represent (Article 4). The duality can also be seen from the brand's perspective where a successful, co-created new product or service might be evaluated positively by the market (i.e. consumers), but still not deliver on brand related success metrics such as brand attitude if the co-created product is not attributed back to the brand (Article 5).

The aspect of duality places this thesis in line with the current research in the field that acknowledges the difficulties and limitations of consumer co-creation (e.g. Cova et al., 2015a; 2015b; Dahlander and Piezunka, 2013; Fuchs et al., 2013), and that there is not a 'one size fits all' model (e.g. Felin and Zenger, 2013; Dahl et al., 2015).

Second, when I synthesise the consumer responses in this thesis, the perceived meaning of consumer co-creation appears to be an important aspect to note. Both participating and non-participating consumers come across as having a desire to understand why co-creation takes place and its meaning. This desire to understand, in turn, can manifest itself in many ways. One example is how the non-participating consumers perceive the ability of the participating consumers. If this ability is perceived to be high, it can be seen as a positive addition to the brand's product development capabilities (Article 3). The consumers are then perceived to bring additional and varied customer-centred knowledge and experience to the product development process (cf. Fuchs et al., 2012). This connects with why the ideated incongruent offerings in Article 5 were perceived as more attractive than ideated congruent offerings. If the participating consumers are not perceived to possess relevant abilities, it becomes pointless. In this case it is even possible that non-participating consumers may feel that the co-creation is a tactic employed by the brand in order to appear in a certain way (such as more customer-focused or innovative) or to 'pseudo-engage' with consumers. Such tactics usually lead to negative reactions among consumers (cf. Morales, 2005).

Participating consumers can also perceive a sense of meaning in the co-creation activities in which they engage, and it is important that this meaning is conveyed initially. Article 2 suggests that the brand may mitigate the potential negative effects of losing an innovation contest by communicating other and broader reasons for participation. Article 1 demonstrates that patients' feelings of exploitation often stem from the fact that they do not perceive their co-creation efforts as meaningful. Both of these articles demonstrate the need for brands to clearly communicate the meaning of the co-creation.

Meaning also connects the two groups of consumers in this thesis. The non-participating consumers' responses are related to their perception of the participating consumers and their reasons for participating. The brand should thus take care to engage in perceived meaningful co-creation with the participating consumers in order to please both the participating and non-participating consumers. As such, both groups of consumers matter in consumer co-creation.

To summarise, I hope to contribute to the research on consumer behaviour, marketing communications and new product and service development by demonstrating that the success of consumer co-creation in new product and service development is bound to the responses of both participating and non-participating consumers. In particular, the success is dependent on these consumers' perception of the meaning of the consumer co-creation in terms of who and why consumers are involved, how they co-create and the resulting co-created products and services.

Chapter 6

Discussion of contributions to marketing practice

Practitioners in both marketing and new product and service development should benefit from the research presented in this thesis. From a marketing point of view, consumer co-creation can be a strategy to cut through the advertising clutter (cf. Rosengren, 2008). In order to succeed in this, a joint collaboration between the practitioners in marketing and new product and service development is necessary (e.g. Cotterman et al., 2009). Therefore, one of the key messages in this thesis – that practitioners need to take the responses of both participating and non-participating consumers into consideration – should be relevant to practitioners.

This thesis provides practitioners with guidance as to how consumer co-creation in new product and service development should be carried out and communicated. I would like to take this opportunity to answer the questions listed in the introduction of this thesis, and thereby provide practitioners with an overview of factors they may want to consider (listed in Table 2 below).

Article 1 describes participating consumers' (patients') responses to the co-creation of their healthcare. The findings indicate that practitioners should be careful not to create feelings of exploitation. For example, practitioners should focus on communicating the reasons that the consumers should engage in co-creation, and highlighting the value they can extract from it. Practitioners should also provide training in how to carry out the

co-creation process, and use the results of the co-creation together with the consumers (patients). In this way, consumer co-creation is more likely to result in empowerment, as opposed to feelings of exploitation.

How different groups of consumers respond to consumer co-creation outcomes is explored in Article 2. The comparison between participating consumers who win an innovation contest, the consumers who lose a contest, non-participating consumers and a control group of consumers (internal new product development) indicates that the winners are the only consumers who respond significantly more positively towards the brand and product. In fact, the consumers who lose the contest respond in a similar way to the non-participating consumers and the control group. By mitigating these potentially negative effects and fostering more positive marketing effects, practitioners can provide and communicate a more meaningful experience that goes beyond the contest and the prize, such as an opportunity to learn and the social experience of the contest. Marketing communications for the co-created new product or service should subsequently emphasise consumer involvement, independent of the contest mechanism.

Product complexity and brand familiarity impacts non-participating consumers. Article 3 demonstrates why familiar brands have more freedom to engage in consumer co-creation. The familiar brand signals a level of competence, which is lacking for unfamiliar brands. Unfamiliar brands should therefore be cautious about advertising complex consumer co-created new products, unless the participating consumers signal competence and the ability to create desirable products.

Who the participating consumers are perceived to be and how they are portrayed matters. Article 4 highlights the risk implied in communicating participating consumers pictorially, since the combination of pictures and text descriptions can produce dissociation among the non-participating consumers. In particular, practitioners should be careful to ensure that the pictorial representation and the text-based description are congruent.

Finally, the results in Article 5 indicate that practitioners should invite consumers to ideate if they wish to launch an incongruent new offering, because this can increase the perceived brand uniqueness. Inviting consumers to select a new product or service is likely to be more successful if the

offering is congruent, because this will facilitate the non-participating consumers to attribute the new offering back to the brand.

Table 2. A practitioner's guide to factors influencing consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development.

Question	Answer	Note for practitioners	Articles
How do participating consumers respond to long-term service co-creation?	In a healthcare context, consumers/patients respond with feelings of empowerment or exploitation.	Brief patients on the meaning of co-creation, provide training in how to carry out the co-creation process, and use the results in patient-doctor meeting.	1
Do participating and non-participating consumers respond similarly to consumer co-creation?	Participating consumers who lose an innovation contest respond very similar to non-participating consumers (as well as the control group/ internal new product development). The only group of consumers who is truly more positive after an innovation contest are the winners.	Practitioners should provide and communicate a more meaningful experience that goes beyond the contest and the prize, such as an opportunity to learn and the social experience of the contest. Marketing communications for a consumer co-created new product is more likely to be successful if it does not stress the contest itself.	2
Are the effects found in previous research on the non-participating consumers' responses to consumer co-creation generalizable to all types of products and brands?	No.	The less complex the product, and the more familiar the brand, the greater the likelihood of positive responses. The perceived ability of the participating consumer plays a role here. Ensure they are communicated as being competent and/or selected by the brand.	3

<p>How do non-participating consumers respond to marketing communications of co-creation campaigns that include information about participating consumers?</p>	<p>Generally, non-participating consumers are positive towards marketing communications for consumer co-creation, however, the portrayed participating consumers do affect the response. Both photos and text descriptions affect the responses.</p>	<p>Practitioners should aim to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. communicate the co-creating consumers as someone like the non-participating consumers (in-group), 2. ensure that the pictorial representation and the text-based description are congruent. 	<p>3, 4</p>
<p>Do marketing effects differ for different types of consumer co-creation activities?</p>	<p>It differs in how it affects perceived brand uniqueness and how well the new product is attributed back to the brand.</p>	<p>Invite consumers to ideate if you wish to launch an incongruent new offering, and to select if you prefer a congruent offering.</p>	<p>5</p>

Presented this way, the five questions from the introduction in fact offer a summary of the five articles in this thesis. It also shows that the findings are based on a number of factors, that practitioners often have some degree of control in that they can choose, for example, whether to invite consumers to co-create through ideation or selection, and that they should try to avoid including dissociative reference groups in the advertising of the consumer co-created new product or service.

Consumer co-creation in new product and service development can offer a more meaningful reason for consumers and brands to engage. In fact, communicated consumer co-creation can be described as one way for brands to build not just brand equity (Keller; 1993; 1999), but also advertising equity (Rosengren and Dahlén, 2015). It is, however, possible that consumer co-creation as an advertising strategy may be difficult to get right because there are conflicting elements for practitioners to balance. For example, in the 'My Burger' example, McDonald's opted for transparency and included the winners of the contests in their advertising. Although transparency can generate positive results in terms of, for example, consumers' increased purchase intentions and their willingness to pay a premium price (Liu et al., 2015), it can also backfire if, as in this example, the portrayed consumers risk provoking dissociation among groups of non-participating consumers.

Consumer co-creation campaigns that are not perceived as meaningful may also create backlashes. For example, the winning contribution of a contest to name a new Mountain Dew flavour was 'Hitler did nothing wrong' (The Huffington Post, 2012). Interestingly, and in line with the duality of consumer co-creation, this backlash may very well have proven meaningful for the consumers, who took the opportunity to express their aversion to the brand and product.

In other words, if practitioners are to take away only one finding from this thesis, let it be that co-creation in all its aspects should be perceived as meaningful by both participating and non-participating consumers. By extension, consumers may also benefit from the findings in this thesis, in that the results will hopefully guide practitioners to create better and more meaningful co-creation experiences and marketing communications.

Chapter 7

Limitations and suggestions for further research

The focus of this thesis is consumer responses to consumer co-creation in new product and service development. From a research point of view, I hope that this thesis tells how interesting this field of research is, because there are many theoretical and practical aspects to explore and take into consideration. I have, however, not been able to cover them all in this thesis, and its limitations therefore coincide with suggestions for further research.

Four out of five articles in this thesis include research on non-participating consumers. It is a relatively new field of research and these studies were conducted using predominantly quantitative methods such as experiments. Long-term studies that include both quantitative and qualitative methods could add interesting perspectives and broaden our current knowledge in this field. For example, it is unknown whether consumer perceptions of brands' consumer co-creation changes with time, either as they participate themselves or as they grow used to this form of brand strategy. It would also be interesting to explore whether there is such a thing as 'co-creation equity', similar to advertising equity (Rosengren and Dahlén, 2015). Potentially, a brand's marketing communications of its past consumer co-creation could propel non-participating consumers to participate in that brand's consumer co-creation.

The research on consumer co-creation of new products and services could also include other stakeholders in addition to the consumers, such as the employees of the co-creating brands (e.g. Cova et al., 2015a; Bondesson and Rosengren, 2016). For example, how do employees perceive marketing communications that include co-creating consumers, as in the 'My Burger' example? Do employee responses affect the service encounter, and thereby adding one more 'route' for consumer co-creation to indirectly impact non-participating consumers?

The perceived meaning of consumer co-creation appears to play a role in both participating and non-participating consumers' responses, however, meaning was never explicitly measured. This is of course a limitation that hinders a deeper discussion of the topic. It would thus be interesting to find out how meaningful non-participating consumers find consumer co-creation and what brand related effects this might correlate with. Further, in relation to both innovation contests and other forms of consumer co-creation, it would be useful to measure exactly what is perceived as a meaningful trigger to participate beyond winning the prize (e.g. emotional as opposed to functional values: Prebensen and Rosengren, 2015) and how this information (i.e. why participating consumers participate) influences non-participating consumers.

The measured effects (i.e. dependent variables) in terms of non-participating consumers' responses were measured with predominantly standardised measures of attitude and intention. There are, however, many other responses that could have been included. An interesting field of such is the research on extended, or unintended, effects that go beyond brand- and product-related effects (e.g. Heatherton and Polivy, 1991; Defever et al., 2011; Maher et al., 2008; Pollay, 1986; Richins, 1991). With regard to research on consumer co-creation, this could, for example, mean that future studies should investigate whether the increasing amount of advertised consumer co-creation affects the view that non-participating consumers have of brands and society at large. Could it affect consumer perceptions of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and perceptions of consumers as creative and capable citizens (cf. Rosengren et al., 2013; Defever et al., 2011; Heatherton and Polivy, 1991)?

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