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Motives and barriers affecting consumers’ co-creation in the physical store

Miranda Schülera, Michelle Fee Maiera and Karina T. Liljedala,b

aCenter for Retailing, Stockholm School of Economics, Stockholm, Sweden; bCenter for Consumer Marketing, Stockholm School of Economics, Stockholm, Sweden

ABSTRACT
The rise of e-commerce has caused a dramatic shift in consumer behaviour, putting pressure on physical stores to offer a more personalised and service-oriented offering. This paper investigates one strategy retailers might apply in this context: in-store consumer co-creation. Research has predominantly focused on online-based consumer co-creation in new product and service development. We argue that with increased focus on digitalisation and consumer experiences in physical retail, this type of co-creation will increasingly take place in-store. Following a pre-study with practitioners, our main study uses 20 scenario-based semi-structured interviews, where we identify eight consumer motives and seven barriers that underlie consumers’ willingness and reluctance to create and select new products in-store, respectively. Some motives, such as ethical, self-efficacy, and concerted are reported as barriers when reverted, due to consumers’ concerns regarding data privacy, low levels of perceived self-efficacy and assumptions that the technology might be flawed. Other motives largely overlap existing research on motives for co-creation whereas other barriers predominantly pertain to the underlying technology and the physical setting of co-creation in-store. The findings further indicate that consumers co-create differently online versus in-store. In-store seems particularly suitable for more marketing related aspects of co-creation, with a stronger emphasis on playfulness and purchase intentions. Practical implications for retailers are therefore discussed.

Introduction
The rise of e-commerce has caused a dramatic shift in consumer behaviour, putting pressure on physical stores to offer a more personalised and service-oriented offering. This paper investigates one strategy retailers might apply in this context: in-store consumer co-creation. More specifically, in this paper we offer an extension of the research on consumer motives for new product and service co-creation, by identifying both motives and barriers applicable to in-store co-creation.

Consumer co-creation in new product development has been lauded to create customer engagement and experiences (e.g. Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004; Bitner, Brown, and Meuter 2000; Russo Spena et al. 2012; Nysveen and Pedersen 2014), that in turn...
fosters better performing new products and services (e.g. Kristensson, Gustafsson, and Archer 2003; Nishikawa et al. 2017), ultimately contributing to the company’s bottom line (e.g. Nishikawa, Schreier, and Ogawa 2013).

Correspondingly, in retail, we are witnessing a rapid development of technological tools and applications that have vast importance and multifunctional use in-store (Ring 2015). Researchers and practitioners alike have been quick to point out that the shift taking place in retail today demands a stronger focus on customer experiences and personalisation (e.g. Russo Spena et al. 2012; Grewal, Roggeveen, and Nordfält 2017; Weill and Woerner 2018; Baird 2017; Mulqueen 2017), where the physical stores are not only used for actual sales, but increasingly for marketing purposes.

In line with this reasoning, we explore a new way for retailers to co-create in new product development with consumers: in physical stores, using technology and connectivity tools to keep the consumer engaged during the in-store experience.

We argue that this area is likely to develop further, corresponding to the continued focus on customer experience and digitally enhanced services in-store. Indeed, such examples now appear regularly in the business press. For example, in an Adidas pop-up store in Berlin, consumers were invited to design their own sweater, find their perfect fit through 3D scanning, and then have the sweater knitted in-store (adidasknitforyou.com 2018). Further, Target has offered children in California customisation of their action figures by using face scanning so that their superhero toy resembles the child (Pendrill 2016).

Thus, in-store consumer co-creation will increasingly serve a dual purpose relating to both marketing and innovation, much like the roots of consumer co-creation per se (e.g. Roberts and Darler 2017). In this paper we present an exploratory study, merging these research streams to gain an understanding of the motives and barriers for in-store consumer co-creation. Our findings echo previous research on consumer motives (e.g. Neghina et al. 2017; Füller 2006), however, there are differences in the motives propelling consumers to co-create in different contexts. For example, our findings indicate that co-creation in-store might be better suited to providing a fun experience, as compared to online. Additionally, we found that consumers believe they would feel more focused in-store and be more likely to purchase the co-created product if they can see and touch the materials in front of them.

Further, our findings extend the current research by including not only motives, but also barriers, to better understand both possible success factors and negative consumer reactions (cf. Mani and Chouk 2018; Claudy, Garcia, and O’Driscoll 2015). This is important, because technology driven in-store consumer co-creation is a form of service innovation which can possess certain barriers to adoption (Claudy, Garcia, and O’Driscoll 2015; O’Cass and Wetzel 2018; Mani and Chouk 2018), and thus is as risky to launch as it is for companies to launch new products (e.g. Storey et al. 2015). Interestingly, our findings indicate that ethical motives (Neghina et al. 2017), that generally motivate by, for example, providing a fair and honest experience, were perceived as a barrier in that consumers’ fear of data privacy may hold them back. This indicates that the creation of a trustworthy and transparent process and set-up plays an important role for the successful adoption of a co-creation activity.
For practitioners, this research offers an indication of just how stores can move towards offering a more holistic and richer in-store experience that contributes to the overall brand experience.

**Theoretical background**

**Consumer co-creation in new product development**

Consumers who actively participate in a company’s new product development co-create by contributing and/or selecting the new product and its features (O’Hern and Rindfleisch 2009). This has also been labelled full empowerment (ideation and selection) and partial empowerment (only ideating or selecting) (Fuchs and Schreier 2011). As an example of full empowerment, consider Threadless, a company that invites its user community to both design and vote for the t-shirts and other products that the company subsequently produces and sells (Ogawa and Piller 2006).

This two-step approach of ideation and selection has become common in consumer co-creation. Companies in fast moving consumer goods especially tend to use this approach when inviting consumers to develop new line extensions, such as Frito Lay’s campaign ‘Do us a flavour’ (Burlingame 2015). Consumers were invited to submit suggestions for new chips flavours for the Walkers/Lays brand (brand name depends on local market) as well as vote for their favourite flavours. Retailers also run similar co-creation efforts, usually in their proprietary web panels. In one such example, the number of purchases was found to increase by 17%, and customer profitability by 36%, for the consumers who participated (Allen, Dholakia, and Basuroy 2016), thereby reducing the risk of launching new products significantly (e.g. Ogawa and Piller 2006; Nishikawa, Schreier, and Ogawa 2013).

Often, however, it is not feasible for a company to open up the new product development process to accommodate for consumer ideation (cf. Cassiman and Valtini 2015). Ideating new products (features) might also be too demanding of regular consumers who may not have the incentive or knowledge to ideate (e.g. Fuchs, Prandelli, and Schreier 2010). To broaden the appeal of co-creation in new product development, scholars have suggested that mass customisation (e.g. Ogawa and Piller 2006), offers a more practical approach for companies to allow their customers to personalise their purchases. Mass customisation generally offers consumers a limited form of co-creation in that consumers may choose to customise certain preselected aspects of the product (Ogawa and Piller 2006). Nike iD, for example, allows consumers to select the colours and print on their t-shirts and sneakers, thereby making them more personalised. This form of customisation is often offered through user toolkits (e.g. von Hippel 2001). They provide a tool for consumers that helps them put together a new product using different pre-designed or pre-selected options. The toolkit should contain commonly used modules to let users focus only on the unique elements of design. It is critical that the toolkits are user-friendly and that they provide a wide enough ‘solution space’ (von Hippel 2001). Whilst giving the user options and necessary tools, this method still ensures that the guidelines are in line with the manufacturer and that it is possible to produce the finished product, as in the case of Nike iD. Moreover, user toolkits make the co-creation task appear more feasible for the co-creating consumer.
A reason for companies to include consumers in co-creation at the point of sale is that it is an experiential environment (Fox and Sethuraman 2010; Baker et al. 2002) and may therefore serve an opportunity for companies to increase consumer engagement, build brand awareness and preference. Research on co-creation in-store to date is mainly focused on value co-creation as opposed to co-creation of new products. These areas may overlap, since co-created value may very well be one outcome of the experience of co-creating a new product. Russo Spena et al. (2012) found that temporary shops, also known as pop-up stores, are very well suited for interactive and experiential relationships between the company and the customers. Even convenience stores have been found to successfully integrate consumer co-creation practices such as the use of self-service kiosks that further enhance consumer perceptions of value (Turner and Shockley 2014).

**Consumer motives for co-creation**

When it comes to the question of what determines consumers’ motives to co-create, previous research has mostly focused on examining consumers in a virtual environment, be it for new products or new services (e.g. Füller 2006, 2010; Fernandes and Remelhe 2016; Neghina et al. 2017; Roberts, Hughes, and Kertbo 2014). Also, descriptions of consumer motives tend to be based on either social exchange theory where consumers are believed to interact because they expect it to be rewarding (Emerson 1987; Füller 2006), or the expectancy-value theory which stresses the importance of how well consumers believe they will do on an activity and the extent to which they value the activity (Wigfield and Eccles 2000; Neghina et al. 2017).

The work of Deci and Ryan (2000; Deci and Ryan 1985) is also often cited, as they cover a range of motivations, from intrinsic to extrinsic (cf. Füller 2010). Intrinsic motivations in the context of consumer co-creation might, for example, be the consumers’ enjoyment of the activity itself (e.g. von Hippel 2005; Füller 2006; Füller 2010). Much of the research on consumer motives in software development projects fit into this category (e.g. von Hippel 2005; Fernandes and Remelhe 2016). In contrast to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation is less linked to the enjoyment of the task itself (Deci and Ryan 2000) and covers, for example, the need to find a creative solution as well as status and job promotions (Deci and Ryan 1985; 2000).

The literature on consumer co-creation covers a number of models that in turn include a set of motives which aim to explain why consumers co-create. For example, Neghina et al.’s (2017) model focuses on the different motives driving consumer willingness to co-create for both professional and generic services. They identify six general consumer motive categories which to some degree overlap with the 10 motives for virtual consumer engagement identified by Füller (2006). For the purpose of this study, we combine the majority of these categories and briefly outline nine motives as they will be referred to later in the paper.

First, reward motives (Füller 2006) typically include consumers’ desire for monetary rewards such as prize money or give-aways. Although monetary rewards have been found to be detrimental for creativity (Amabile 1996), more recent studies found that it is precisely this type of reward that may attract widespread participation (Acar 2018; Füller 2006) and indeed lead to self-selection of the best consumers (Mack and Landau 2015). In the example of Frito Lay’s campaign ‘Do us a flavour’ (Burlingame 2015), the winner did in fact win a sum of money as a reward.
Additionally, all the finalists in ‘Do us a flavour’ were typically also included in the marketing for the campaign. This ties in with the second form of motives; titled recognition or visibility (Füller 2006). These are somewhat related to the reward motives but focus on consumers’ wish for visibility and recognition as a form of reward – as opposed to a form of monetary reward.

Third, curiosity motives drive consumers to co-create simply because they are curious or because they want to relieve boredom (Füller 2006; cf. Füller 2010; Fernandes and Remelhe 2016). Much of company run consumer co-creation, such as ‘Do us a flavour’, is scripted as campaigns or entertainment to attract consumers’ attention. The curiosity per se might stem from either the specific task or the consumer can be prone to seek new information generally (i.e. specific versus diverse curiosity; Berlyne 1960). Curiosity in terms of relieving boredom and for the purpose of entertainment is also well connected to motives for visiting physical retail stores (e.g. O’Cass and Grace 2008). Thus, in-store co-creation seems likely to benefit from consumers’ curiosity.

Fourth, playfulness motives connect with consumers’ engagement in co-creation tasks because the tasks can be fun, playful and rewarding in themselves (Füller 2006; von Hippel 2005). In co-creation, playfulness is often connected to, and enhanced by, gameful design (Hoy and Brigham 2015) as well as multimedia-rich contents such as product visualization (Füller 2010). Naturally, user toolkits that allow consumers to co-create products will benefit from such, but also simpler forms such as creating new chips flavors, will allow consumers to play and root for favorite suggestions.

Fifth, motives related to self-efficacy and achievement have been mentioned by Füller (2006) but have received less empirical support yet than, for example, the closely related empowering motives (Neghina et al. 2017). The difference between these is the latter’s focus on consumer power in being able to influence the process or the final product (e.g. Neghina et al. 2017; Fernandes and Remelhe 2016). Self-efficacy, however, focuses more on consumers viewing the co-creation task as a challenge to be mastered and consequently feeling proud of their contributions (e.g. Füller 2006; Füller 2010). In both cases, the consumer seems to be motivated by being able to do a part of the job that is otherwise reserved for e.g. product developers and designers, such as coming up with a new chips flavour (‘Do us a flavour’) or designing a sneaker (Nike iD).

By being able to partly take on an otherwise professional role, self-efficacy is also related to a sixth form of motives – individualising motives – since consumers are able to express their own preferences and use their own skills to ensure that the product or service fit their needs (Neghina et al. 2017; cf. Berthon and John 2006; Coelho and Henseler 2012). This has been found to affect consumers’ willingness to co-create in generic services (Neghina et al. 2017) and is generally believed to be an important aspect of why consumers engage in mass customisation (e.g. von Hippel, Ogawa, de Jong 2011). Such product customisation, in turn, has been found to increase purchase intention, willingness to pay and attitude towards the product (Franke, Keinz, and Steger 2009).

Seventh, relating motives describe the more social aspects of co-creation where consumers form a social and emotional connection, be it with other consumers or with company employees (Neghina et al. 2017; Füller 2006; cf. Fernandes and Remelhe 2016; Roberts, Hughes, and Kertbo 2014). Often, consumers are motivated to engage in order to connect with likeminded people (Kozinets 2002) and it has been found to affect consumer willingness to co-create in generic services (Neghina et al.
This is in line with the sought-after interactions between consumers and service personnel in physical stores, where this human interaction indeed is part of what makes consumers perceive value for money in-store (O’Cass and Grace 2008; Reynolds and Beatty 1999).

In co-creation campaigns such as ‘Do us a flavour’, relating motives can be found in joint co-creation among friends, or by being part of the competition where participants vote for submissions, and finalists getting to meet. Relating motives are otherwise often found in more innovation related forms of co-creation where participants jointly develop new products in online communities over time (e.g. Fernandes and Remelhe 2016; von Hippel 2005).

Eighth, concerted motives highlight the consumer’s wish to experience flow in the co-creation activity through a well-organized project. This includes ease of collaboration and to feel that others appreciate their input (Neghina et al. 2017).

Ninth, and last, ethical motives concern aspects such as wanting to be treated fairly and honestly and to ensure that there is transparency in terms of how the co-creation project is executed (Neghina et al. 2017). Thus, both concerted and ethical motives are related to rather functional aspects of how a company sets up the co-creation and communicates about it, where, for example, user experience and data privacy policies can be important aspects.

The large number of consumer motives for co-creation, as briefly described above, certainly has one explanation in that they stem from studies in a wide range of contexts and different forms of co-creation. Interestingly though, not nearly as much scholarly focus has been given to consumers’ perceived barriers to co-creation.

**Barriers to consumer co-creation**

Although the research on consumer co-creation overall tends to focus on the positive aspects of consumer co-creation, negative results are also reported. Academics have noted that co-creation can be seen as a form of exploitation of consumers (e.g. Terranova 2004), and consumers have indeed been reported to feel exploited (e.g. Essén, Winterstorm Värlander, and Liljedal 2016), as well as frustrated and angry (Gebauer, Füller, and Pezzei 2013). These feelings, which form a type of barrier, can be grounded in misunderstandings surrounding the purpose of the co-creation. For example, if consumers perceive that they are asked to perform some of the work the company would otherwise do, they may draw the conclusion that the co-creation is, in fact, nothing more than a way for the company to save money (Essén, Winterstorm Värlander, and Liljedal 2016). This is thus related to communication before the co-creation takes place, focusing on clarity and credibility of the offering, and ensuring that the participants understand why they should engage (cf. Mani and Chouk 2018). Correspondingly, communication is equally important at the end or after the co-creation when the outcome is to be communicated. In the case of co-creation competitions, feelings of frustration and anger may arise from consumer perceptions of unfairness as to the winning solution (Gebauer, Füller, and Pezzei 2013), thereby hampering consumers’ willingness to engage in future co-creation.

In this paper, we focus on a particular form of co-creation that uses toolkits in-store. As such, the activity of co-creation is visible to a different degree than when it takes place online (which participants may engage in from the comfort of their homes). There is thus
reason to believe that barriers relating to the actual physical space do exist, not least because humans can suffer from anxiety in social settings (cf. Maslow 1943). It also seems likely that there would be barriers that relate to testing new technology (Meuter and Bitner 1997; Meuter et al. 2005), as well as psychological barriers related to the actual task, such as consumers becoming demotivated by a sense of low self-esteem or low perceived ability to perform a task (cf. Deci and Ryan 2000). Indeed, there might even be active consumer resistance, as has been identified in regard to service innovation (Mani and Chouk 2018), since many consumers are reluctant to change their behaviour (Meuter et al. 2005; Mani and Chouk 2018) and co-creating in-store would involve a change of current consumer behaviour.

Technology-aided in-store co-creation can be viewed as a form of technology-based service innovation per se, leading us to believe that the literature on consumer resistance to adopting new technology and service innovations (e.g. Mani and Chouk 2018; O’Cass and Wetzels 2018; Heidenreich and Handrich 2015; Claudy, Garcia, and O’Driscoll 2015; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009; Ram and Sheth 1989) may be particularly useful when exploring barriers for this type of co-creation.

Similar to the literature on consumer co-creation, the literature on technology adoption has been focusing on motives and success factors, despite the fact that barriers to adoption is equally important to understand regardless of whether it deals with innovation in products or services (e.g. O’Cass and Wetzels 2018; Claudy, Garcia, and O’Driscoll 2015; Ram 1989). In our case, this is particularly important since service innovation is just as prone to failure as product innovation (O’Cass and Wetzels 2018).

Consumers may to a varying degree have a predisposition to resist innovation because innovations always impose a change (Heidenreich and Handrich 2015). The reasons for resisting this change may, however, be different from the reversed motives for adoption (Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009). That is, although it seems likely that, for example, the concerted motives (Neghina et al. 2017) may form a barrier when the technology does not function properly, the barriers for co-creation may also include aspects that do not relate to any motives such as perceived social risk (e.g. fear of being judged) (e.g. Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009).

Generally, consumers resistance to adopting innovations are divided into two categories of barriers: functional and psychological (Ram and Sheth 1989). Both of these categories have been found to include a number of different barriers.

Functional barriers typically include some sort of usage barrier because the innovation offers something that departs from consumers’ existing habits and/or practices (Ram and Sheth 1989). This may very well be one of the main drivers behind consumer resistance to innovations (ibid.). Usage barriers are often strongly connected to perceived complexity when the innovation is based on technology (Mani and Chouk 2018). A new technology or service may be perceived as complex, both in terms of how difficult it may be to both understand it and use it (Mani and Chouk 2018; Rogers 2003).

Risk barriers are also typical of functional barriers. This is perhaps inevitable, since innovations represent uncertainty, which functions as a barrier for consumers who resist the innovation until the level of uncertainty has diminished (Ram and Sheth 1989). Risk barriers may in turn encompass a wide range of different perceived risks that are relevant in the case of technology enabled in-store co-creation. One example is consumers’ lack of trust in the company (Rudolph, Rosenblom, and Tillman 2004), which may be connected
to perceived security risks (as in the case of IoT adoption where consumers fear losing control over personal and private information; Mani and Chouk 2018). Risk barriers may also include more practical risks such as fears over poor functionality (e.g. Szmigin and Foxall 1998; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009) as well as social risks that include the fear of being judged by others (e.g. Ram and Sheth 1989; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009).

Of the psychological barriers, image barriers have found support in a number of studies (e.g. Mani and Chouk 2018; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009). Image, however, may deal with both the image of the actual product or service per se, as well as how well the image of the product may correspond to the self-image of consumers. That is, the image of the product may be tied to a certain category of products or general (often stereotypical) beliefs, thereby forming a favourable or unfavourable image (Ram and Sheth 1989; Rudolph, Rosenblom, and Tillman 2004; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009). This image may subsequently be analysed or compared with consumers’ views of themselves. Resistance is likely to take place when there is a self-image incongruence between the innovation and the self (e.g. O’Cass and Grace 2008; Mani and Chouk 2018), just as in the case of consumers’ rejection of retailers due to an incongruence between the store image and consumers’ selves (O’Cass and Grace 2008).

Traditional behaviour can also form psychological barriers as it includes both inherited or past behaviour and norms/beliefs within the relevant social context (Ram and Sheth 1989; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009). In the context of services, this is usually translated to consumers’ need for human interaction (Laukkanen and Kiviniemi 2010). In many consumer settings (such as the physical retail store), human interaction has been the norm, which has been posited to explain consumer resistance towards self-service technologies (e.g. Walker and Johnson 2006; Evanschitzky et al. 2015). Thus, these traditional barriers to technology adoption may be the reverse of the relating motives (e.g. Neghina et al. 2017; Füller 2006). That is, consumers are motivated to co-create in order to form a social and emotional connection with others, and they may similarly resist innovations that limit the opportunities for this.

A potential psychological barrier that is not usually discussed is consumers’ fear of failure, in terms of their perceptions of their own competence to make sound decisions in the co-creation. This is an important boundary condition for consumers’ otherwise positive response to empowerment in terms of being able to co-create new products (Fuchs, Prandelli, and Schreier 2010). This barrier is connected to the usage barrier mentioned above since it may deal with to the perceived level of complexity of the innovation. However, it is also a form of an inverted self-efficacy motive (Füller 2006), where a barrier is formed when consumers perceive themselves to have a lack of relevant skills to make it an interesting challenge.

Before detailing our main study, which focuses on consumer motives and barriers for in-store co-creation, we provide a short background to practitioners’ view of technology enabled in-store co-creation.

**Pre-study: a practitioner view of in-store co-creation**

To receive the viewpoint from practitioners in today’s retail landscape, four industry experts were interviewed about co-creation in retail and how it can be integrated and used in the physical store environment. The purpose was to investigate the practitioner view of technology enabled in-store co-creation and how it may be integrated and used, thereby verifying that the co-creation scenarios in the main study are viable.
Methodology

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews with representatives from leading companies within retailing and technology in Sweden; Apple, IBM, Symbio and Slash.ten, were carried out in the pre-study. Interviews were loosely transcribed and coded using an open coding process (O’Gorman and Macintosh 2015).

Findings

The industry experts agree that the role of physical stores will increasingly evolve towards providing an engaging experience and acting as a showroom for brands to showcase themselves and their products. In-store co-creation may therefore be key for retailers in solving the question of how they may engage consumers effectively. Technology was frequently mentioned as an important facilitator that provides companies with the right tools for innovation. There seems to be huge potential for technology empowered co-creation activities in-store that enable consumers to communicate their preferences to the company and provide direct customer feedback.

Even though there was consensus regarding the vast opportunities for in-store co-creation, there was also uncertainty among the experts regarding how in-store co-creation should best be designed, and whether consumers would engage or not. Therefore, there is a need to experiment with the concept and to study in-store co-creation more extensively. Involving consumers in co-creation activities in stores as opposed to online can be one way of engaging consumers and tying them closer to the brand. Furthermore, co-creation may also be a feasible solution to satisfying the seemingly increasing need for self-expression.

Main study

Methodology

Participants and procedure

Twenty semi-structured interviews of 35–45 min were conducted face-to-face. The interview sample (60% female, age 15–51) was recruited in two ways: by directly recruiting interviewees in public spaces (such as student campuses) and by using social media channels and office newsletters. The sample thus consisted of people who study or work close to a downtown retail store where the co-creation scenario would be a likely addition. The store offers a wide range of consumer products such as fashion and accessories, targeting both men and women.

The interviewees were walked through a co-creation scenario described to take place in the downtown store close to their work or study location. The scenario included three different options for co-creation and one option of no co-creation. All interviews took place at a quiet office space where interviewees could click and read through the illustrative scenario in their own time, before the interview commenced. The central value of an interview is that the researcher can ask the why-question. Hence, it enables the researcher to explore the meaning of answers given by the interviewee (Brenner, Brown, and Canter 1985), which were in this case the underlying motives and barriers to participating in a co-creation activity.
The authors decided to perform semi-structured interviews since it allows for enough flexibility to tap into new areas of motives for co-creation that the interviewee introduces and which the researcher did not consider before (Bryman and Bell 2011). At the same time, this technique allows for drawing comparisons between interviews as the same narrative-generating questions are asked repeatedly in all of the conversations with the ultimate aim to achieve theoretical saturation (ibid.).

Stimuli development
A scenario is ‘a small bespoke set of structured concepts or systems of equally plausible future contexts, often presented as narrative descriptions, manufactured for someone and for a purpose, typically to provide inputs for further work’ (Ramirez et al. 2015, p. 71). Thus, for the purpose of our study, we adopted scenarios to allow for context-specific new knowledge to emerge by challenging existing assumptions and exploring novel alternatives (cf. Ramirez et al. 2015). In line with Ramirez et al. (2015), the authors specifically chose to introduce each participant to each of the possible four scenarios in order to receive a more nuanced view on motives and barriers for the choice of engagement or no engagement in each respective case.

The interviewees were walked through a scenario of a shopping experience at a modern retail store where they are offered to hang up their coat and have coffee. They can have a look around the store using the simulated pictures and are subsequently guided to notice a store installation displaying a backpack. At this point the co-creation opportunities are explained to the interviewee. In line with Fuchs and Schreier’s (2011) four levels of empowerment, they are told they can choose to 1) co-create their own backpack design from a variety of set options with the help of an interactive screen (i.e. pick colors and accessories, in line with user toolkits; von Hippel 2001), 2) by voting on designs created by other users, 3) by voting on designs created by other users as well as their own design, and 4) by not engaging in any form of co-creation.

In the case where the participant would design the backpack, the design was described to be immediately displayed on a physical backpack exhibited in the store. They were told they could also choose to display it to the public by entering a competition and being shown on the ‘wall of fame’ – a large interactive screen in the store, displaying all user backpack designs.

Data analysis
All interviews were transcribed word by word by the author responsible for the recording and note-taking on each interview. The transcripts were plugged into a qualitative data analysis program and coded separately by two of the authors. The coding process was inspired by Mayring’s (2015) approach for the analysis of qualitative interviews. As a first step, a summarizing content analysis was conducted (ibid.) reducing the collected material to a category system that was then interpreted with regard to the research focus. In a second step, the data were re-coded and synthesized by two of the authors simultaneously, resulting in a coding overview as illustrated in Table 1. Finally, the coded material was reconnected to existing theory for interpretation and explanatory purposes.
Results

The authors identified eight motive categories for in-store co-creation, as well as seven barriers consisting of five thresholds and two hygiene factors. Thresholds and hygiene factors are similar to the distinction between psychological and functional barriers (Ram and Sheth 1989) discussed earlier. Thresholds, as defined in this study, are related to a consumer’s personality and mindset. Therefore, they cannot be controlled by the co-creating brand. If the experienced thresholds are too high, the consumer is not likely to create a product him- or herself but to vote for another user design or not engage in co-creation at all. The thresholds are typically related to psychological factors but may also be related to other factors that are difficult for the co-creating company to control, such as the lack of time available to the consumers. As opposed to thresholds, hygiene factors (cf. Herzberg 1959) are within the co-creating brand’s control and should be accounted for when wanting to successfully engage consumers in new product co-creation. They are functional factors in that they deal with the functionality of the in-store co-creation but they differ from the above-listed factors and should be considered a bare-minimum that the company must look to in order to remove potential barriers for co-creation. The motives and barriers will be presented individually below.

Motives

Reward motives. We recognize reward-oriented motives as a main reason for co-creation, as it was frequently referred to among the majority of our interviewees in various forms (cf. Füller 2006).

When the interviewees were made aware that a winning design will be produced and launched to the market, the expectancy for compensation came into play. Why is that so? The participants realized that a profit-oriented company stands behind the co-creation activity. This provoked a shift in the participant’s mindset from focusing on the joy of the experience in itself to the expected outcome of designing a backpack. ‘I mean the
company would make money out of my design. I would expect a little bit of compensation.’ (F, 40). For some interviewees the expectation of a monetary compensation was not only linked to the direct profits a company makes from selling a co-created product – they also understood the marketing value behind involving users in a product co-creation competition. In line with Fuller’s (2006) findings on online co-creation competitions, the participants in our study would self-select (Mack and Landau 2015), being incentivized by monetary rewards. This in turn could lead to higher levels of engagement, meaning that they would spend more time and effort in designing the product as well as following up on the competition.

**Recognition motives.** In addition to monetary rewards, several participants enjoyed the idea of being recognized as a designer and seeing their own design worn by others. The study results indicate that having the opportunity to be visible as an ‘innovator beyond their local boundaries’ (Fuller 2006) motivates consumers to become product co-creators. When asked whether she would like her own design to be produced, an interviewee replied: ‘That would be cool because I would actually feel like a designer. If I saw it on the streets I would be happy. I think I wouldn’t consider a shift in profession – but maybe I would think that for a few minutes and it would make me happy’ (F, 26). Several participants perceived winning the competition and having their design produced as a confirmation of their competence and creative skillset.

**Curiosity motives.** Exploring the unknown in a safe environment is intriguing for most of us (Berlyne 1960). It is therefore hardly a surprise that most participants named curiosity as a determining motive to engage with the co-creation activity. Supporting Fuller’s (2006) findings from co-creation in an online environment, participants engaged in in-store co-creation because they perceived it as a stimulating experience, satisfying their curiosity around the co-creation concept. The rarity of in-store co-creation activities, the unfamiliarity of the concept and its innovativeness increased the level of curiosity. ‘I hadn’t come across anything like it previously. So I was, I became like curious to see what the next step would be’ (F, 26). The integration of a tactile experience into a technology-empowered user interface enhanced the perceived level of innovativeness of the co-creation task, and the interest in trying out new technology was a highly motivating factor to engage in the activity: ‘I like the technological kind of application, and the newness of the solution of a product’ (M, 28).

**Playfulness motives.** The co-creation activity was regarded as a joyful experience in itself, as it enabled participants to play around with different designs. One participant aptly described this aspect of playfulness as acting ‘like a big child’ (M, 28) in the store environment. A joyful experience, expressing creativity and ‘exploring possibilities’ (M, 28) of an innovative task turned out to be key drivers for engagement.

**Relating motives.** The desire to improve one’s social network and be able to relate with service employees or other consumers is a motive for co-creation (Neghina et al. 2017; Fuller 2006; Roberts, Hughes, and Kertbo 2014). In this study, we can confirm that relating motives do serve as a driver also for in-store co-creation in several regards, especially in relation to social proof from peers and friends.
Many participants discussed how taking part in the co-creation activity was connected to fun when others are involved. When imagining that one’s friends are co-creating with them, the task focus shifted from fairly high to rather low. The motives to co-create change from primarily being motivated by creating a backpack they would like to wear, to being motivated by having fun. One interviewee describes it: ‘If I would go out with friends for example, we would perhaps do it for fun, joke around with it. […] It would probably be less serious with friends’ (F, 16). Another interviewee further explains the purpose that the activity would have for her together with her friends: ‘You would not choose the nice-looking bag. You would create something weird, something more fun’ (F, 24).

Several participants have the need for seeking confirmation from other people. Most of our participants value the input from friends higher than the input from the community. In-store co-creation serves as an excellent arena for fulfilling this need, with malls or stores being a popular meeting point for friends. One interviewee mentioned: ‘And if you do something fun or something good, then your friends will see it and be like, wow that’s cool, kind of’ (M, 15).

Even though many respondents claim that they are not interested in social media aspects, several also state that they still would like to look at the ‘Wall of Fame’ to be inspired by others, get an understanding of what other people like, and to see the winning design. Evidently, many consumers do seek social proof, whether it is from friends or from the broader community of consumers. The ‘Wall of Fame’, for instance, heightens the perceived credibility of the co-creation activity as it shows that other consumers have spent time and effort creating a nice-looking backpack. This makes peoples’ contribution feel more important.

**Self-efficacy motives.** Several study participants experienced confidence and a sense of increased self-efficacy in that they would feel like accredited designers upon winning the competition. This is connected to feelings of pride and empowerment in that they see themselves as taking a task which traditionally belonged to educated professionals. ‘It’s your creation, something you built up from the ground let’s call it. Maybe you gain a little bit of confidence doing that for example. You see like okay, I’m a little bit more creative than I thought.’ (M, 25)

In this specific co-creation activity, the user toolkit (von Hippel 2001) acted as a facilitator. It serves as a guide, increasing consumers’ perceived competence of performing the creation task. When using the toolkit, all participants described it as an easy design activity to take part in. Interestingly, even though they all felt competent to design the backpack, not everyone was confident enough to enter the competition with their own design.

For some participants, ‘only’ selecting a design (as opposed to designing it themselves) had a strong connection to a heightened feeling of pride: ‘Because I would feel like I’d been a part of … not the design process but the making it happen, basically, and then I’d probably feel a bit proud’ (M, 25).

**Individualising motives** were prominent among our study results. A majority of our respondents seemed intrigued by the thought of being able to adapt the product to their own wishes and preferences. One interviewee mentioned the following: ‘I think, if I should wear something, I like that it is personal, and that it matches my personality in a way’ (M, 15). Indeed, the aspect of adapting the details to fit the consumers’ specific needs is a way to express one’s preferences and identity.
Some expressed a strong sense of psychological ownership for the created product (cf. Fuchs, Prandelli, and Schreier 2010), which in turn connects with increased purchase intentions (e.g. Franke, Keinz, and Steger 2009). In the present study, several participants motivated their purchase intention of the co-created backpack with the possibility to show to others that they own something different and unique. “Maybe it would look a bit different and people would start asking. To have one of these details that kind of stand out” (F, 24).

Concerted motives were recognized in the study, as the user toolkit provided by the company increased the willingness to engage since it functions as a facilitator for collaboration. Even though the co-creation activity is fun to engage in, consumers still realise and reflect upon the fact that there is a brand behind the activity. Individuals want to feel the presence of, and connection to, the other party when they are engaging in the activity.

**Barriers**

**Fear of failure threshold.** Participants that chose to co-create wished to enter the competition only with a design that satisfies their aspirations. Placing high expectations on oneself turned out to be a threshold for many of the participants, preventing them from creating their own product design: ‘If I myself would design?/ … /I would be very nervous about doing something ugly that would be published that people would see. So it would probably end with me giving up and feeling that it’s no use that I participate. Because I would feel like it would be too hard.’ (M, 51)

The fear of failure has a large impact on the emergence of the two main types of co-creating consumers: Those keen on entering a competition and exposing their own design to the public and those who prefer not to engage in the competition. The latter ones decided to vote on another user’s design instead. The reason why several of the participants did not want to engage in a competition is mainly linked to their perceived level of design competence (cf. Fuchs, Prandelli, and Schreier 2010). They expected not to possess enough design competence to win the competition, especially when considering a high number of contestants. Interestingly enough, the possibility to employ the user toolkit did not lower this threshold enough for the selecting participants to actually create their own design instead of just voting. Thus, fear of failure is strongly connected to the self-efficacy motives, where low self-efficacy creates a threshold for in-store product design.

**Social anxiety (social risk) threshold.** The fact that the co-creation activity was to be conducted in a public setting with high visibility produced social anxiety, a fear of being judged and evaluated negatively by other people (e.g. Fenigstein et al. 1975; Dabholkar and Bagozzi 2002). This type of fear can, for example, evoke feelings of self-consciousness, embarrassment and inferiority (ibid.) – all of which were frequently addressed during the interviews. One of the participants who experienced this explained: ‘I’m not super comfortable participating in a kind of competition with others on display, you know … and If I would, I’d take the time to do something really good, if I should put my name on it basically’ (M, 25). Thus, contrary to most literature on social risks where the risks are perceived in relation to consumers’ direct social circle (Ram and Sheth 1989, Kleijnen et al. 2009), we find that the social risk here is connected to the public display of the co-creation and thereby connected to a much broader group of people.
**Time threshold.** The empirical findings suggest that time is a crucial factor influencing the level of engagement. A store is, according to many participants, an environment where they typically do not have a lot of time at their disposal to engage in a co-creation task. Many of the participants who chose to select only regard the possibility to co-create directly at the store as too stressful.

**Trustworthiness (security risks) threshold.** The majority of the participants emphasized the importance of a legitimate appearance of the presented activity and the related brand. Concerns about data privacy were mentioned frequently throughout the interviews, posing a threshold for some of the participants to engage in the competition. In order to participate, the consumer needs to possess enough trust in the data policy of the respective company and wants to be able to actively decide how much of his or her own private information is disclosed to the public. Thus, the ethical motives (Neghina et al. 2017) might very well also function as a threshold for consumer co-creation, much like risk barriers such as security risks (Ram and Sheth 1989; Mani and Chouk 2018) have been found to hinder new service adoption by consumers.

**Product attitude (perceived image) threshold.** Last but not least, the attitude towards the product and its perceived value to the consumer is a major threshold affecting consumer motives (cf. image barriers; Ram and Sheth 1989; Kleijnen, Lee, and Wetzels 2009). Some participants explained their low willingness to engage with their aversion for the backpack: ‘I think that it might have something to do with the fact that it was a backpack and I don’t use those. So that might have, that might be a factor. But if it was a dress I would be interested. So I guess I’m biased because it was actually a backpack’ (F, 26).

**Interaction with technology (fear of poor functionality) as a hygiene factor.** It is important to note that most participants had no concerns about using the provided technology in the store. However, they emphasized that the user interface (e.g. the interactive screens) should be easy, as well as intuitive to use and directly accessible. A seamless and reliable interaction with technology is a fundamental requirement for the project’s success. If the participants encounter any obstacles using the respective technology, they will stop engaging with it: ‘I need it to be really easy to handle. So that if it’s like the least frustration coming out from that, then I would leave it’ (F, 26). Thus, the concerted motives regarding ease of use (Neghina et al. 2017) might very well imply a barrier for co-creation (cf. Mani and Chouk 2018).

**Convenience-based hygiene factors.** Other hygiene factors are related to inconveniences that negatively affect consumers’ motives regarding co-creation. Most consumers considered queuing for the activity as a hassle which is too time consuming. Furthermore, the majority of the participants would want to try out the activity in the store if they were close by, but they would not actively seek the store in order to engage.

**Perceived differences between co-creation in-store and online**
Apart from listing motives and barriers, the findings in this study additionally point to the differences in consumer views and anticipated behaviours between co-creating online and in-store. Nearly all of the participants wanted to co-create and several of them
anticipated benefits from engaging in co-creation in physical stores as opposed to in online stores. The motives and purpose of co-creating differs slightly between the two settings. The physical setting in-store heightens the authenticity of the experience due to the sensory stimuli that it provides (cf. Grewal and Levy 2007). A lower level of risk is associated with the in-store setting, as the participants can feel more certain that the product they co-create will look the same in reality as it does on a screen if, for example, products or materials are provided for them to inspect. This also led interviewees to state that they would have a higher purchase intention in-store, compared to an online setting. Furthermore, being in the store provided for an increased commitment to the experience and a sense of absorption in the activity. Usually, there is a certain purpose and urgency ('now or never'; F, 24) associated with physical stores, which makes some of the participants more engaged and committed to complete the task right away. Finally, the probability that a consumer may approach the co-creation task is seemingly higher when they are in the store, as explained by one participant: “And, it sounds a bit weird but I think it’s just easier when it’s two meters away from me, I can just check out. And I think it, online would bother me more, to click on it, when there’s a new tab and I wouldn’t know what to expect.” (M, 25)

The store setting also enables a social element of co-creating together with someone else. Although it might reduce task engagement, it can in fact enhance the consumer's overall store experience (cf. O’Cass and Grace 2008; Walker and Johnson 2006). This form of ‘social co-creation’ may also give rise to feelings of competitiveness as some participants would like to compete against a friend, tying in with the reoccurring marketing related forms of co-creation such as the ‘Do us a flavour’ campaign.

**General discussion**

In this exploratory study, in-store co-creation seems to be a promising alternative for retailers who wish to enhance customer engagement by creating an exciting in-store environment. Nearly all participants showed willingness to select and/or to create their own product in this setting.

Our results largely echo previous studies on consumer motives for co-creation (Neghina et al. 2017; Füller 2006; Füller 2010). However, due to methodological choices, we cannot verify which motives that are strongest in-store. Reward motives are certainly predominant among the study’s 24 participants (cf. Füller 2006) and, in line with Neghina et al.’s (2017) findings on consumer motives for generic services, we also found support for motives relating to consumers’ ability to individualise the product and to relate to fellow consumers. Additionally, we find that the in-store environment helps heighten consumers’ focus, level of absorption and customer experience.

We did not, however, find evidence of developmental motives at play in our in-store co-creation scenario. Developmental motives relate to the development of consumers’ competencies, capabilities, skills and knowledge (Neghina et al. 2017; Füller 2006) and have often been identified as a motive for software co-creation (e.g. Fernandes and Remelhe 2016; von Hippel 2005). Developmental motives are related to relating motives since much of the knowledge stem from fellow co-creating consumers who assist each other in developing their own ideas (cf. von Hippel 2007). During in-store co-creation, however, consumers seem more interested in playing or competing together.
In the course of this study, it became evident that not only motives, but also the perceived barriers, affect whether consumers co-create or not. As a result, our research focus was extended to also explore which barriers might exist. The absence of certain hygiene factors as well as the presence of thresholds give an indication of the existing barriers that may hinder consumers’ co-creation. Such barriers have not been investigated in previous studies on consumer co-creation, and hence pose a valuable extension to research aiming to explain reasons why a consumer might engage in new product co-creation. Interestingly, consumer motives such as ethical, self-efficacy, and concerted might also exist as barriers when reverted, due to consumers’ concerns regarding data privacy, low levels of perceived self-efficacy and assumptions that the technology might be flawed.

Our study adds to the current literature on consumer co-creation by extending our knowledge to include in-store co-creation. We enrich the findings generated through extant quantitative studies with insights from an in-depth qualitative study conducted in a specific store setting. Thereby, we were able to identify a number of differences between consumer co-creation online and in a physical store setting. These differences, in turn, have managerial implications as discussed below.

**Managerial implications**

Managers are advised to offer consumer co-creation in different channels depending on the intended purpose: marketing or innovation. The physical store setting allows for high consumer to consumer interaction, promotes playfulness and creates a sense of urgency. Hence, this seems to be a good setting for marketing purposes, allowing the customers to spend time connecting with the brand in an experiential environment. Moreover, successful co-creation activities have historically received a considerable media coverage as, for example, in the case of the adidas pop-up store in Berlin (adidasknitforyou.com 2018) implying that co-creation activities of such nature should be regarded as marketing expenses. Instead of trying to make user-created unique products profitable in themselves, which is hard to achieve, the monetary benefits associated with such an activity should be measured in terms of, for example, increased brand recognition and more positive attitudes towards the retailer and its products.

When the intended purpose from the company’s perspective is innovation, the co-creation should be designed in a way that it can be performed with a high task focus. Preferably, the consumer should design the product on their own and in an undisturbed environment. Therefore, online co-creation may be more suitable in this case, alternatively an in-store co-creation instalment in a comfortable and more reserved setting within the store.

Combining online co-creation and in-store co-creation may provide several benefits for the brand, as the different types of co-creation may attract different types of consumers. The store may serve as an extension of an online co-creation event, by not only serving as a marketing space, but also a co-creation space, by for instance allowing consumers to select designs that other consumers have created online, or offering consumers to co-create in store as well. Both alternatives will provide companies with valuable insights into consumer preferences.
Finally, our findings also indicate that the co-creating consumers might have higher purchase intentions in-store as opposed to online, due to lower levels of perceived risk. This should be especially true if ethical motives concerning data privacy, which we identify as a potential barrier (security risk), is explicitly countered by the company by communicating clearly regarding their data privacy policies. How much consumers’ purchase intentions differ between the contexts need further investigation as this study did not directly compare online versus in-store intentions.

Limitations and further research

All methods have their limitations and we believe an important next step for our research would be to quantify consumer motives and barriers for in-store co-creation in order to verify which are the most relevant. This would offer researchers an opportunity to directly compare, for example, motives and intentions across channels such as online co-creation versus in-store co-creation. Further to that, a quantitative study with a larger, randomly selected sample may outrule the risk that consumers participating in the study have a predisposition to engage in co-creation. A larger sample of consumers would also allow for the identification of different consumer groups in terms of their motives and perceived barriers.

Another interesting path for further research would build on Neghina et al.’s (2017) separation of professional and generic services in their research. It is quite likely that consumer co-creation in-store differs from that of professional co-creation in-store, exploring, for example, stores catering to craftsmen or artists.

Additionally, experimenting with different types of stores (e.g. hedonic versus utilitarian) and different types of products (e.g. high vs. low involvement) might also provide interesting findings.

In terms of theoretical development of the field, it might be useful to further distinguish between active and passive resistance to innovations (Heidenreich and Handrich 2015). The barriers presented in this study are more in line with active resistance since the participants were presented with actual scenarios and any resistance was formed after considering these. Passive resistance, however, deal with consumers predisposition to resist innovations and as such it may differ between consumers (ibid.) and to what degree it may shape their resistance, or reluctance, to participate in in-store co-creation. Potentially, consumers’ underlying passive resistance may have differing impact depending on the degree to which the co-creation offers human interactions with, for example, service personnel in-store. Research on technology-based self-service has indicated that it may be resisted because it reduces the human interaction (e.g. Laukkanen and Kiviniemi 2010; Walker and Johnson 2006).

Finally, new product consumer co-creation that takes place in-store is perceived as novel today. If our prediction is correct, however, these forms of consumer engagement will become much more present in retail and as such, future studies may need to look into other forms of motives and barriers for participation that are not tied to innovation or the newness of the service.

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Notes on contributors
Miranda Schüler is a recent graduate from the master program in business and management at the Stockholm School of Economics. She also earned her bachelor’s degree in retail management from the Stockholm School of Economics. She is currently employed as a junior consultant within marketing strategy at Marketing Clinic in Stockholm.

Michelle Fee Maier is a recent graduate from the master program in business and management at the Stockholm School of Economics. She has a bachelor’s degree in Culture and Economics from the University of Mannheim, Germany. She is currently working in the position of Executive Trainee to the Group CFO at Tele2 in Stockholm.

Karina T. Liljedal, PhD., is an Assistant Professor at the Center for Consumer Marketing and a Research Fellow at the Center for Retailing at Stockholm School of Economics. Her research interests are focused on understanding consumer responses to various forms of co-creation, especially in new product and service development. Her work has been published in journals such as Journal of Advertising Research, European Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Communications and Journal of Marketing Education.

ORCID
Karina T. Liljedal http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4106-4310

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