Defining Brand Voice Using Buyer Personas for Ruohonjuuri Oy

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The commissioning company, Ruohonjuuri Oy, suggested research into their customers in the Swedish market, where they have been operating since 2018. Having closed down the brick-and-mortar stores due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and their web shop being the only channel to connect with customers, they were keen on understanding the motivations, preferences and hurdles of their customers to continue expanding and claiming market share in the recently entered market.

The research question was how do Happy Food Store's buyer personas differ and how to adapt brand voice to appeal to the buyer personas? The investigative questions looked more into the buyer decision process and consumer behaviour of the customers. Taking the research results further, the last investigative question aimed at creating brand voice guidelines adapted for the Swedish market based on the buyer personas.

The theory includes background on buyer personas, how they have evolved throughout time and what data can be included in them. Consumer behaviour is explained using all the factors that affect an individual's purchasing behaviour, and the buyer decision process is explained regarding low-, medium- and high-involvement purchases. The researcher examines the Swedish market's development from the point of view of retailing natural, organic, and functional/fortified products, with the e-commerce market's decelopment separately examined.

The research is a sequential mixed method research, and the first phase is a qualitative interview with the Digital Marketing Manager, Heidi Waltari. The second phase is a quantitative survey distributed to Happy Food Store's email list and social channels, and therefore no sampling method was used, and the population is Happy Food Store's email list (who have given marketing permission) and those that view their content. Data was analysed using SPSS (means, frequencies, cross-tabulations). The qualitative research was summarized.

The results gave an overview of Happy Food Store's customers, how they define health, how they get influenced to purchase natural and ecological products, who they trust for diet and nutritional information, what price sensitivites they have, which supplements they are currently taking, which attributes are important to them when purchasing hygiene/cosmetic products, what perceptions they have of supplements and vitamins in general, and their preferred free-time activities and hobbies. The survey also gathered data on demographical factors like age, county of residence, income levels and family composition.

The buyer personas were separated based on age groups, which were "36 and younger, "37-54-year-olds" and "55 and older", and each age group had nearly the same amount of respondents. The results highlighted differences in how they defined health, how they get influenced to buy natural and ecological products, who they trust for nutrition advice, their price sensitivities, how they are currently taking care of their health and which product attributes they value/seek for.

The outcome of the research provided answers to the commissioning company's request of knowing their customers' preferences, motivations and hurdles, and based on those results, representational buyer personas and a brand voice guideline to compliment the buyer personas. It is advised the commissioning company use the buyer personas across the organisation to humanize and individualise their customers and consider the differences that the age groups exhibited, when considering marketing and communication efforts, product category expansions and future service development.

Keywords
Customer data, buyer persona, brand voice, consumer behaviour, buyer decision process

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1 Introduction

This is a research-based bachelor's level thesis for the Degree Programme in International Business in the Customer Relationship Management and Communication's specialisation in the Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. This chapter presents the research background, objectives, and the research question and investigative questions. This chapter will also familiarize the reader with the demarcation of the research, the international aspects, benefits, risks, key concepts, and the commissioning company.

1.1 Background

For a company to succeed in today's competitive markets, it is crucial to understand customers in terms of what product or service they need, what they are willing to pay for it, how they want to be sold to, and where they want to buy from. Meeting those needs and exceeding expectations – while staying profitable – is the quest for many companies. An exponentially increasing number of companies are beginning to understand the value and competitive advantage of customer-centricity, where customer data and marketing research are used in complex ways to segment markets and craft detailed buyer personas to help hone a company’s messaging, find the gaps in content offerings, and understand the pain points of the customers. Buyer personas can also be used in part to develop the brand voice, which differentiates companies from its competitors and ensures consistency of communication across different customer-facing interactions.

The commissioning company Ruohonjuuri Oy needed to gain a better understanding of their Swedish store's customers, and therefore, the research will be conducted for the Swedish market, where the store is named as Happy Food Store. The results will hopefully aid with informed marketing decisions that contribute to increased sales and market shares. For clarification, this research will mention Ruohonjuuri when the background and history of the company are discussed, and the name Happy Food Store will be used when the research and the Swedish markets are discussed.

1.2 Research Question

This research aims to understand better the customers of Happy Food Store and how potential customers can and should be marketed to. The research’s outcomes were data analysis based on the customer survey and buyer personas based on variables relevant to the target audience. Review of literature will provide frameworks for buyer persona formation, understanding buying decision processes and consumer behaviours. Results can be used to acquire and target health-conscious consumers in ways that resonate with them.

The research question (RQ) of this research is how do Happy Food Store's buyer personas differ and how to adapt brand voice to appeal to the buyer personas? The research question is divided into investigative questions (IQ) as follows:

IQ 1. How does Happy Food Store tailor marketing for the Swedish market?
IQ 2. Which factors influence the consumer behaviour of Happy Food Store's customers?
IQ 3. How do the buyer decision processes differ between the buyer personas?
IQ 4. How can the brand voice be adapted for the buyer personas?

Table 2 below presents the investigative questions, theoretical framework components, research methods and results chapters for each investigative question.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Investigative question	Theoretical Framework	Research Methods	Results (chapter)
IQ 1. How does Happy Food Store tailor marketing for the Swedish market?	Defining the market, the e-comm market	Interview with the digital marketing manager	6.1
IQ 2. Which factors influence the consumer behaviour of Happy Food Store's customers?	Consumer behaviour, buyer decision process	Quantitative survey	4.2; 6.1; 6.2
IQ 3. How do the buyer decision processes differ between the buyer personas?	Buyer persona, Buyer decision behaviour	Quantitative survey	5; 4.3; 6.1; 6.2
IQ 4. How can the brand voice be adapted for the buyer personas?	Buyer persona, brand voice	Quantitative survey	4.3; 6.1; 6.2

1.3 Commissioning Company

Ruohonjuuri Oy is an importer, wholesaler, and retailer of natural and sustainable goods, established in 1982. They also act as a publisher in the industry and have café, restaurant, and take-away operations. (Ruohonjuuri 2020a.) In 2019, Ruohonjuuri Oy had revenue of 32MEUR and a profit of 2,1MEUR, but due to closing their Swedish operations, they had to write-off 1,9MEUR, and that resulted in the actual profit being around 0,2MEUR. (Ruohonjuuri 2020b.) Despite of this, they have had a 23% increase in revenue from 2018 to 2019. At the time of the research, their headquarters were in Helsinki, Finland, and in 2018 they employed

98 people in their company. "We offer our clients a diverse range of high quality, environmentally responsible, organic, and fair trade products. We believe in freshness, relevance and vitality. Fair play is our way of working." (Ruohonjuuri 2020c.)

In Finland Ruohonjuuri currently has 16 stores: Kamppi, City - Kaivopiha, Hakaniemi, REDI, Itis, Tripla, Kaari, Sello, Iso Omena, Ainoa, Jumbo, Tampere, Turku, Raisio, Jyväskylä and Oulu. Their online store, as of now, serves Finnish customers as well as European customers (Ruohonjuuri 2020a). Previously Ruohonjuuri also had two stores in Sweden named under "Happy Food Store", the first one opened in 2018, and the second one in 2019. Both were in Stockholm: one in Liljeholmtorget Galleria -shopping mall and one on Sveavägen. They had to shut down both stores in May 2020 due to the Covid-19 situation. The Swedish operations resulted in losses, but 2019 was better in terms of losses than the first year in 2018. In fact, they had calculated that 4-5 stores would have been enough to cover the expenses (Ruohonjuuri 2020d). Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the growth seemed too uncertain and extensive measures had to be taken in closing the stores. At the time of the research, they were also planning on rolling out a web shop for international reach.

1.4 Demarcation

This research will focus on Happy Food Store's B2C customers and will aim to gather data from those. The qualitative research will be conducted as an interview with the marketing manager for an overview of their knowledge about their Swedish customers. The research is looking to formulate the buyer personas based on the data gathered through the survey, no secondary sources will be used to extend the personas.

The quantitative research will be interested in potential or existing customers that already purchase natural, organic and functional products. The data will be analysed by the researcher with frequency, mean, and crosstabulation methods. The researcher will analyse the quantitative research results independent of any other data provided by the case company, meaning that historical purchase data will not be integrated with the survey responses.

1.5 International Aspect

The researcher will be analyzing the Swedish market and how it is developing, and whether the products that Happy Food Store sells could succeed in the country's e-commerce landscape. The survey will be sent to Happy Food Store's customers in Swedish, and therefore external help will be required for the survey to be translated. The buyer personas will be created based on the survey results, and the brand voice will be adapted to the buyer personas, and therefore the results are tailored to Happy Food Store's customers.

1.6 Anticipated Benefits

This study's benefit can be of significant value, as the health and wellness market are highly valued and is seeing high increase in year-on-year growth. While the industry evolves, the consumers and markets evolve simultaneously: new research, technological advancements and connectivity are just a few of the prevalent megatrends. Some drivers for such changes include changing values, population changes, shifting economic power and technology. (Passport 2020.)

Ruohonjuuri Oy being the commissioning company for this research, has a huge role as a megatrend pioneer in Finland. It is in their interest to expand their customer base by gathering customer data and conducting market research to continue revolutionising the health and wellness industries. Ruohonjuuri's marketing teams will understand whom they are serving and how to serve them better based on the buyer personas.

Suppliers and other stakeholders will gain an advantage if this research's results are utilised effectively: they could gain access to other markets besides Finland and expand their customer base to other countries. Investors (private stockholders and NGOs which hold stocks) are likely to benefit from this research as well if the results help Happy Food Store reach a wider audience by adapting communications.

Through this task, the researcher will gain confidence in her professional capabilities as an entry-level marketing professional. Researching a topic that is inherently interesting to the researcher makes the process more natural than doing it for a company whose values the researcher does not share. Market and customer research skills will inevitably improve during the research project as well as data analysis skills. Showing a willingness to work with the company might also benefit the researcher in the future, with a position later from Ruohonjuuri or other companies within the same industry. Doing this research for Ruohonjuuri has become an actualisation for the researcher to want to work with customers and health and wellness companies in the future as well.

1.7 Key Concepts

Buyer personas are fictitious, specific, concrete representations of target users (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 11). Often depicted together with a representative picture, and sometimes with realistic demographic data.

Brand voice "…is a mechanism to talk to your consumers in a language and style that they understand" (Diamond & Singh 2012). It is adapting the character/persona, tone, language, and the purpose of communication to create engaging and consistent content for a company's audience.

Consumer behaviour aims to understand the decision making behind the layers of factors to help make better marketing decisions. The characteristics that affect consumer behaviour include cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 163-176).

The buyer decision process is the chain of events that happens when a customer makes a purchase from a company. Some purchases are more habitual, and some require more complex patterns before the actual decision is made. Buying decision processes are always the same, starting from need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and the post-purchase decision. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 177.)

(Market) Targeting is when a company proceeds to target those customers in the target audience for a better allocation of resources (Armstrong, Kotler & Opresnik 2017, 198). It requires knowing the market, the potential customers, and the current customers.

Segmentation is the act of separating target customers into different groups based on demographic or behavioural data so that marketers can tailor marketing strategies and products more specifically to each group (Blanchard, Behera & Bhatnagar 2019, ch 3).

LOHAS (Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability) segment makes up of consumers are socially responsible, driven to protect the environment, and are avid users of green products. They are a critical target for companies marketing green or socially responsible products (Natural Marketing Institute 2008, 14). The people who belong to this segment see their consumption as a way of voting for a greener world.

2 Defining the Customer for Strategic Marketing

The theoretical framework is the backbone of the research; it supports the formation of data collection tools, data analysis and interpreting the results. The theories and models are visualised into a figure to show the inter-relationships between the key themes discussed in this chapter (figure 1).

For this research, it is required to explore the methods and uses of buyer personas, consumer behaviour and buyer decision behaviours. Understanding each theme helps formulate the survey questions, create the buyer personas, and critically analyse whether the objective has been fulfilled with understanding Happy Food Store's customers more. The importance of external reports on consumer behaviour regarding health-conscious consumers worldwide cannot be dismissed, as it brings in perspectives of the current and potential Happy Food Store's customers' attitudes and motivations, thus the LOHAS market report has been used together with the theoretical framework to conduct the research.

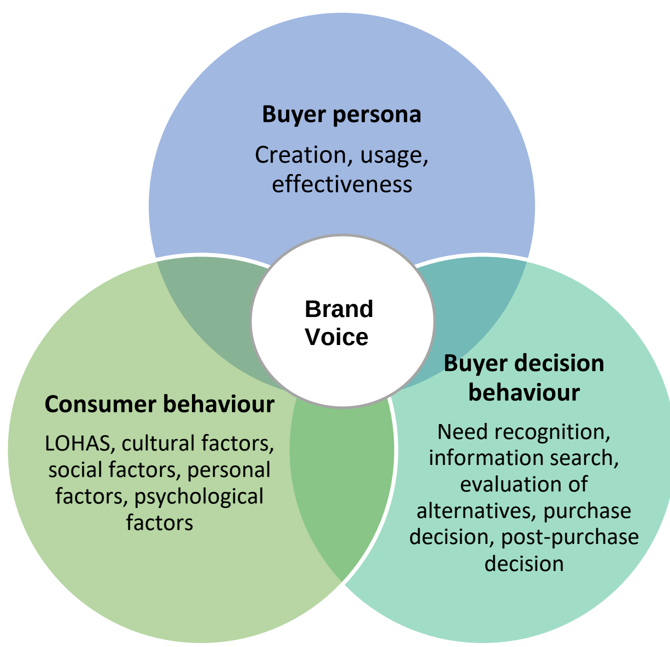

Figure 1. Theories and models strategic customer definition

2.1 Buyer personas

Buyer personas are "…are fictitious, specific, concrete representations of target users" (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 11). With buyer personas, marketers can craft strategies to promote products and services to people who are most likely to buy them. They can be presented in PowerPoints, posters, infographics, and elaborate intranet sites where internal teams can find them to make informed marketing decisions (Revella 2015, 124).

> "Traditionally organizations, regardless of the industry they operate in, tend to use market segmentation schemes that are based on demographics and value information. In today's competitive markets, this approach is not sufficient. They also need to focus on their customers' needs, wants, attitudes, behaviors, preferences, and perceptions, and to analyze relevant data to identify the underlying segments." (Tsiptsis & Chroniapoulos 2010, ch 5).

2.1.1 Benefits of Buyer Personas

The benefits and uses of buyer personas vary from product development to customer service interactions and marketing activities. "When you understand your buyer persona and focus on creating useful information, you create the trust that inspires buyers to initiate a relationship with you" (Revella 2015, 152). Building a buyer persona could ensure that products brought out by the company succeed with high demand and desire, by discovering the mind-set and the motivation of a potential customer by asking questions and listening to the customers' responses. They are also intended to give decision makers credibility "…to eliminate an idea that is a waste of time and expenses, no matter where the idea originated" (Revella 2015, 153). It is important to give buyers the clearly articulated information they seek, in the language they understand, when and where they need it – as it is the essence of effective marketing.

For marketing and branding purposes, personas can help with having a clearer definition of the market, and it is therefore easier to target the market with specific messages and value propositions, especially when entering a new market. Instead of market segments, which define groups of users, buyer personas seek to describe specific goals and needs of individuals. Needs are the most important customer definition characteristics for companies, as well as the basis for defining markets. According to Adlin and Pruitt (2006, 24) segments tend to capture the range of demographics, psychographics and technographics among a group of customers, while target customer characterizations explore the buyers in their daily environment.

2.1.2 Creating A Buyer Persona

The history of defining customers reaches all the way to the 1960s, when Jack Sissors attempted to introduce the concept of user representation to the business world. Back then it was becoming evident that who a company is trying to sell to is key in having a successful product. From then on, many different approaches have emerged from trying to grasp the relevant variables required to successfully represent a company's customers.

In 1998, Art Weinstein's strategic market definition described an approach to identifying and using market definitions for product marketing and business strategy. The framework consisted of three major steps (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 22):

1. Identify the relevant market.
2. Create the defined market.
3. Specify the target market

Creating the defined market (step 2) would be describing the common characteristics shared by the individuals that use, would or could buy the products or services. According to Adlin and Pruitt (2006, 23), Weinstein's approach provides a foundation for market research and strategic customer definition that is essential in creating personas.

Geoffrey Moore's approach to defining customers in 1991 was getting closer to modern day's definition of buyer personas. Moore's idea was more dilemma-focused, and captured the images of customers through visualizations, as opposed to imagining whole markets. Moore's Target Customer Characterization includes the creation of 20 to 50 characterizations and narrowing it down to 8 or 10, of which each includes (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 24):

- Personal profile and job description
- Technical resources
- A "day in the life" dramatization before the introduction of the proposed product
- Problem or dilemma that motivates the purchase of the proposed product
- A "day in the life" after the introduction of the product

A more living and fluid approach to customer definition was presented in 1995, by Lynn Upshaw, with the idea of "indivisualizing the customer". It is a discipline of continuously visualizing the customer as an individual rather than a part of a mass population, group, or segment. Upshaw made the distinction between descriptive and indivisualized profiles, in which the descriptive profile includes data that describes the customer as seen by others, and the indivisualized profiles portraying the customers as individuals in the context of the purchase decision. Upshaw's approach included a general view of the daily life of the target customer from a first-person point of view, as well as a photo. (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 25.)

Examples of Upshaw's descriptive and indivisualized profiles (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 25):

- Descriptive Profile – "Middle range income, divorced, children in college, city area"
- Indivisualized Profile – "I'm Maija. I'm feeling stressed at work, and don't want to forget my health while progressing in my career. I need simple ways to take care of myself, and don't want to waste money on products I won't enjoy or benefit from using."

Sheila Mello in 2002 described a process for understanding users' needs and desires by having a clear "image" of the customer, with single sentences that answer to questions such as (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 24):

- What is the customer's life like?
- What challenges the customer?

- What motivates the customer?

The statements were reduced to the key subset of 20 or 30, which were then formulated in a format that would enable deep understanding of what it is like to be the customer. They did not include customers' desires or suggestions for solutions but were meant to describe essential characteristics of the customer. (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 24.)

On top of demographics, a well-known buyer persona author, advocate, and researcher Adele Revella and her trademarked Buying Insight™ method advocates for buyer persona templates to include Buying Insights, which are non-attainable through surveys but rather in-depth interviews. According to her, customers can be segmented based on the Buying Insights as well, to group customers who share similar expectations toward a business. These gathered buying insights seek to reveal the customers' (Revella 2016, 8-9):

- Priority Initiatives: What causes certain buyers to invest in a solution, and how are they different from buyers who remain attached to the status quo
- Success Factors: What operational or personal results does the buyer persona expect from purchasing a solution
- Perceived Barriers: What concerns cause the buyer to believe that a solution or company is not their best option?
- The Buyer's Journey: Behind-the-scenes story at each phase of the evaluation
- Decision Criteria: Which aspects of the competing offerings do your buyers perceive as most critical, and what do they expect from each one

2.1.3 Buyer Persona Data

While customer data is becoming more and more enriched, buyer personas can be tailored to suit the needs of a business (figure 2). Most importantly, the buyer persona needs to communicate clearly who the fictional character is representing, and that the understanding of it throughout the company is unified.

It is important to note that, despite surveying customers of their purchase motivations and preferences, low-purchase products (like those from grocery stores) are oftentimes hard to reason or explain because the thought processes happen in the unconscious (Revella 2015, 14). That is why low-consideration solutions' buyer personas will generally revolve around the demographic and psychographic details. Medium- to high-consideration solutions will benefit from listening to buyers' stories (in-depth interviews) about their purchase decisions, because they are able to verbally point out the factors that affected their purchase decision (Revella 2015, 114).

Surveys and interviews are often conducted to find out about the consumers' mindset, like motivations and values, but since the questions are formulated by an individual or a team, the findings are subject to unintended bias, meaning that it is hard to discover anything that is unexpected or unknown by those conducting the research. (Revella 2015, 44, 114)

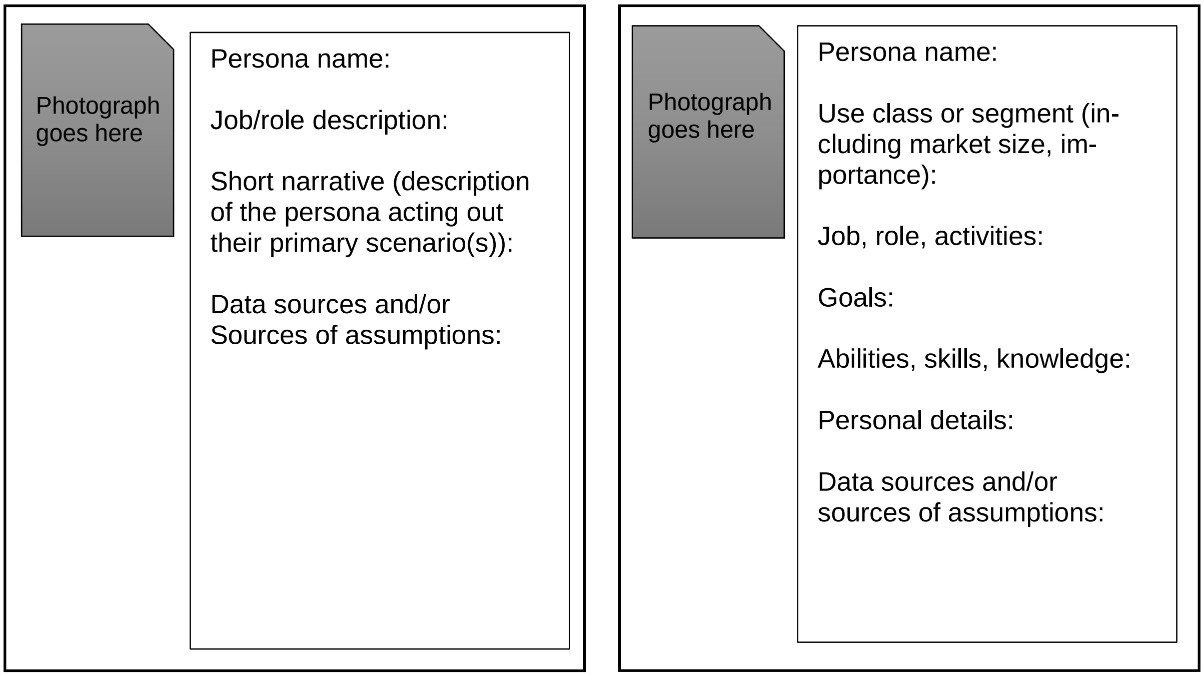

Figure 2. A generic buyer persona (Adlin & Pruitt 2006, 222)

2.2 Buyer Decision Process

Buyer decision behaviour consists of considering the complexity of decisions, and the involvement required from the buyer's side when making a purchase. The involvement in purchases is more critical when a product is expensive, risky, purchased infrequently, or is highly self-expressive. Perceived differences between brands also affect the buyer decision behaviours, since they require more extensive studies, meanwhile less perceived differences are made more quickly. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017,174.)

Today, even the most basic commodities, like salt for instance, have increasing disparities between brands and may require more involvement from the consumer’s side. This could be the case for Happy Food Store’s products, where the products are similar to those being sold at grocery stores and supermarkets yet have more benefits to them that extend beyond the supply chain (health of people and planet).

Every customer goes through a decision process when purchasing: some decision processes are more habitual which may result in cutting corners in the buyer decision process, but generally the process for new and complex decisions is the same: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, the purchase decision and post-purchase behaviour (Armstrong et al. 2017, 177). Understanding how the target audience makes their decisions helps the company adjust its marketing.

2.2.1 Need Recognition

The first stage in a buyer decision process is recognising the need, either evoked by an internal stimulus – such as a physiological or biological need, or by an external stimulus – like an ad on a YouTube video or a discussion with a friend (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 176).

2.2.2 Information Search

Depending on the situation, consumers embark on information searches before deciding on purchases. Information is available from a multitude of sources, such as personal sources (family, friends, neighbours, acquaintances), commercial sources (advertising, salespeople, dealer and manufacturer web and mobile sites, packaging, displays), public sources (mass media, consumer rating organisations, social media, online searches, and peer reviews), and experiential sources (examining and using the product) and consumers usually prefer one over the another (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 176). To make new prospects aware of a company, it is important to identify consumers' sources of information and the relative importance of each source.

2.2.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

While others rely on intuition and buy on impulse, some might carefully evaluate the purchase alternatives with calculations and logical thinking. It depends on the individual and the buying situation, and therefore the number of attributes taken into consideration vary. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 177.)

2.2.4 Purchase Decision

While intention and decision might be enough to push a consumer to finalise their purchase decision, some unexpected situational factors or attitudes of others might influence the final decision right before it is made. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 177.)

2.2.5 Post Purchase Behaviour

After purchase, the consumer decides whether their expectations were unmet, satisfied or exceeded. Kotler and Armstrong (2017, 178) mention, that satisfied customers repurchase a product, talk favourably to others about the product, pay less attention to competing brands and advertising, and buy other products from the company.

2.3 Consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour studies "…how individuals, groups, and organisations buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants" (Kotler 2015, 179). It is in every company's interest to know the cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that affect consumer behaviour for a given market or geographical location. Knowing these factors enable companies to create goods and services that are more likely to be accepted by the target audiences.

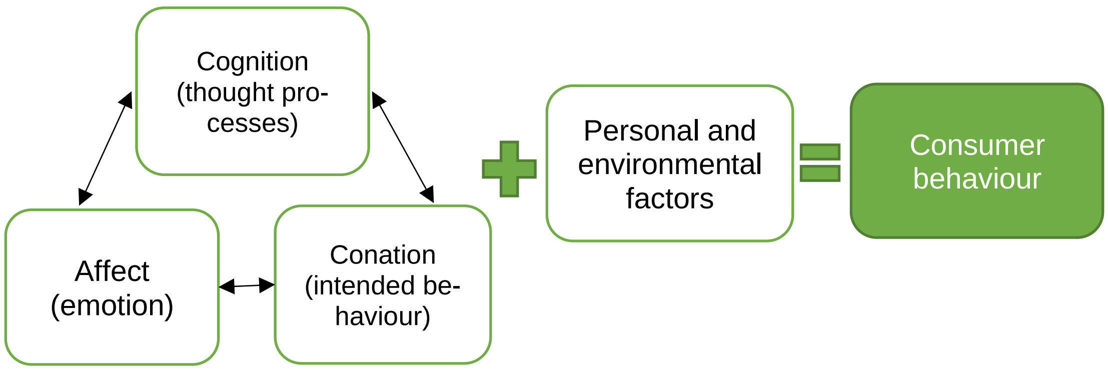

Figure 3. The dynamics of consumer behaviour (Blythe 2013, 7)

As depicted in figure 3, personal, and environmental factors impact the basic attitudes of people, which means that marketers can influence attitudes by providing the right information at the right time, displaying the relevant imagery and communication, and ensuring pleasant environmental stimuli to provoke purchases. Consumer behaviour looks at how and why consumers buy, which are crucial for formulating marketing plans. (Blythe 2013, 7.)

2.3.1 Cultural Factors

Of all factors affecting consumer behaviour, cultural factors pose the most significant and broad effect; it is the fundamental determinant of a person's wants and behaviour (Kotler 2015, 179). To examine culture, one needs to look at the character of the total society, which could entail factors such as language, knowledge, laws, religions, food customs, music, art, technology, work patterns, products, and any other aspects that make societies distinctive form each other. Culture can also determine what society deems as a necessity and what as a luxury, but it also continuously evolves to meet society's needs. Unlike biological characteristics, culture is learned throughout life. (Schiffman et al. 2012, 342; 343).

Schiffman et al. (2012, 342) define the cultural influence on consumer behaviour as "…the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs that serve to direct the consumer behaviour of members of a particular society" in which the values and beliefs act as guides for behaviour, and customs as the usual and acceptable ways of behaving. Families also take part in consumer socialising the younger members of the family, such as introducing them to (Schiffman et al. 2012, 348):

- the meaning of money, the relationship between price and quality
- establishing product tastes, preferences, and habits
- appropriate methods of response to various promotional messages

Also, educational institutions, religious systems and mass media all contribute to forming a society's culture. Yet, cultural changes are caused by new technology, population shifts, resource shortages, wars, changing values and customs borrowed from other cultures. As an example, a major ongoing cultural change that has been taking place in the past few decades, especially in European societies, has been the expanded role options open to women. (Schiffman & al 2012, 348.)

2.3.2 Social Factors

Reference groups, namely co-workers, friends, neighbours, families and any group, club, or organisation an individual belongs to all have the power to influence an individual's behaviour. The everyday interactions with reference groups affect decision-making, shopping activities and actions of consumers. Schiffman et al. (2012, 295) define that a reference group is any person or group that serves as a point of comparison (reference) for an individual in forming either general or specific values, attitudes, and behaviours.

Being exposed to new behaviours and lifestyles, attitudes, and self-concepts and the expectations of compliance to either old or new sets of standards influence one's consumer behaviour and attitudes. As known by now, bloggers and influencers (opinion leaders) of all magnitudes can effectively influence consumer behaviour. Therefore, a person does not necessarily need to belong to a group to be influenced by it: aspirational groups are groups which an individual wants to belong to, and dissociative groups are groups whose values or behaviour an individual rejects – both of which can affect an individual's product or brand choices. (Kotler 2015, 182).

We are more likely to change our behaviour if it is "people I know and trust", and therefore, the most influential primary reference group is family, as declared by Kotler (2015, 182). The family of orientation (parents and siblings) can have a massive effect on an individual's behaviour, since "…from parents, a person acquires an orientation toward religion, politics, and economics and a sense of personal ambition, self-worth, and love" (Kotler 2015, 182). The family of procreation (spouse and children) have an even more direct influence on everyday buying behaviour.

Social classes can act as determinants of lifestyles and spending habits, and they are present in all human societies. Social class "…is defined as the division of members of a society into a hierarchy of distinct status classes, so that members of each class have relatively the same status and members of all other classes have either more or less status" (Schiffman & al 2012, 324). According to this theory, individuals that have more purchasing power have more status and vice versa. There has been some evidence that within each of the social classes exists specific sets of lifestyle factors, like shared beliefs, attitudes, activities, and behaviours that distinguish the social classes from each other. (Schiffman & al 2012, 330).

2.3.3 Personal Factors

Personal characteristics, such as occupation, age and stage, economic situation, lifestyle, personality and self-concept, influence buying decisions. Purchases also change throughout age and life stages; what was considered a need in young-adulthood or teenage years might be luxury or a non-necessity in the mid-ages. "Tastes in food, clothes, furniture, and recreation are often age-related" (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 167). Some of the impactful life-stages include marriage, having children, purchasing a home, divorce, children going to college, changes in personal income, moving out of the house, and retirement – all of which impact the goods and services bought.

As defined by Kotler and Armstrong (2018, 168), lifestyle is a person's pattern of living as expressed in his or her psychographics. It includes the consumers' activities (work hobbies, shopping, sports, social events), interests (food, fashion, family, recreation), and opinions (about themselves, social issues, social events, business products) – and therefore, it captures more than just a social class or personality (Kotler and Armstrong 2017, 168). What is already known is that consumers buy the values and lifestyles that products represent, and therefore it is important to observe how changing consumer values affect buyer behaviour.

The unique psychological characteristics that distinguish a person or a group make up the personality of an individual, which is "…usually described in terms of traits such as self-confidence, dominance, sociability, autonomy, defensiveness, adaptability, and aggressiveness" (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 169). Brands are also known to have personalities, and as mentioned by Kotler (2017, 169), consumers are likely to choose brands with personalities that match their own.

2.3.4 Psychological factors

Motivation, perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes are the underlying psychological factors that affect a person's buying choices. Motivations stem from biological needs, such as hunger and thirst, and psychological needs, such as needs for recognition, esteem, and belonging. Sigmund Freud, a well-known and one of the first psychoanalysts, explained that real motivations are often unconscious to the individual, making it difficult to rationalise why one acts the way they do. Another psychologist, Abraham Maslow, claimed that different needs are approached in a certain order. The physiological or biological needs come first and are satisfied before the individual has any interest in safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualisation needs. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 169; 170.)

Learning plays an important role in the psychological factors affecting the buyer decision process. When individuals have a positive interaction with a brand or a service, they are more likely to associate positive feelings or thoughts about the brand. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017, 173.)

2.3.5 Consumer Behaviour of The LOHAS Segment

LOHAS is an acronym for Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability, which implies a group of individuals and a market of products and services that its members prefer. The Natural Marketing Institute's (2007) sixth annual research study and respective analysis of the LOHAS segment in the U.S. consumer and marketplace provide meaningful insight on consumers' attitudes, behaviours, psychographics, lifestyle activities and product/service usage patterns to be expected from purchasers of green products, including Happy Food Store's customers. Over 2,000 adults participated in the survey in 2007. Important to note that they are completely different markets, with different cultures, yet the respondents could display similar qualities independent of the geographical location. "LOHAS consumers are socially responsible, driven to protect the environment, and are avid users of green products" (Natural Marketing Institute 2007, 13).

Parts of the LOHAS report were used to formulate the questions for the quantitative part of the research. The questions were chosen to suit the commissioning company's requirements, and so the questions included explored the behavioural (preferences, motivations, and lifestyle) and socio-demographic aspects of the customers.

2.4 Brand Voice

Brand voice "…refer[s] to the language styles or registers that a company uses to express a distinctive personality or set of values that will differentiate its brands from those of competitors" (Delin 2005, 10). The tone is comprised of a certain character/persona, tone, language, and purpose, and is part of creating engaging content. Whether creating content for a blog, website or social channels, the style that is used will become the "voice" of a brand. "The voice you use will also depends on the persona you're creating content for" (Jones 2014, 28).

It is also required to examine the company's mission, so that the brand voice is relevant with the goals of the company. As mentioned before (chapter 2.3.3), consumers are likely to choose brands with personalities that match their own, and therefore, the brand voice should match the personality of the brand.

Table 2. An example of a brand voice chart (Heald 2015)

Voice characteristic	Description	Do	Don't
Passionate	We're passionate about changing how the world works.	Use strong verbs Be champions for (industry) Be cheerleaders	Be lukewarm, wishy-washy Use passive voice
Quirky	We're not afraid to challenge the status quo and be ourselves.	Use unexpected examples Take the contrarian viewpoint Express yourself	Use too much slang or too many obscure references Use jargon, overplayed examples Lose sight of the audience and core message
Irreverent	We take our product seriously; we don't take ourselves seriously	Be playful Use colourful illustrations or examples	Be too casual Use too many obscure, pop-culture examples
Authentic	We're going to give you the tools and insight you need to make your job easier. That may not always be through our product.	Be honest and direct Own any issues or mistakes, and show how you will address them Stick to your own word	Use marketing jargon or superlatives Overpromise Oversell the product's capabilities

2.5 Defining the Market

Ruohonjuuri entered the Swedish market in 2018, which is a short period of time to build a stable presence in a completely new market. Thus, they are keen on understanding their customers: the barriers, the drivers, and their product preferences. Based on statistical data below, the Swedish market is ideal for Happy Food Store's operations, yet a cultural and a more in-depth understanding of the customers' behaviour is required for added confidence. Happy Food Store and its mother company Ruohonjuuri is a retailing business specialising in a spectrum of products mostly in the natural, organic, and fortified/functional section, and those markets' developments are depicted in figure 1 and in e-commerce in figure 2.

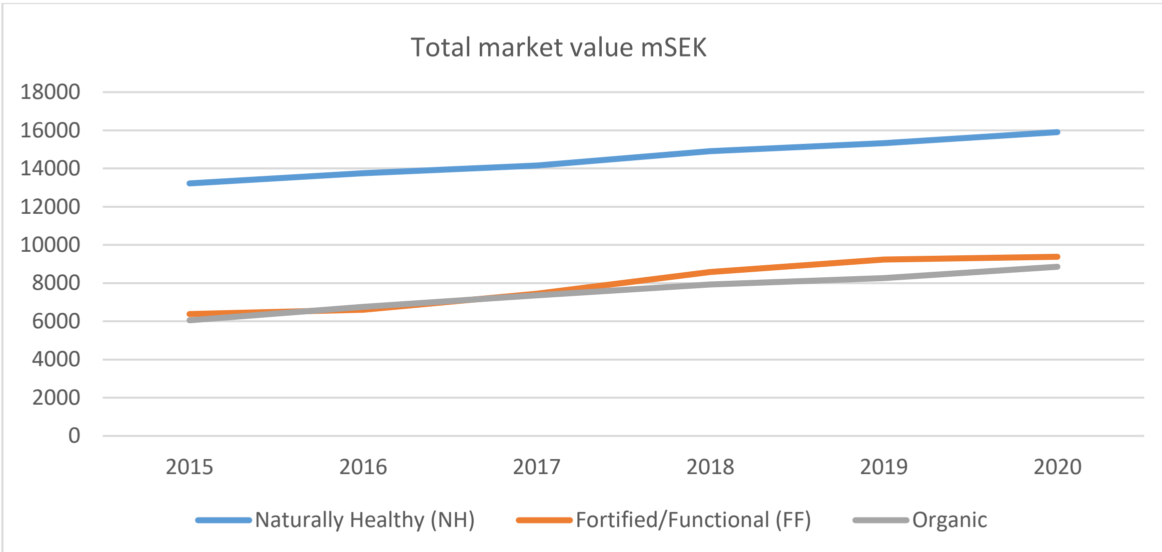

Figure 4. The total market value of the industry in Sweden from 2015-2020 (Passport 2020).

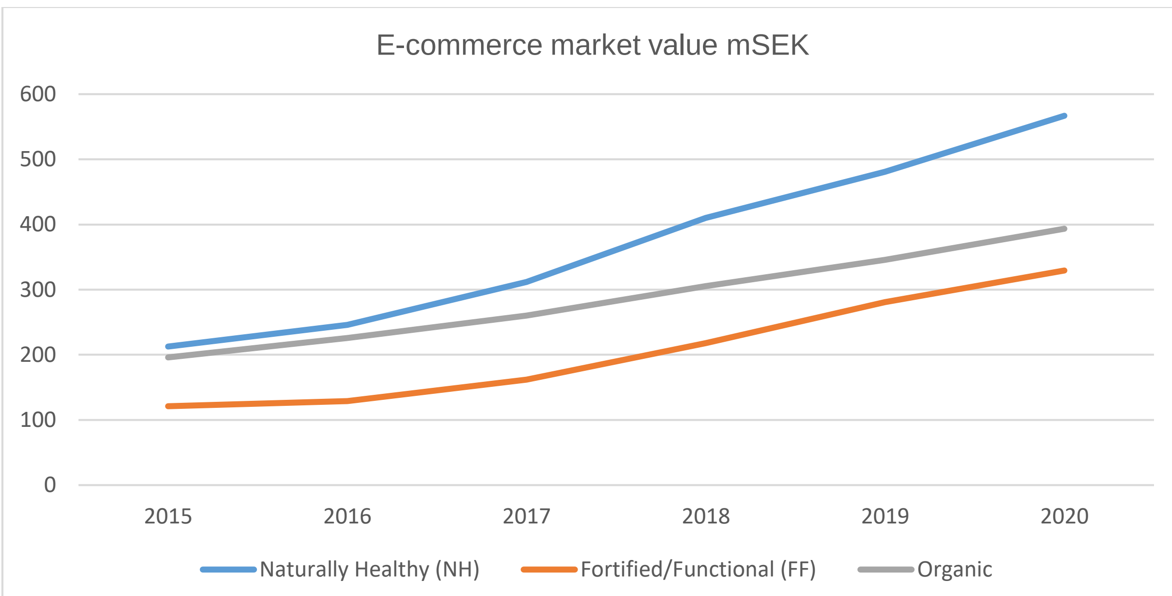

Figure 5. Total e-commerce value of the industry from 2015-2020 (Passport 2020)

The e-commerce activity in Sweden for naturally healthy, functional, and organic products is seeing an increasing trend line compared to the overall total market value, which poses opportunities for Happy Food Store to step in and establish some footing in the market as an e-commerce store specializing in naturally healthy, fortified/functional, and organic product categories (figure 4+5).

> "Healthy lifestyle habits are becoming a more normal way of life, as concerns over obesity, food sensitivity and the number of people affected by different types of disease continue to rise. Furthermore, a more holistic approach to wellness is being adopted, which encompasses spiritual and mental wellbeing, alongside physical health. Continued focus on health and wellbeing entails a wider lifestyle shift and evolving attitudes towards healthcare, nutrition, beauty, physical activity and overall self-improvement." (Passport 2020)

In Finland, the company is positioned as a pioneer and a leader in the industry of natural and ecological daily consumer goods by providing food products, wellness products, beauty products and home products that have been procured with the respect for nature and societies in mind. It aims to be the go-to place for consumers seeking to be healthy and support an ecological and respectful attitude towards nature in Sweden as well, but due to having only a web shop, is restricted, or currently limited to, providing only half the products the Finnish market has access to (at the time of the research, Happy Food Store does not sell food products in Sweden).

According to a European Commission study (Wilde 2016), 40% of Swedes have purchased eco-labelled food and consumer products for one month, higher than the European average. More recently, an online survey distributed in co-operation with PostNord, Svensk Digital Handel (translated as Swedish Digital Trade) and HUI research 87% of participants had answer that the importance of groceries being sustainable when shopping online was either fairly important (58%) or very important (29%), with over 7,000 having participated in the survey (Statista 2020).

2.5.1 The E-comm Market

In Sweden alone, the e-commerce distribution for organic products (products with certified production processes and the main aspect of the product being organic) has increased by 100,8% from 2015 till 2020 with a 15% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR). In 2020, e-commerce for organic products stood at a 4,4% share of the total market distribution. The overall market for organic products has gone up by 46,3% in the same timeframe (2015-2020) with a 7,9% CAGR. Therefore, e-commerce seems to be picking up at a rate that is two times faster than the overall organic product market. However, in recent years, growth has stagnated for organic products: since 2017, no remarkable growth has occurred. Nonetheless, the overall organic market size is considerable at 8,8bSEK and e-commerce at 393,5mSEK in 2019. (Passport 2019.)

Naturally healthy products (food and beverages that naturally contain a substance that improves health and wellbeing beyond the product's pure calorific value) have seen significant growth in the Swedish market through e-commerce with an increase of 166,6% and 21,7% CAGR from 2015 to 2020. In 2020, e-commerce for naturally healthy products stood at a market share of 3,6% with a value of 566,9mSEK. The overall market for naturally healthy products have seen a 20,3% increase with a 3,8% CAGR in the same time frame. In 2020, the naturally healthy market constituted an overall 15,9bSEK value. (Passport 2019.)

Fortified/Functional products (package food and beverages to which health ingredients have been added – provide health benefits beyond their nutritional value) in the Swedish market has seen an increase in e-commerce by 172,1,3% with a 22,2% CAGR from 2015 to 2020. In 2020 the market share of e-commerce distributed functional packaged food was 3,5%, with a value of 329,4mSEK. The overall market for functional packaged food has seen a growth of 47% with an 8% CAGR and an overall market value of 9,3bSEK. (Pass-port 2020.)

The statistics for years 2015-2020 (table 1) indicate that e-commerce sales for naturally healthy (21,7% CAGR) and fortified/functional (22,2% CAGR) products are growing at faster rates than for organic products (15% CAGR). Yet, considering all distribution methods, organic (7,9%) and fortified/functional (8%) products are seeing higher growth rates than naturally healthy (3,8%) products. In general, e-commerce is growing at much higher rates than the total markets.

Table 3. Market distribution of healthy foods and beverages in Sweden 2015-2020 (Passport 2020).

	E-commerce				Total market		
	Value mSEK	2015-2020 %	2015-2020 CAGR %	Market share %*	Value mSEK	2015-2020 %	2015-2020 CAGR %
Organic	393,5	100,8	15	4,4	8,857.5	46,3	7,9
Naturally Healthy	566,9	166,6	21,7	3,6	15,906.5	20,3	3,8
Fortified/Functional	329,4	172,1	22,2	3,5	9,381	47	8

*market share of e-comm from total market distribution in 2020.

Due to Covid-19, the growth rates of organic, naturally healthy, and functional products have taken some plunges. Currently, naturally healthy products value up to 44-47% of the total market and e-commerce. From 2018 to 2019, the functional foods sold by e-commerce experienced the greatest growth rate at 28,8% compared to naturally healthy (17,3%) and organic products (13,2%). The pandemic had affected the growth rate of mostly functional (1,5%

growth) and naturally healthy (3,7% growth) product markets, while the organic product market saw the highest increase in growth (7,1%) from 2019 to 2020. (Passport 2020.)

3 Research Methods

The empirical research for this research is an applied research, including a real business case, in which the results can be used for solving a real business problem. This research will be conducted as a sequential mixed method research, and the first phase will include qualitative data gathered with an interview to explore what the marketing managers know of Happy Food Store's customers by at the time of the research and what they seek to find out more about. This data will provide a starting point to their customer understanding. The other, and more prominent part of the research will be the quantitative data gathered with a survey, which will be distributed to Happy Food Store's mailing list, compiled of 8956 individual consumers, of which 5710 have given a marketing permission. The research is then following a sequential exploratory research design, in which the qualitative research is followed by the quantitative research (Saunder, Lewis & Thornhill 2019, 182).

Investigative question 1. was "Who are the current customers of Happy Food Store, and how are marketing and communication efforts differentiated for them?", which is answered by the qualitative research conducted as an interview with the marketing manager of Ruohonjuuri. It is important to understand the current state of Ruohonjuuri's understanding of their customers, so that at the end of the research it can be depicted whether the research provided new customer insight or not. If prior research of their current knowledge had not been done, it would be possible for a stakeholder to state at the end of the research that "we already knew that". Therefore, to avoid this frustration from all stakeholders, an interview is necessary before the quantitative research. The results of the qualitative research will be analyzed from the interview notes.

Investigative question 2. was "Which factors influence the consumer behaviours of Happy Food Store's customers?" which will be answered by the quantitative research. This IQ will be part of the buyer persona formation. Cross-tabulations will be utilized to divide the respondents based on age. Investigative question 3. Was "How do the buyer decision processes differ between the buyer personas?" which will be answered with the results of the quantitative research and after the buyer personas have been created. Investigative question 4. was "IQ 4. How can the brand voice be adapted for the buyer personas?", which will be answered based on the data from the quantitative research conducted as a survey, as well as the buyer personas.

The nature of this report will be of a descriptive research, where the researcher will try, using the mixed method research, to describe the status quo of the current customers for the case company. This research will do very little of comparison of previous knowledge of the customers, therefore a cross-sectional research which focuses on the current knowledge, is the correct term to describe this research.

3.1 Research Design

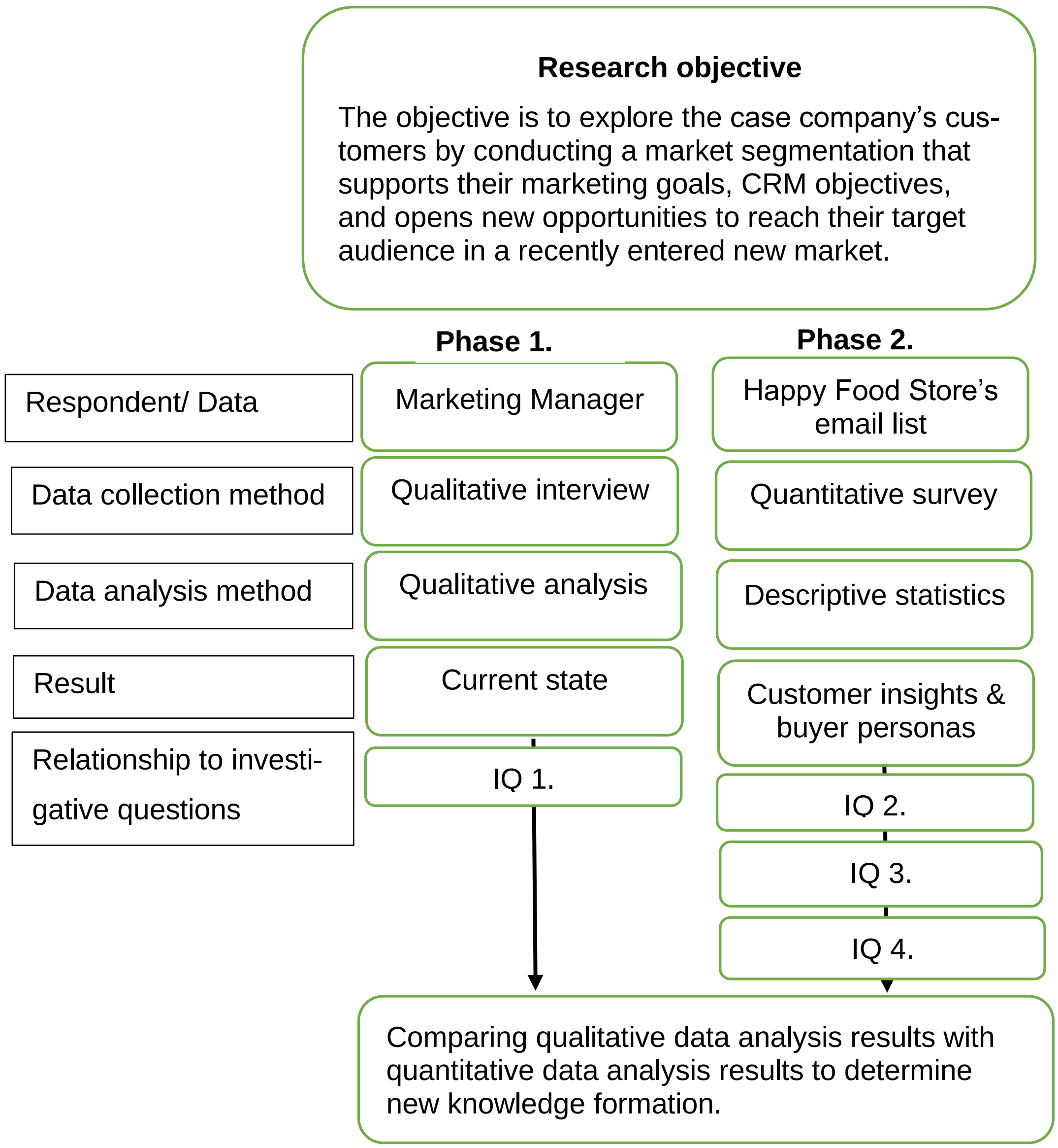

Figure 6. Research design.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The survey was sent to Happy Food Store's email list, as well as published on their social channels. The reach of the survey is therefore immeasurable. The population was Happy Food Store's current customers, but due to a lack of responses, the survey was also distributed on a Swedish Homeopathy group on Facebook (with over 6000 members), but no survey responses were received from the group, either due to a lack of interest or technical issue. Since the population would be reached through digital means, the costs were low. Main costs were made up of the three gift cards that were promised to be raffled by the company.

The sampling frame are the people who had given a marketing permission in Happy Food Store’s emailing list, and it is the population that the results are seeking to generalize for. Due to a lack of responses from other than the company’s mailing list, the results can only be generalised to Happy Food Store’s existing customers. It is important to note that internet users are generally younger. In this research, any non-probability or probability sampling technique was not used because it was sent to all recipients in the mailing list that had given a marketing permission. Saunders et al. (2019, 298) define that “Sampling is used when it is impracticable to collect data from the entire population.”

As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, 218) state, a sample size of 30 or more will usually result in a sampling distribution that is very close to a normal distribution. What can be concluded from this, is that a sample size of 30 respondents is the minimum amount for statistical analyses and can already portray normal distribution. Yet, is important to note that given the law of large numbers (Saunders et al. 2019, 300), samples of larger absolute size are more likely to be representative of the population that they have been drawn from.

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Interview

For the qualitative research part, the interview was held through a video conference platform Zoom. The call was recorded, and later transcripted. Interview was conducted on the 11th of February 2021 with the Digital Marketing Manager Heidi Waltari. The planned date for the interview was initially in March, but due to a maternal leave, the interview had to be conducted earlier.

3.3.2 Survey

The survey was created using Google Forms, since this was the tool that the company had previously used. All together the survey had 22 questions, of which 14 questions were obligatory. Demographic questions included age, gender, income, family composition and country of residence. Rest of the questions were exploring the behavioural and lifestyle factors such as purchases, free-time activities, media preferences, values, and sustainability activities. The survey was revised by two different people working in the company to ensure relatability of the questions.

The survey was sent to an email list and the response time was for two weeks, from 12th to 26th of March. The researcher asked the commissioning company to boost the survey for more responses due to a very small response rate. Nonetheless, the response rate remained small. The email list itself included at least 5700 people who had given marketing permission, on top of that, the survey was posted on social channels, and therefore the exact response rate is impracticable to measure. The survey was afterwards once more posted on a selected Facebook group, which had over 6000 members, but no responses were acquired from the source.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring reliability of a research is reducing the possibility of getting an answer wrong, by paying attention to the reliability and the validity of the results with careful research design. Reliability indicates the extent to which the data collection procedures and data analysis processes yield consistent results. (Saunders et al. 2009, 156.) Reliability in regards of qualitative data is mainly concerned when the data is coded or categorized.

The response rate and reliability and validity of survey results can be ensured when designing a questionnaire by (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 439):

- Carefully designing each question
- Having clear and pleasing visual presentation
- Lucid explanation of the purpose
- Pilot testing
- Carefully planning and executing delivery, and return of completed surveys

Validity considers whether the results are really about what they appear to be about, like considering causality versus correlation (Saunders et al. 2009, 156). The timing of the research may have implications on the results: during the time of writing the research, an on-going, worldwide pandemic was taking place, which may have amplified the participants' need for different measures to protect one's health and planet.

3.5 Data Analysis Methods

The data was analysed using the SPSS software, and Excel was used for visualization of data. The survey results were first translated from Swedish back to English, and almost all the string values were modified into numerical values. Some string values were left because they did not require further analysis besides frequency analysis. The questions were analysed with the corresponding methods, including means, frequencies, and cross-tabulations.

4 Research Results

4.1 Qualitative research

The purpose of the qualitative research was finding out who are the customers of Happy Food Store and how do they respond to marketing efforts. From the viewpoint of customers, the interview highlighted that according to current knowledge, the Swedish customers are not as much interested or knowledgeable about superfoods as the Finnish counterparts. The main gap in the customer knowledge was regarding the Swedish customers' culture, what kind of products they want and what is trending right now in Sweden. The Swedish customers more actively interact in with each other in social media posts and other groups, exchanging information and recommendations on different products or brands. Many are said to be happy with the remaining possibility of shopping online, yet some miss the brick-and-mortar stores.

Happy Food Store is till rather young in the Swedish market, and the competition is more complex in the market. They are currently only serving the Swedish customers half of the product category which are available to the Finnish customers. Happy Food Store has only a small portion of organic visibility compared with Ruohonjuuri in Finland, and therefore paid advertising is utilized. Communications and advertisements are translated from Finnish to Swedish and are not yet tailored or modified to correspond to any possible cultural differences. Ruohonjuuri is knowledgeable about matters regarding the web shop, such as preferred delivery times and payment methods etc., due to a recent survey gathered through the web shop.

Currently Ruohonjuuri is utilizing tribes to define their customers into groups, and they were formulated based on external report findings and adjusted to Ruohonjuuri's customers. Targeting is done with the use of behavioural data, including what the customers have purchased before, or browsed in the web shop. Therefore, the data they collect comes through either the web shop, which collects data on which products are sold and through which channels, as well as Google Analytics, used to gather data on what the customers buy, how often, how much is the shopping cart value, and from which channels they come to the website. The digital marketing manager considered the data on customer preferences in regards products and their purchasing behaviours most important and valuable.

4.2 Quantitative research

The survey had 34 responses, with 97% being female respondents (1 male responder). Most of the respondents were from the capital city area, Stockholm, the second most from Västra Götaland, which is the second largest county in Sweden (figure 7).

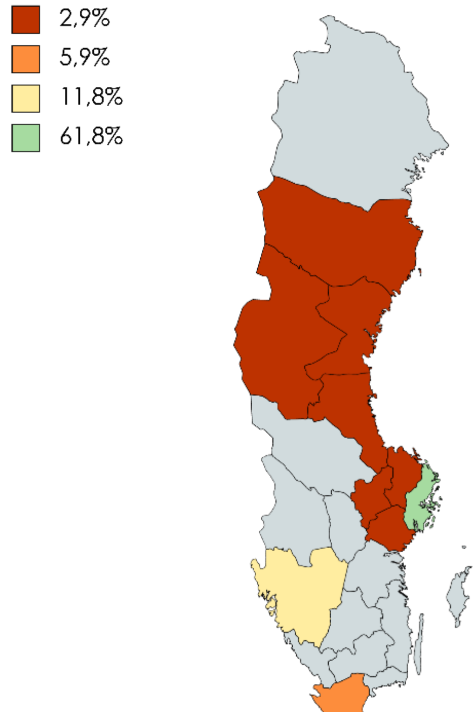

Figure 7. Respondents' country of residence

Using crosstabulation, the county of residence and the channel used to shop were examined. Around 87% of respondents that had visited the brick-and-mortar stores were living in Stockholm at the time of the survey. Of the respondents living in Stockholm, 62% had also purchased from the online store, indicating that despite closing the stores, they had shopped from the online store. Most of the respondents (55, 9%) had shopped only from the online store, and 42% of those were living in Stockholm.

Table 4. Frequency of Shopping at HFS

	Frequency	Percent
1-5 times	17	50,0
6-10 times	9	26,5
more than 10 times	8	23,5
Total	34	100,0

Of the respondents, 50% had shopped from HFS 1-5 times, 26,5% had shopped 6-10 times, and 23,5% had shopped more than 10 times.

Table 5. Purchase Channels

	Frequency	Percent
Online	19	55,9
Brick-and-mortar	9	26,5
Both	6	17,6
Total	34	100,0

Over half of the respondents (55,9%) had only purchase from HFS's web shop, while 26,5% had only purchased from the brick-and-mortar store while they were still open, and 17,6% had purchased through both channels.

Table 6. Counties of residence for respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Gävleborg	1	2,9
Jämtland	1	2,9
Södermanland	1	2,9
Uppsala	1	2,9
Västerbotten	1	2,9
Västernorrland	1	2,9
Västmanland	1	2,9
Skåne	2	5,9
Västra Götaland	4	11,8
Stockholm	21	61,8
Total	34	100,0

A little over a third of the respondents (38,2) were living at the time of the survey somewhere else than Stockholm, leaving most, 61,8% of the respondents, living in Stockholm.

Table 7. Family composition

	Frequency	Percent
13-17-years-old	3	8,8
6-12-years-old	3	8,8
Children under 6-years-old	2	5,9
No children	26	76,5
Total	34	100,0

Most respondents did not have children at the time of the research (76,5).

Table 8. Personal Income (SEK)

	Frequency	Percent
120,000 or less	6	23,1
120,100-200,000	5	19,2
210,000-300,000	4	15,4
310,000-400,000	1	3,8
410,000-500,000	8	30,8
610,000 or more	2	7,7
Total	26	100

Some respondents did not want to disclose their income, and the data showed that the respondents' income levels varied from the lowest to the highest income classifications, with more respondents on the lower side of the spectrum (table 5).

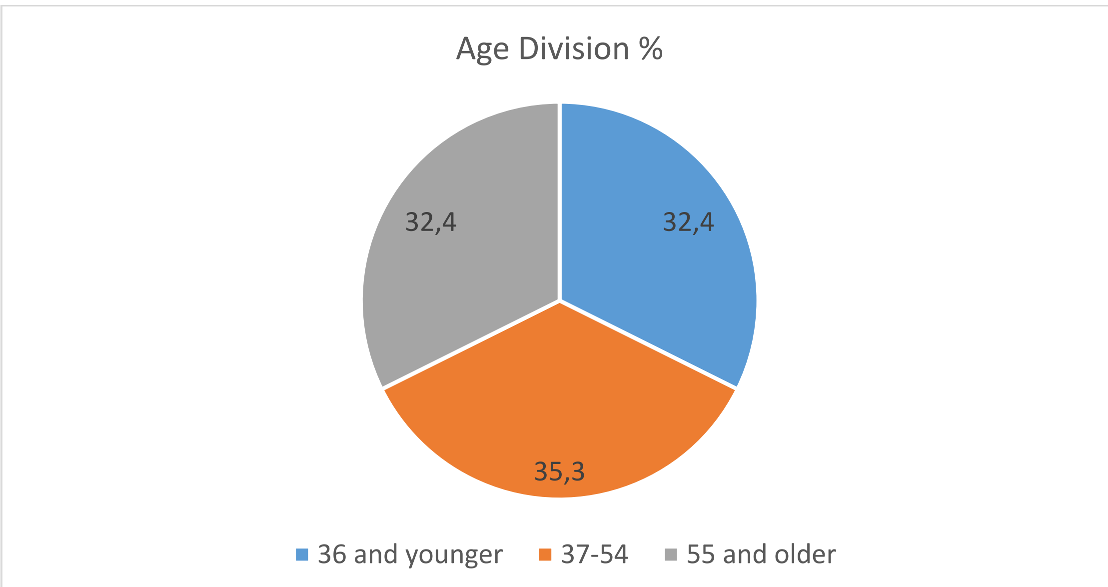

Figure 8. Age division

The research had an almost equal division between age groups "36 and younger", "37-54", and "55 and older", with each group consisting of 11-12 respondents (figure 8). This was an optimal situation, because since the age groups are of equal size, they can be utilised in cross-tabulations, namely looking for correlations between variables in the age groups.

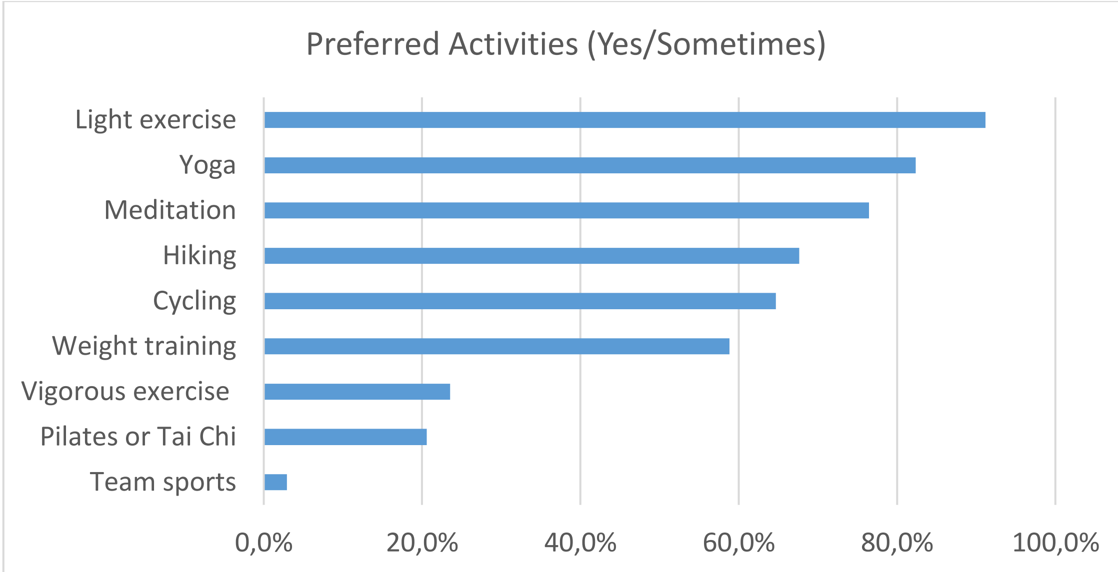

Figure 9. Preferred sports activities

The research intended to find out the respondents' preferred activities (figure 9). The activities that the respondents answered either Yes or Sometimes indicate a preference of either an on-going hobby or an occasional one. Light exercise was the most common, with almost everyone participating in it either sometimes or often, and yoga and meditation being very common activities as well.

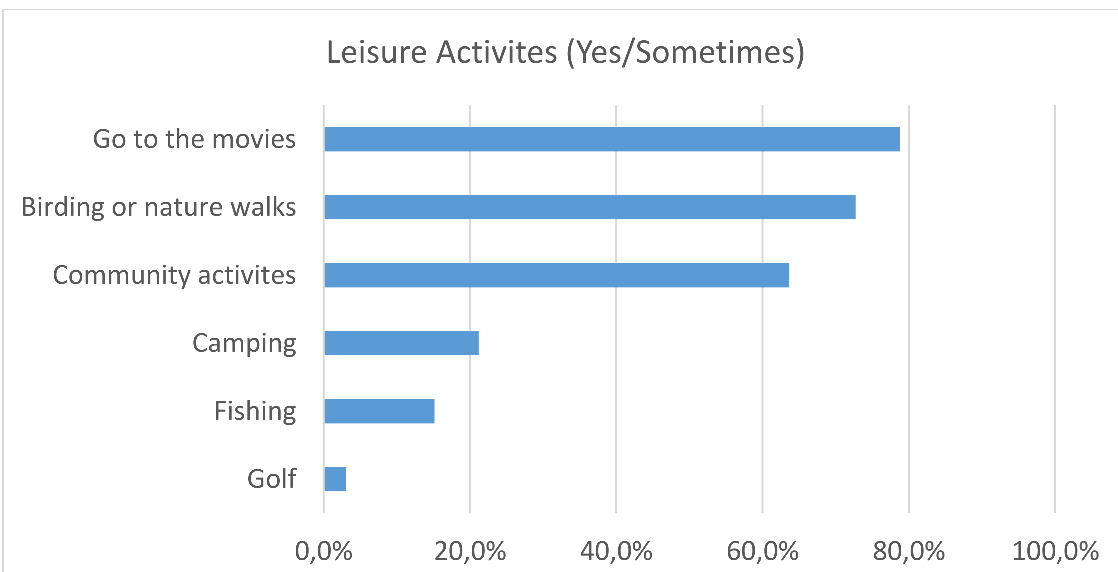

Figure 10. Preferred leisure activities

For leisure, the respondents are active cinema goers, as well as birding/nature walk enjoyers. Community activities are also not uncommon, with over 60% claiming they participate in community activities either often or sometimes (figure 10).

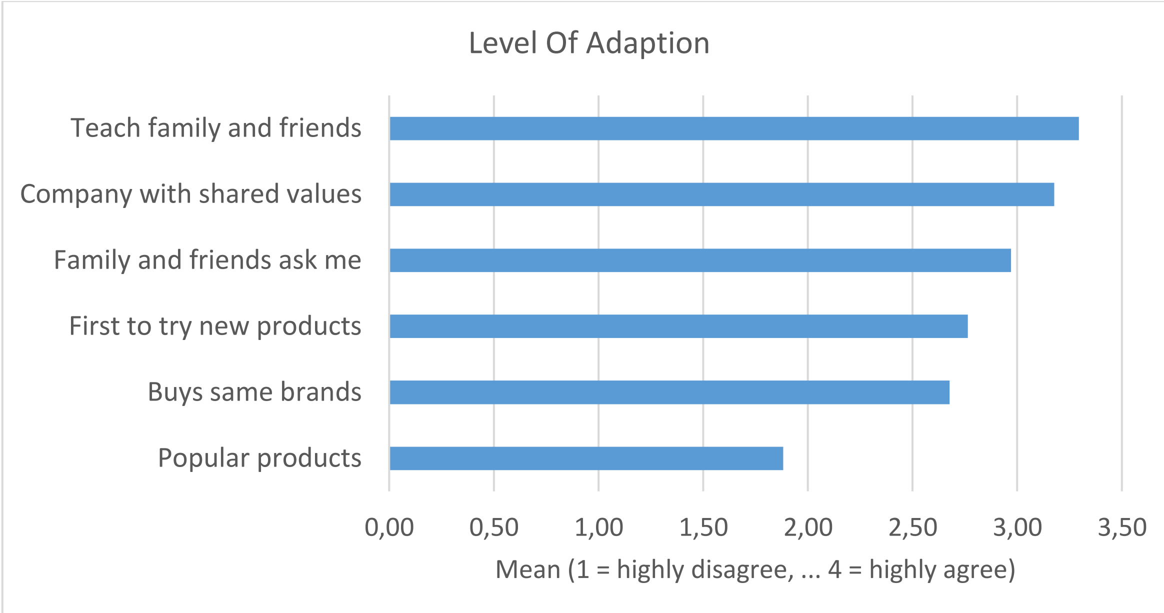

Figure 11. Level of adaption

Some products Ruohonjuuri sells are over-the-counter supplements and vitamins, and other functional/fortified products that are not necessarily common or familiar with the wider population. Therefore, it was of interest to explore the level of adaption of the respondents in regards health and wellness products. The results showed that the average mean for the respondent to "…try to teach [my] family and friends about the benefits of purchasing environmentally friendly products" was 3,29, indicating that most respondents either agree or highly agree with the statement (figure 11). Almost closely as much, the respondents choose to "…buy from a company whose values are most like [my] own", indicating that brand values that are clearly communicated might affect their buying decision. On average, the respondents answered that it is at least somewhat agreeable that "… friends and family often ask [me] for advice on which "green or eco-friendly" brands/products to buy" at a mean of 2,97.

All together the results indicate a level of information-thirst, activism and inner values and motivations that drive them to purchase eco-friendly and natural products. The respondents were less likely to be the first ones to try new products, buy the same brands on a regular basis, and buy products due to their popularity.

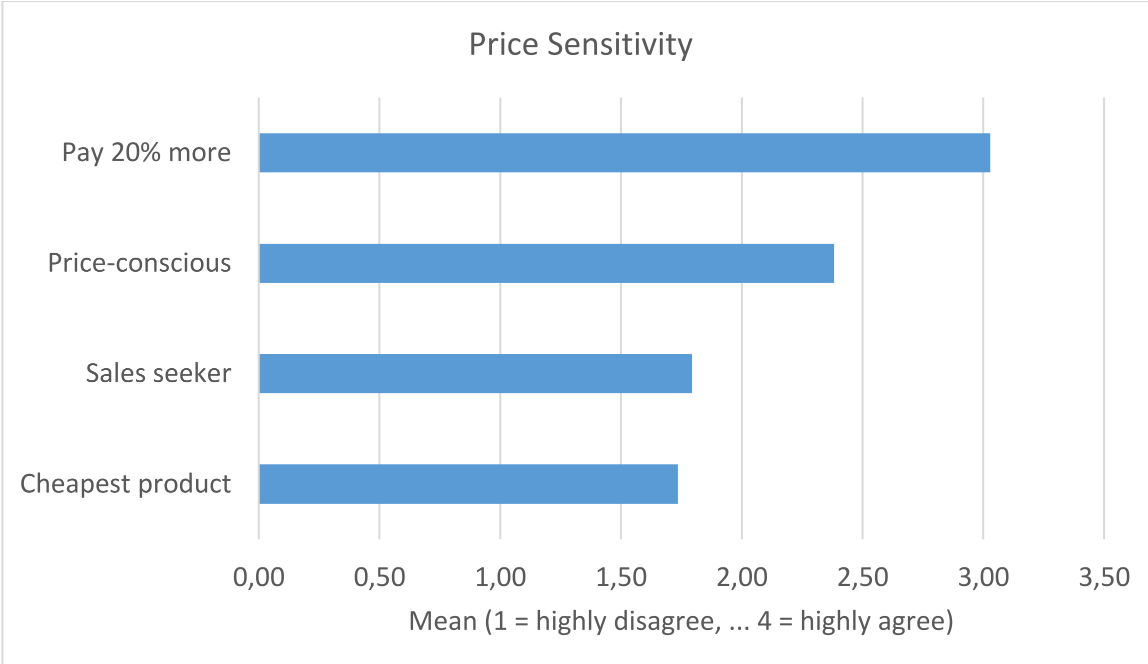

Figure 12. Price sensitivity

The results showed that most agreeably, with the mean rate of 3,03, the respondents are willing to "…willing to pay 20% more for products made in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way". Second most agreeably, and to a slight controversy, the respondents chose "I care about the environment, but my purchase is determined mainly by price", indicating they are still very price-conscious, but are not necessarily always willing to sacrifice price-comfortability for purchases that are more friendly for the environment (figure 12).

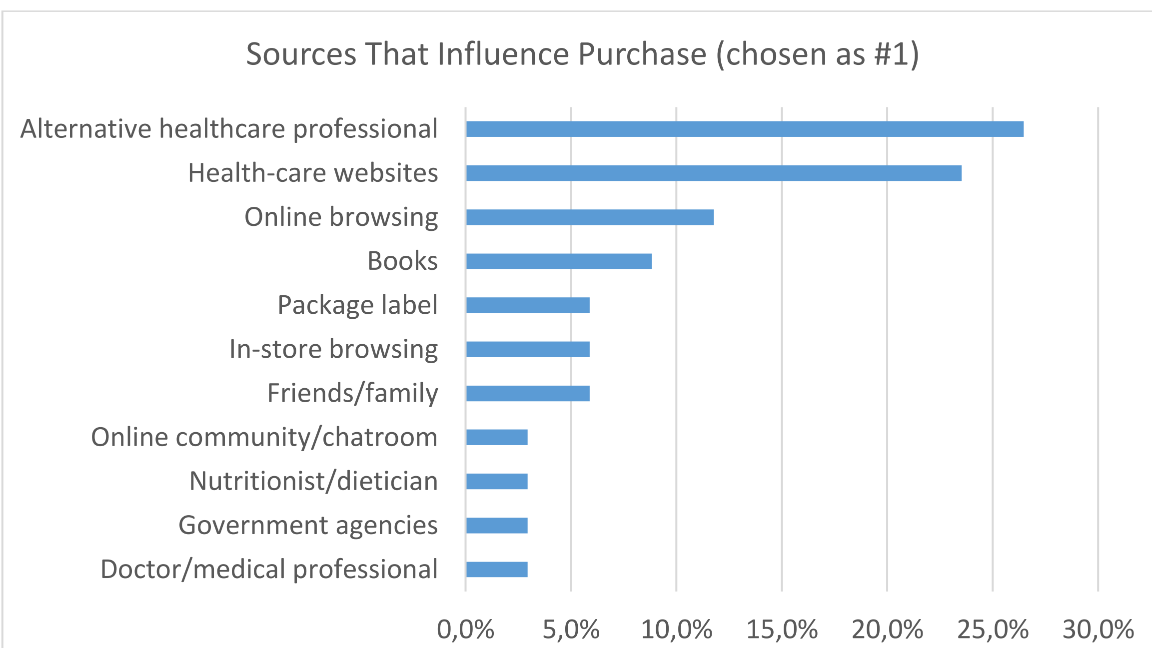

Figure 13. Sources that most influence purchases of eco-friendly and health products

Alternative health care professionals and practitioners gained high popularity when asking for sources that influence the purchase decisions (figure 13), and when asked which sources they trust the most for nutrition and diet information (figure 14). Health-care websites were also very popular, which can indicate anything from branded blog posts to health and wellness oriented websites. Doctors, government agencies, celebrities and advertisements were seen as most unreliable or uninteresting sources for information and influence.

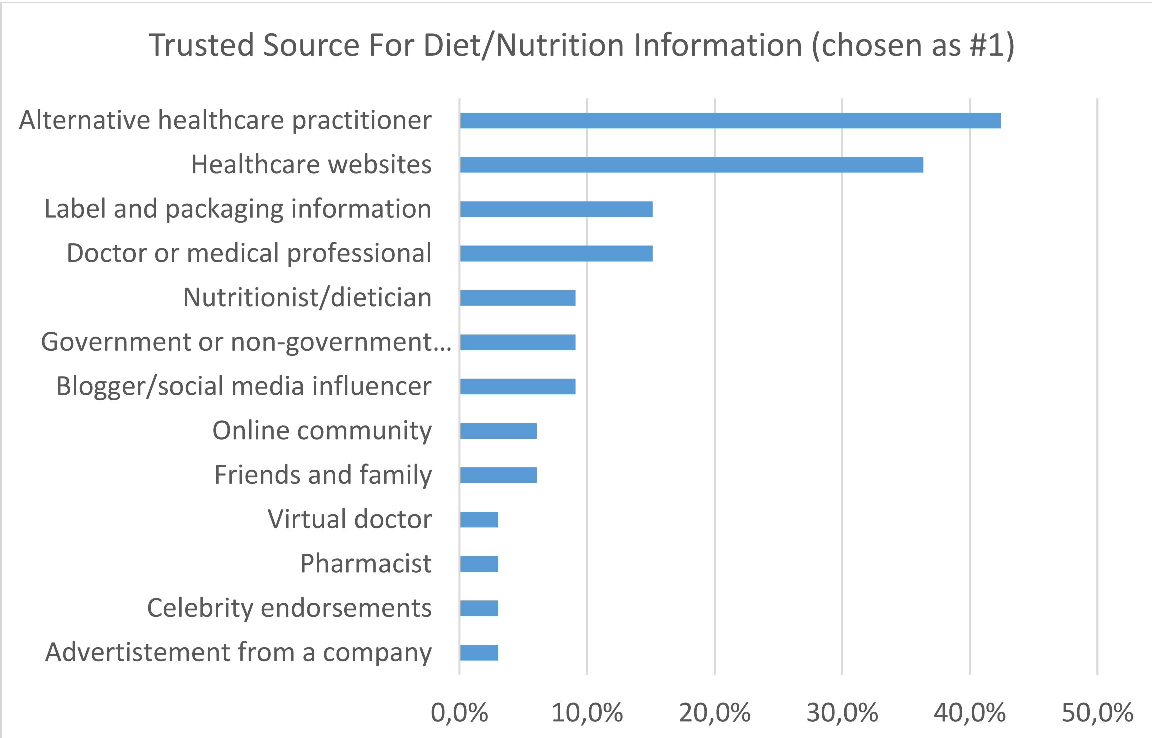

Figure 14. Most trusted sources for diet and nutrition information

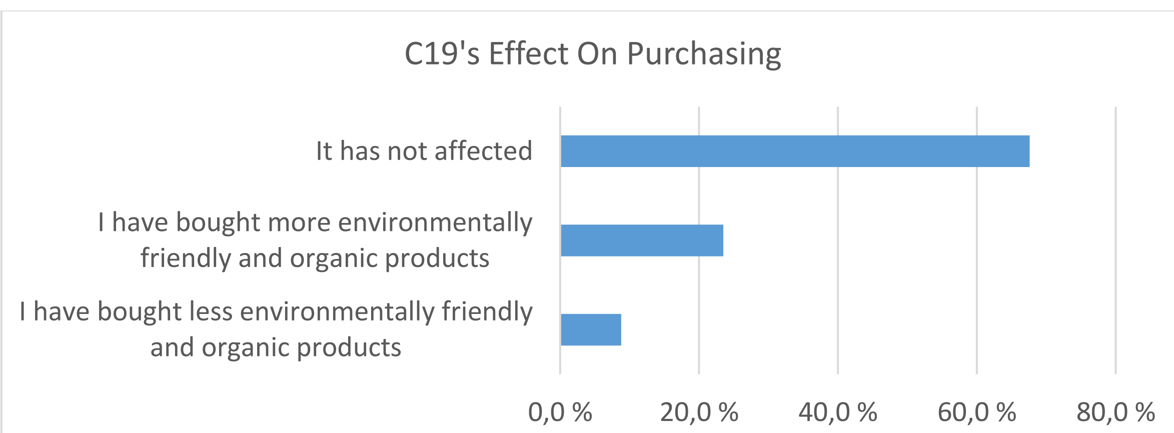

Figure 15. Covid-19's effect on purchasing eco-friendly and/or natural products

Due to the peculiar timing of the research, it was in the interest of the company and researcher to explore whether the consumer behaviour for eco-friendly and/or natural products was impacted by the pandemic (figure 15). Almost 70% of the respondents responded that the pandemic has not affected their consumer behaviour, and a little over 20% responded that they have bought more.

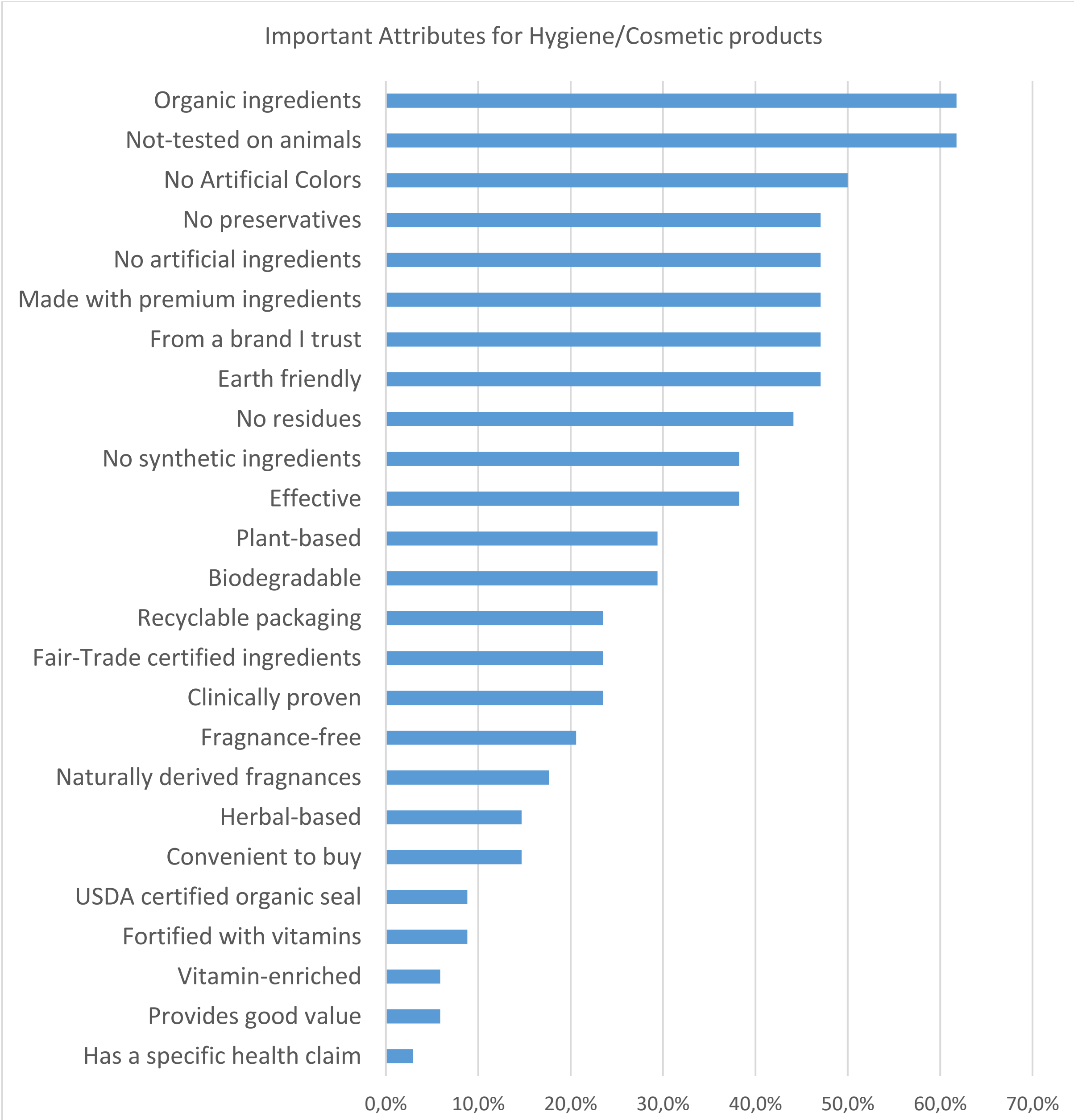

Figure 16. Most important attributes for hygiene and cosmetic products

The most sold products from Happy Food Store are hygiene/cosmetics products and supplements, and therefore it was in the interest of the commissioning company to find out which attributes are preferred by the respondents regarding hygiene and cosmetic products. Products with organic ingredients, that have been not tested on animals, and having no artificial colors stood out as most commonly important to the group of respondents (figure 16). Vitamins and specific health claims were least important, either due to a lack of knowledge of them, or being unsure about the effects of vitamins.

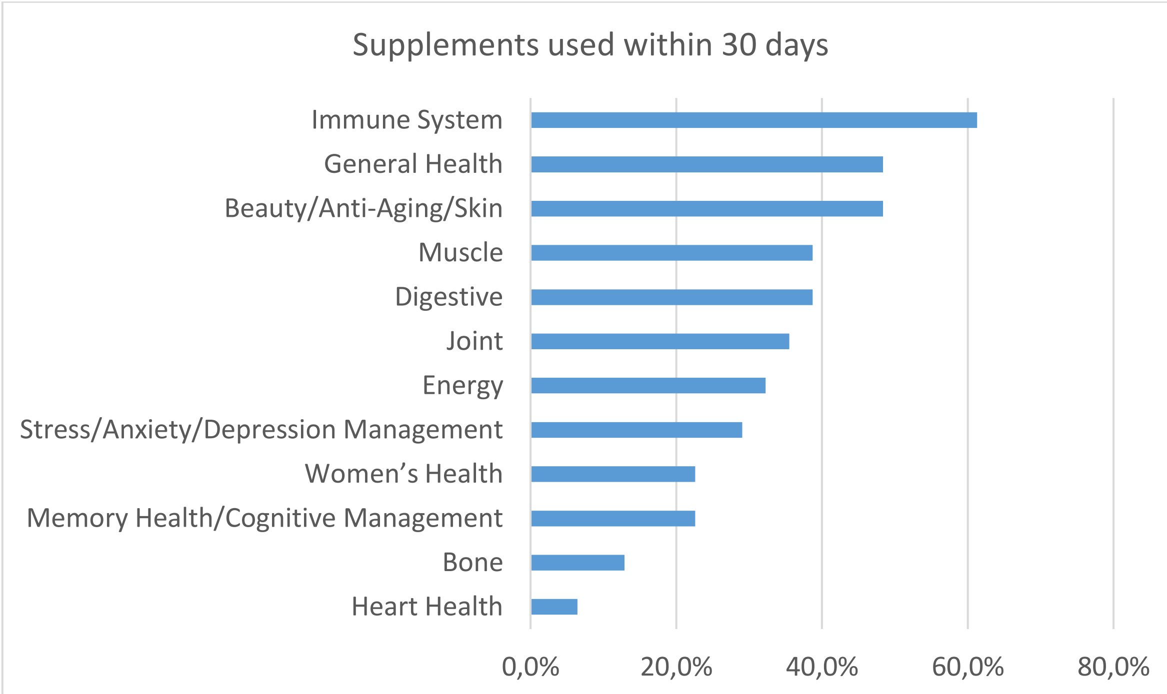

Figure 17. Supplements used in the past 30 days

Since supplements were also one of the main product groups sold at Happy Food Store, it would be valuable to investigate which supplements were most used by the respondents over the past 30 days (figure 17). Over 60% of respondents had taken immune system related supplements in the past 30 days, which was most likely have been impacted by the influenza season and the pandemic. Second most ingested supplement for the group was general health related, and the third most ingested was beauty/anti-aging/skin related supplements.

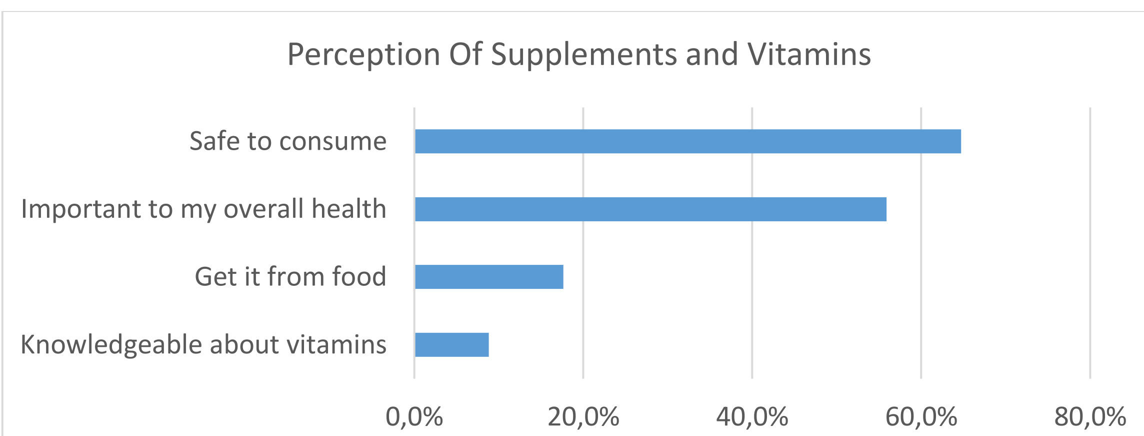

Figure 18. Perception towards supplements and vitamins

Over six in ten respondents would consider supplements and vitamins generally safe to consume, and a little less replied that supplements and vitamins are important factors for their overall health (figure 18). Yet, respondents were least agreeing with a statement that would indicate their confidence or knowledgeability about supplements and vitamins. The results show a positivity towards supplements and vitamins, despite the lack of information about them, this gap could be filled with informing the customers, publishing expert statements and sharing news that englighten the customers in such topics.

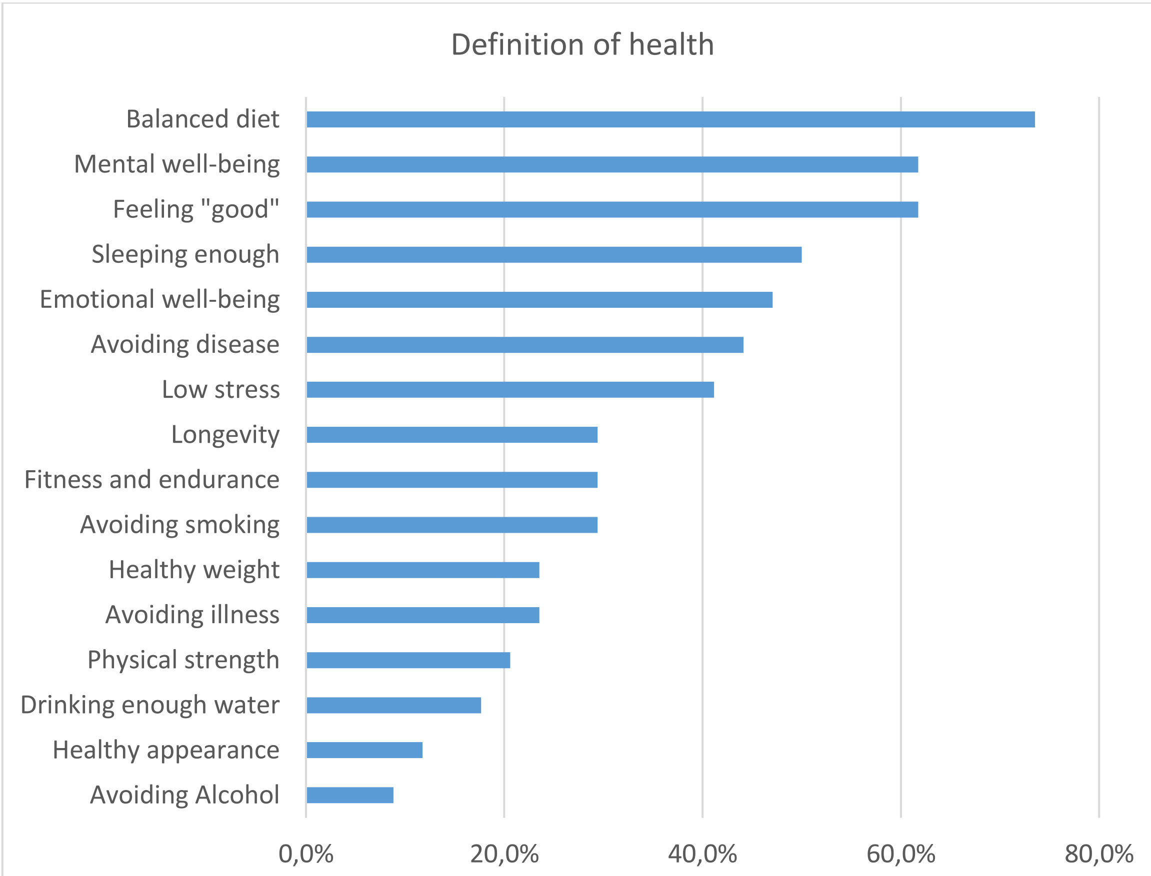

Figure 19. Definition of health

Almost 80% of respondets stated that a balanced diet was one of their most common definitions for health and healthy life. Mental well-being and feeling “good” were also very common definitions for health for almost 60% of the respondents which corresponds with the increasing worry about younger people having burn-outs from a lack of work/life balance, and the ever-increasing discussion around mental health topics. Avoiding alcohol was the least chosen response for the definition of health, indicating that alcohol is not something they are likely to sacrifice for health. As can be seen from the graph, that more intangible values were given more weight, while more tangible values like “healthy appearance” and “physical strenght” were given less weight (figure 19).

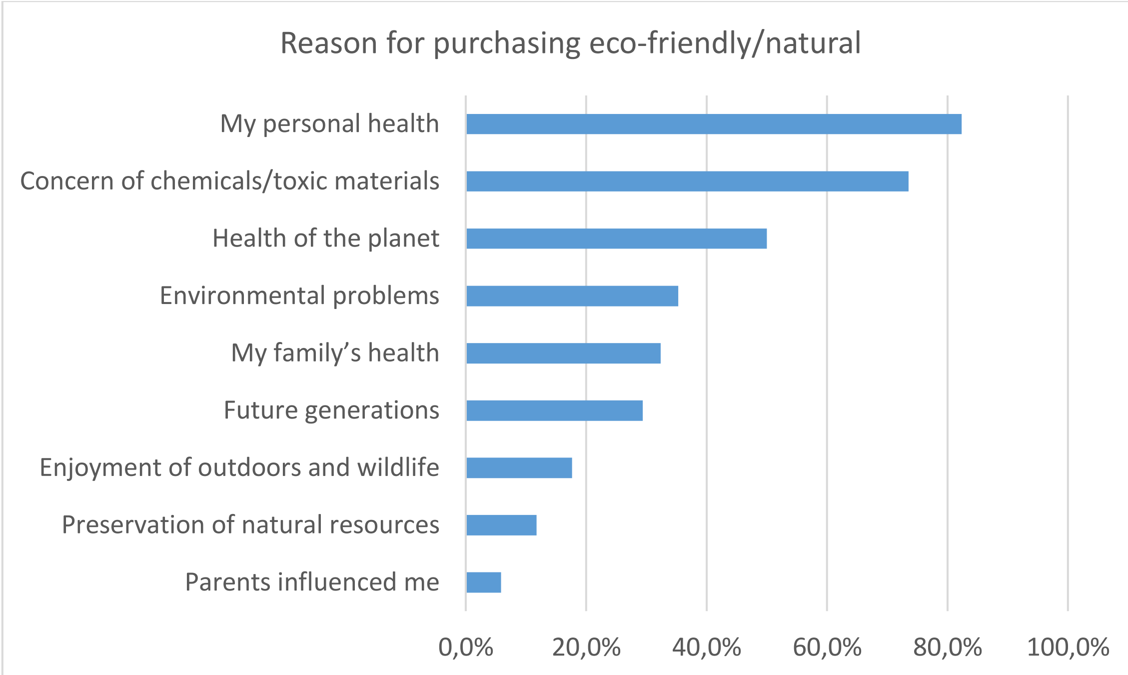

Figure 20. Reason for purchasing eco-friendly and natural products

Over 80% of the respondents had chosen personal health as a reason for purchasing eco-friendly and natural products. Second most common reason was a concern of chemicals and toxic materials. These two reasons indicate a favorability towards a "self-centered", personal responsibility-based and health-aware decision making, rather than their decisions being influence by external means, such as "parents influenced me" and "preservation of natural resources" (figure 20).

4.3 Cross-Tabulations for Establishing the Buyer Personas

The researched used SPSS to cross-tabulate some selected variables, including age with definition of health, price sensitivity, sources of influence over buying decisions, trusted sources of information, used supplements, important attributes for hygiene/cosmetics and perception of supplements (appendix 2). Each age-group had an almost equally number (11-12 respondents per group) of respondents (figure 8), and therefore the cross-tabulations indicate some possible direction for the behaviours, preferences, and values for these age-groups.

The respondents were able to choose their age from a scale of values that were within the proximity of five years. Later when analysing the data, the age variables were recoded into different variables, by creating larger groups, which all happened to have an equal number of respondents. Currently, the age groups determine respondents at a proximity of 15 years due to combining the age groups.

Table 9. Cross-tabulations for the age groups

	36 and younger	37-54	55 and older
Definition of health	✓ Balanced diet ✓ Mental well-being ✓ Low stress ✗ Avoiding alcohol ✗ Avoiding smoking ✗ Fitness and endurance	✓ Emotional well-being ✓ Low stress ✓ Mental well-being ✓ Balanced diet ✓ Feeling "good" ✗ Healthy appearance ✗ Healthy weight	✓ Feeling "good" ✓ Sleep ✓ Balanced diet ✗ Drinking enough ater ✗ Avoiding alcohol ✗ Healthy appearance ✗ Low stress
Price sensitivity	No significant difference	✓ Most likely to be price-conscious ✓ Most likely to choose the cheapest option	✓ Most likely to be willing to pay 20% or more
Source of influence	✓ Health-care related websites ✓ Online browsing ✓ Friends and family ✗ Fitness trainer/coach ✗ In-store browsing ✗ Magazine/newspaper	✓ Health-care related websites ✓ Alternative healthcare professional (e.g. herbalist) ✓ Books ✗ Government agencies ✗ Magazines/newspaper ✗ Package label	✓ Magazines/newspaper ✓ Health-care related websites ✓ Alternative healthcare professional (e.g. herbalist) ✗ Celebrity/social media influencer ✗ Friends/family ✗ Government agencies ✗ Information/advertisement from brand ✗ Online community/chatroom ✗ Package label
Trusted sources	✓ Health-care websites ✓ Nutritionist/dietician ✗ Blogger/social media influencer ✗ Online community or chatroom ✗ Pharmacist	✓ Alternative healthcare practitioner ✓ Healthcare related websites ✗ Fitness trainer	✓ Alternative healthcare practitioner ✓ Healthcare related websites ✗ Government or non-government expert associations ✗ Pharmacist

	✗ Virtual doctor or medical professional		✗ Virtual doctor or medical professional
Supplement use	✓ General health ✓ Joint ✓ Immune system ✗ Bone ✗ Heart health	✓ General health ✓ Beauty/Anti-aging/Skin ✓ Immune system ✗ Heart health ✗ Joint	✓ Beauty/Anti-aging/Skin ✓ Digestive ✓ Immune system ✗ Memory Health/Cognitive Management
Important attributes for cosmetic/hygiene	✓ Earth friendly ✓ From a brand I trust ✓ Not-tested on animals ✓ Organic ingredients ✗ Fortified with vitamins ✗ Has a specific health claim	✓ Effective ✓ No artificial colours ✓ Organic ingredients	✓ No artificial colours ✓ Made with premium ingredients ✓ No preservatives ✗ Convenient to buy ✗ Fortified with vitamins ✗ Provides good value ✗ Vitamin enriched ✗ Has a specific health claim
Perception of supplements	✓ Vitamins and nutrients from food	✓ Important to my overall health and nutrition	✓ Important to my overall health and nutrition

No significant differences were found for cross-tabulations with age and reasons for purchasing natural and ecological products (personal health and toxicity being the most common reasons for all age groups), and neither for levels of adoption: all age-groups responded that they are the ones families and friends ask advice from, and that they teach their families and friends about natural and ecological products. Only those variables that were perceived as important were included in the cross-tabulations and the buyer personas (chapter 6.2). The researcher created positive and negative buyer personas, in which the positive includes only those values that the age group showed clear preference toward. The negative buyer persona includes those values that were clearly lacking in preference for the age group. Appendix 2 shows all the values and their data for the age-groups.

5 Discussion

The research findings are analyzed from the buyer decision process perspective, as consumer behaviour extends beyond the actual purchase situation and which is more difficult to influence solely by marketing efforts. Below is discussion using the phases of the buyer decision process (chapter 2.2), integrated with theory from consumer behaviour (chapter 2.3) and analyzed with the quantitative research (chapter 4.2) data. This discussion incorporates data from all the respondents, while the buyer personas (chapter 4.3; 6.2) go further to analyze the quantitative research findings to highlight differences between age groups. Data unrelated to the buyer decision process is summarized in chapter 6.1 as well as visualized in chapter 4.2.

The first phase of the buyer decision process is need recognition (chapter 2.2.1). The respondents were asked to give a reason to why they purchase natural and ecological products (figure 20), and the answer that had the most responses was for personal health reasons and concerns of chemicals/toxic materials. Parents' influence and the preservation of natural resources had the least answers, which indicate that the need of the respondents is to clearly take care of themselves and feel safe as a consumer. Therefore, indicating that the need of Happy Food Store's customers is triggered by an internal stimulus (stay safe and healthy). Figure 18 represents how the respondents perceive supplements and vitamins, and almost 60% answered that they are important to the respondents' overall health. From this it can be concluded that Happy Food Store should emphasize their capability to provide solutions so that the customers can feel healthy and safe as consumers.

The second phase of the buyer decision process is information search (chapter 2.2.2), and for which the respondents were asked which sources of information influence their purchase behaviour of eco-friendly and health related products (figure 13), and which sources they trust for nutrition and diet related information (figure 14). Among all the options, the respondents showed clear preference towards alternative healthcare professionals, like herbalists, and health-care websites to influence their purchase decisions and be trusted information sources. At the other end of the spectrum in regards favourability were government agencies, doctors and other medical professionals, celebrities, and advertisements from companies. For informing the customers it is therefore advisable that there are as many collaborations with alternative health-care professionals and service providers, as well as paid/unpaid promotions with health-care websites like blogs or magazines.

After the need and information search come the evaluation of alternatives (chapter 2.2.3), in which the consumer seeks other sources of information or compares between companies or brands. In figure 11 the respondents' level of adaption was inquired, and the results showed that they are highly likely to buy from companies with shared values. They are much less likely to buy products just because they are popular and less likely to buy the same brands consistently. This could indicate that the consumers are highly involved and interested in companies who are able to verbalize their values efficiently as well as prove that what they do as a company is authentically aligned with their activities.

Last phase before the actual decision making is the purchase decision (2.2.4), which can be affected by many factors, ranging from cultural (chapter 2.3.1), social (chapter 2.3.2), personal (chapter 2.3.3), and psychological factors (2.3.4). Price sensitivities (which are affected by personal and cultural factors) and level of adoption could take affect during the last phases of the process. Price sensitivity was inquired in the survey and the results in figure 12 indicated that most of the respondents are likely to pay 20% or more for products that are made in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way. Yet, many of the respondents are also price conscious, meaning that despite caring for the environment, their purchase is determined by price. It is important to note that there were clear differences among the age groups (chapter 6.2) in price sensitivities, which are affected by the aforementioned factors. It was also inquired whether the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the purchasing of natural and eco-friendly products, and a majority answered that it had not had an effect and had even increased their purchases.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Key findings

Using quantitative and qualitative methods and focusing on the current situation of the commissioning company, the research results together with theory on buyer personas, consumer behaviours and buyer decision processes provided answers to the research question and investigative questions.

It was identified during the interview with the digital marketing manager of Ruohonjuuri, Heidi Waltari (chapter 4.1), that the current knowledge for Happy Food Store's customers is strong regarding the web shop operations, for example what delivery methods, delivery times and payment methods they prefer. It was also noted that the Swedish customers are not as interested or knowledgeable about superfoods as the Finnish counterparts. The main gap in the customer knowledge was regarding the Swedish customers' culture, and what kind of products they want and what is trending right now in Sweden. Communications and advertisements are translated from Finnish to Swedish and are not yet tailored or modified to correspond to any possible cultural differences. Currently Ruohonjuuri is utilizing tribes to define their customers into groups, which were formulated based on external report findings that were adjusted to Ruohonjuuri's customers. Target marketing is done with the use of behavioural data, like what the customers have purchased before or browsed in the web shop. The digital marketing manager considered data on customer preferences in regards products and their purchasing behaviours as most important and valuable.

Based on the qualitative research (chapter 4.1), it was identified where it is that Ruohonjuuri was lacking customer understanding, and which data they were already collecting and utilizing. During the interview it was also validated whether the questions asked in the survey were relevant, and interest to the commissioning company. Based on the interview findings, it was discovered that the Swedish and Finnish consumers differ in their consumer behaviour, but that the communication and marketing efforts are not differentiated for the Swedish market.

The quantitative research aimed to recognize the factors that affect Happy Food Store's customers' consumer behaviours and buyer decision processes. Consumer behaviour (chapter 2.3) seeks to explain the cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that affect consumer behaviour for a given market or geographical location. Buyer decision processes (chapter 2.2) considers the complexity of decisions, and the involvement required from the buyer's side when making a purchase. Both topics are intertwined, while buyer decision looks at how a decision regards a specific product or service is made, and consumer behaviour looks at all the prevalent factors (internal and external) in an individual's life that affect the way they behave as a consumer.

Many factors regarding consumer behaviour and buyer decision processes were addressed in the survey. The results were analyzed using the phases in the buyer decision process in chapter 5. From the consumer behaviour perspective, the findings showed that the respondents are active partakers in light exercise, meditation and yoga; they enjoy movies, walks and occasional community activities; they are likely to teach family and friends about benefits of purchasing environmentally friendly products, and buy from companies with shared values; they are likely to pay 20% or more for products made in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way; they showed clear preference toward alternative health-care professionals and being influenced by health-care websites; they considered product attributes like 'organic' and 'cruelty-free' to be most important; they are currently using supplements to take care of their general health, immune system and skin; they mostly consider supplements and vitamins to be important for their overall health, and consider them generally safe to ingest; they define mental health and well-being, balanced diet and feeling "good" as cornerstones for healthy life; their main reasons for purchasing eco-friendly and natural products were due to personal health reasons and concerns over toxic substances and chemicals. Together these make up the factors that affect the respondents' preferences to buy from companies like Happy Food Store, and it is possible to use these findings to target more potential customers that have not yet found Happy Food Store.

The researcher also used the cross-tabulation function in SPSS to discover whether different age groups portrayed different preferences, consumer behaviours and buyer decision processes (chapter 4.3). The results showed clear differences between respondents aged under 36, respondents aged from 37 to 54 and respondents over the age of 55. Each group had an almost equal number of respondents, which eased the process of comparing the age groups. Some differences that set the buyer personas apart included differences in regards how they defined health, how they get influenced to buy Happy Food Store's products, who they trust for nutrition advice, price sensitivities, how they are currently taking care of their health and which product attributes they value/seek for (table 9).

6.2 Recommendations

The results of the research were summarized in buyer personas, which show the generational differences that were able to be extracted with cross-tabulations. These buyer personas can be printed out and shared within the company, to understand which products are of interest to whom, and by which methods they are most likely to be influenced by. It gives the customers a humane touch, a face, and remind everyone interacting with customers of the different generational differences in regards values, and lifestyles.

Buyer personas

Ages 36 and younger

Figure 21. Positive buyer persona for 36-year-olds and younger

Figure 22. Negative buyer persona for 36-year-olds and younger

The group of 36-year-olds and younger defined health by having a balanced diet, caring for mental well-being, and having low stress. This means that products with such promises or informational content relating to these could resonate with this age group. Their purchase decisions are informed and influenced by health-care related websites, which could include branded blog posts or influencer blog posts. From all the age groups, friends and family were most likely to affect this age groups' decision making. They are also likely to follow nutritionists or other nutrition related professionals and experts, from which they trust advice from. Their supplement intake during the time of the survey included supplements and vitamins for general health, joints, and the immune system. They also claimed that the most important attributes they look for in cosmetic and hygiene products were "earth friendly", "from a brand I trust", "not-tested on animals" and "organic ingredients". This age group was also most likely to enjoy their vitamins and nutrients from food, which complements their definition of health ("balanced diet"). For this age group, instead of supplements, they could be more interested in ways to make their meals more "enriched" with high quality and nutrient dense products (figures 21-22).

Ages 37-54

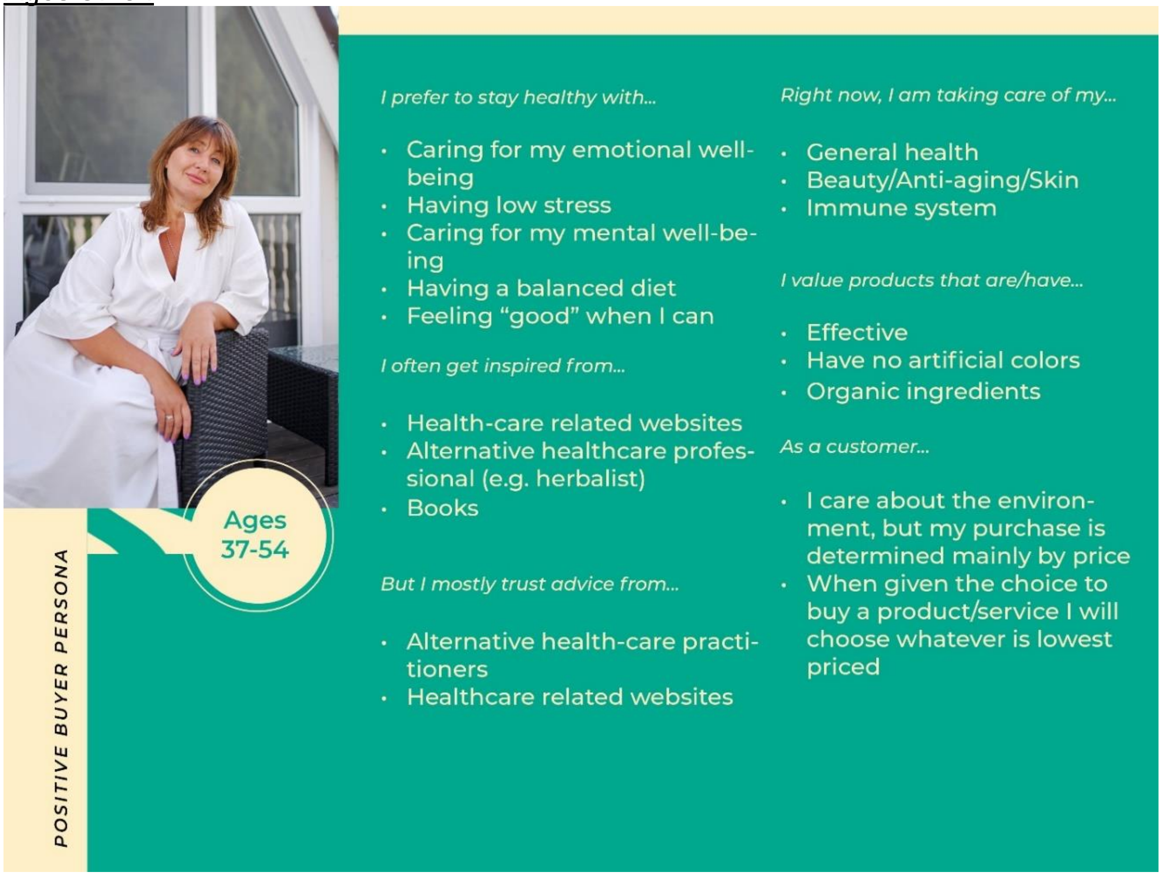

Figure 23. Positive buyer persona for 37-54-year-olds

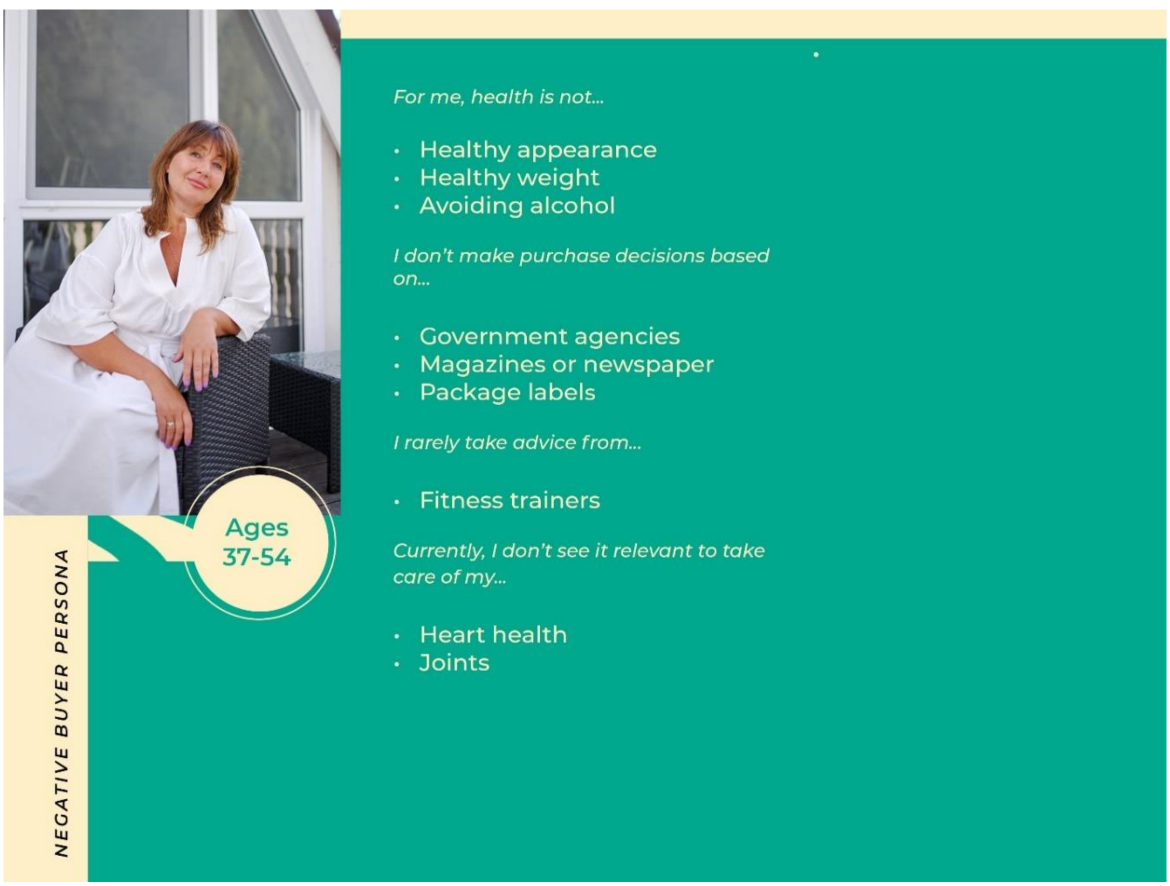

Figure 24. Negative buyer persona for 37-54-year-olds

For respondents aged from 37 to 54, their definition of health was most likely taking care of emotional well-being and feeling “good” when they can. Between the age groups, books were the most likely to be a source of influence for this age group. They were most likely to trust advice from alternative health-care professionals and health-care related websites above any other options. They were also among most likely to be taking supplements for beauty/skin. Product attributes they look for in hygiene and cosmetic products should be “effective”, “have no artificial colours” and be made with “organic ingredients”. They are the customers that are most likely to be price-conscious and choose a product that is the lowest priced (figures 23-24).

<u>Ages 55 and older</u>

Figure 25. Positive buyer persona for 55-year-olds and older

Figure 26. Negative buyer persona for 55-year-olds and older

The respondents of age 55 and older were most likely to define health with a healthy amount of sleep. They were more likely to be influenced by magazines and newspapers than the other groups. They mostly trust advice from alternative healthcare practitioners and healthcare related websites. They are most likely to be the ones to be supplementing for the health of their digestive system. The product attributes they value most for hygiene and cosmetics products were products made with "no artificial colours", "premium ingredients", and "no preservatives". They are the most willing from the age groups to pay 20% or more for products alike the ones Happy Food Store sells (figures 25-26).

Brand Voice

The brand voice (chapter 2.4) was made with the buyer personas in mind. Each voice characteristic has been chosen based on one buyer persona. It is not intended Happy Food Store adapt these on their own, but possibly integrate them to their currently existing brand voice guidelines as complementary. Friendly was chosen with the 36 and younger in mind, since they are likely to be influenced by family and friends, and therefore prefer word-of-mouth recommendations. Keeping company messaging down-to-earth and approachable ensures a friendly tone. Energetic was chosen with the 55 and older respondents in mind, as they are those appreciating a good night's sleep. They prefer to feel full of life and well rested, and this tone of voice is meant to express it. Gleaming was chosen with the 37 to 54-year-olds in mind, since they are taking care of their skin and give special attention to feeling "good" internally, and when one feels good, it can be seen externally from a gleaming.

Table 10. Brand voice based on Happy Food Store's buyer personas

	Description	Do's	Don'ts
ENERGETIC 	*We stay on top with latest health trends and always strive to improve our operations.*	• *Use tone of voice or emojis to show enthusiasm* • *Turn things to positive* • *Know when to rest and when to move*	• *Use passive voice* • *Approach everyone similarly* • *Use the most common adjectives*
FRIENDLY 	*We want everyone to benefit from healthy and sustainable goods, all around the planet.*	• *Talk in a respectful, casual manner, like to a friend or co-worker* • *Make jokes to cheer up* • *Show genuine interest* • *Inclusive language*	• *Sound cold or too professional* • *Sell in a manipulative manner* • *Turn down ideas* • *Cut conversations short*
GLEAMING 	*The health of the people and planet are our main goal, and we are proud and happy to serve.*	• *Radiate healthy mindset* • *Exceed expectations by adding magic ingredient* • *Raise the energy*	• *Let minor things bother* • *Lower the shine of others* • *Associate age with anything*

6.3 Reliability, Validity and Generalisability

The reliability of the research was sufficiently high, but factors such as translating questions into another language, as well as having many different types of questions posed some risks to the reliability. The risks regarding the translation of the survey, due to the researcher's inability to translate the survey into Swedish by themselves was handled by having two bilingual friends translate the survey, including two other people to proof check and test the survey.

During the analysis of the results, the researcher found out that some respondents had answered the "Which of the following information sources influence the purchasing of eco-friendly and health products?” and “Which information sources do you trust when looking for information on diets and nutrition?” inconsistently, as the point was to choose three from the list of options and pick them in the order from most important to least important (1= most important… 3= least important). This is not portrayed in appendix 1, as it has the English version which was later translated to Swedish and some modifications made to the question types. Some respondents had evaluated all options with a value from 1-3, which skewed the results unjustly, making some variables much more popular than intended. Those responses had to be either modified or completely removed. Some respondents had only chosen one important factor, but they were kept in the results, as it is possible for respondents to only use or trust one source of information. All together five responses had to be removed from the question regarding the trusted information sources. This error could possibly have been avoided with better description and explanation on how to answer the question.

As mentioned in chapter 3.1.2, surveys are subject to biases because they are not useful for discovering completely new, unexpected information. Due to restrictions for SPSS to analyse open ended questions, those were limited to only a few questions which were requested by the commissioning company. These open-ended questions were delivered straight to the company, without including them in the report due to it including irrelevant information for the research objective.

Other biases include subject biases towards a favourability of the company, or the issues being discussed. When being asked for important attributes regarding skincare and hygiene products, it is possible that respondents choose factors due to a feeling of obligation to purchase certain products naturally or ethically. Whether these translate to actual behaviours is a question that many companies seek to answer by combining purchase data from loyalty cards with survey responses.

During the data cleanup, the data was transferred from Google Forms to Excel, then to SPSS. Before transferring to SPSS, the data required extensive modification, as most values were string values, and in Swedish language. This required the researcher to make multiple choice question into binary questions, but due to a small number of responses it was manually doable. All scale questions were required to be translated into binary questions as well. As for data loss or researcher’s input errors, they should be rather marginal, because the number of subjects was small, and the researcher was able to do it sufficiently.

The validity of the quantitative research and data-analysis is to be carefully considered. As mentioned in chapter 4.4., timing of the research may have implications on the research, and during the timing of the research was a global pandemic. It was pursued by the researcher to explore whether the pandemic had affected their purchase decision due to this with the last question inquiring whether Covid-19 had affected their purchase patterns.

Whether the cross-tabulations used in conjunction with creating buyer personas is a reliable method to create them and portray the results as generalizable to a wider audience is questionable – yet may work to some extent. Using age as a factor to separate a customer base may not be reliable, because not all that are the same age represent the same needs. Though generational differences should not be dismissed, but whether they affect the purchase decisions solely is a strong statement. The results of the research are not generalisable to any other population than Happy Food Store's customers who have given marketing permission. Therefore, the results may not be utilisable for any other organisation.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Ruohonjuuri could also benefit from using focus groups to conduct in-depth interviews to find out more about how their consumers make decisions regarding their products. Considering differences between low- and high-involvement products, it would be valuable to know whether the products fall into "grocery store" -low-involvement product category, or to medium-involvement product category. More specifically, how much do the customers invest or are involved in the purchase decision they make regarding the different products Ruohonjuuri sells. With interviews, it is easier to discover something new.

It would be advisable that the survey results to be transferred to Ruohonjuuri's Customer Data Platform for future use, as in the future, when more data is collected through surveys and customer satisfaction surveys, they are then to be found in one platform. When there is more data collected throughout a longer period, it is easier to make assumptions or have direction for future development. Revella (2015, 114) states "When we group people together who are like minded with respect to their expectations when doing business with us, we get the most actionable guidance about how we can match our solution to their needs."

It would also be valuable to always test research results with targeted campaigning. Naturally, it requires resources, but for companies seeking to be the makers of the future, requires making decisions that no other company makes and taking risks no other company takes. Taking into account the possibility of expanding the web shop to international markets, it will be crucial to stay consistent with the brand voice, and conduct content audit, which can help to identify the pages that get the most interest, determine what the most successful content has in common and see the Return On Investment (ROI) for different areas of the website.

6.5 Self-Evaluation

The commissioning company requested research into Happy Food Store's customers, which is in the Swedish market serving Ruohonjuuri's products. They were curious to know more about the consumer behaviours and buying decision processes, and the researcher had self-interest to conduct a segmentation with the data that would have been gathered through the survey.

The topic was initially set as "Data-Driven Market Segmentation for Ruohonjuuri Oy", but after the theory part of the research had been written and the quantitative research had been collected, the researcher understood that it was not possible to conduct a data-driven segmentation with the number of respondents that the survey had accumulated. During the literature review (Dolnicar, Grün, Leisch, Schmidt 2014, 296-306) it had become evident that the ratio for variable to subjects was around 24-70 per one variable (one variable requires at least 24-70 respondents), but till then the survey had only had 34 respondents. It would have been possible to decrease the number of variables, but more complicated to get more respondents. After consulting with the thesis advisor, the topic of the research was pivoted, and instead of focusing on groups of customers, or segments, it was more plausible to look at individual customers and at creating buyer personas, which were more focused on individuals. Despite not accounting all the risks in the process, such as not having enough data, the research was proceeded systemically and further risks minimized, and the buyer personas created. The segmentation seemed plausible at the beginning, though many literature sources regarding segmentation pointed out that segmentation is complex and very resource-extensive and require formal teams or external consultation to be conducted. The segmentation, as well as the buyer personas and brand voice, were all ignited from the researcher's curiosity of wanting to exceed expectations and go another step further. In the end, the research completely fulfilled the commissioning company's needs and wants for the research project. The researcher is not confident to write research papers, conduct market research, analyse data and portray it in an understandable way.

The most important learning was related to using peer-reviewed sources, industry reports and assessing the validity of sources. The researcher had the least confidence regarding writing professionally, it felt too often that the writing was too casual for a research paper. It was also hard for the researcher to, after six months of working on the paper, to conclude which information was irrelevant to the research, especially in the theoretical framework. Thus, the researcher went through the report multiple of times, to read over and analyze which information was critical in regards having enough theory to back up to with the research findings.

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Appendix 1. Survey

Happy Food Store Survey

Hello!

This survey is made on behalf of Happy Food Store Sweden AB, and its purpose is to gain an
understanding Happy Food Store's customers, to serve the people and the planet even better while
leading the way for the industry.

Your answers will remain confidential, but the answers may be combined with your exist-ing data in HFS's
customer database.

Thank you for being a part of sustaining life on the planet.

Happy answering!

How many times have you shopped at HFS?

- ◯ 1-5 times
- ◯ 6-10 times
- ◯ more than 10 times

Which shop have you purchased from?

- ☐ Happy Food Store online store
- ☐ Happy Food Store brick-and-mortar

In the following questions, you may choose all options that apply. We are curious to know what lead you
to become invested in purchasing planet-friendly and people-friendly products.

What is the definition of health to you?

- [ ] Absence of disease
- [ ] Avoiding alcohol
- [ ] Avoiding illness
- [ ] Avoiding smoking and tobacco
- [ ] Drinking enough water
- [ ] Eating a balanced diet
- [ ] Emotional well-being
- [ ] Feeling "good"
- [ ] Fitness and endurance
- [ ] Getting enough sleep
- [ ] Healthy appearance
- [ ] Longevity/living for a long time
- [ ] Low stress
- [ ] Maintaining a healthy weight
- [ ] Mental well-being
- [ ] Physical strength

Why did you start purchasing eco-friendly and/or natural prodcts?

- ☐ A current and prevalent issue in the media
- ☐ Concerns about chemicals/toxic materials in my house
- ☐ Concerns about environmental problems
- ☐ Enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife
- ☐ How my parents influenced me
- ☐ My family’s health
- ☐ My personal health
- ☐ Overall health of the planet
- ☐ The impact on future generations
- ☐ The influence of a friend of teacher
- ☐ To conserve natural resources
- ☐ To reduce chemicals in the environment

Do you agree with the following statements? (1 = Highly disagree, 2 = Somewhat disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Highly agree)

	1	2	3	4
I try to teach my family and friends about the benefits of purchasing environmentally friendly products	○	○	○	○
My friends and family often ask me for advice on which “green or eco-friendly” brands/products to buy	○	○	○	○
I like being the first to try new products and brands	○	○	○	○
I tend to choose brands that are popular	○	○	○	○
I will usually buy the same brand on a regular basis	○	○	○	○
I will buy from a company whose values are most like my own	○	○	○	○

Purchase decisions. Do you agree with... (1 = Highly disagree, 2 = Somewhat disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Highly agree)

	1	2	3	4
I am willing to pay 20% more for products made in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way	○	○	○	○
I care about the environment, but my purchase is determined mainly by price	○	○	○	○
I wait to buy something until it is on sale	○	○	○	○
When given the choice to buy a product/service I will choose whatever is lowest priced	○	○	○	○

Which of the following information sources influence the purchasing of eco-friendly and health products? (Pick three in the order of importance)

- ☐ Alternative healthcare professional (e.g. herbalist)
- ☐ Books
- ☐ Brochures at a clinic or doctor's office
- ☐ Celebrity/social media influencer
- ☐ Direct mail
- ☐ Doctor/medical professional
- ☐ Fitness trainer/coach
- ☐ Friends/family
- ☐ Government agencies
- ☐ Health-care related websites
- ☐ Information/advertisement from brand
- ☐ In-store browsing
- ☐ Magazines/newspaper
- ☐ Nutritionist/dietician
- ☐ Online browsing
- ☐ Online community/chatroom
- ☐ Package label
- ☐ Pharmacist
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ None of the above

Which information sources do you trust when looking for information on diets and nutrition? (Pick three in the order of importance)

- ☐ Advertisement from a company or brand
- ☐ Alternative healthcare practitioner
- ☐ Blogger/social media influencer
- ☐ Celebrity endorsements
- ☐ Fitness trainer or coach
- ☐ Friends and family
- ☐ Government or non-government expert associations
- ☐ Healthcare related websites
- ☐ In-person doctor or medical professional
- ☐ Nutritionist/dietician
- ☐ Online community or chatroom
- ☐ Pharmacist
- ☐ Product label and packaging information
- ☐ Virtual doctor or medical professional

Which attributes are important to your natural hygiene and/or cosmetics purchase decisions?

- [ ] Biodegradable
- [ ] Clinically proven
- [ ] Convenient to buy
- [ ] Earth friendly
- [ ] Effective
- [ ] Fair-Trade certified ingredients
- [ ] Fortified with vitamins
- [ ] Fragnance-free
- [ ] From a brand I trust
- [ ] Has a specific health claim
- [ ] Herbal-based
- [ ] Made with premium ingredients
- [ ] Naturally derived fragnances
- [ ] No artificial colors
- [ ] No artificial ingredients
- [ ] No artificial preservatives
- [ ] No residues
- [ ] No synthetic ingredients
- [ ] Not-tested on animals
- [ ] Organic ingredients
- [ ] Plant-based
- [ ] Provides good value
- [ ] Recyclable packaging
- [ ] USDA certified organic seal
- [ ] Vitamin-enriched
- [ ] None of the above

Which supplements have you used in the past 30 days?

- ☐ Beauty/Anti-Aging/Skin
- ☐ Bone
- ☐ Digestive
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Eye Health
- ☐ General Health
- ☐ Heart Health
- ☐ Immune System
- ☐ Joint
- ☐ Memory Health/Cognitive Management
- ☐ Men’s Health
- ☐ Muscle
- ☐ Stress/Anxiety/Depression Management
- ☐ Women’s Health

How do you perceive supplements?

- ☐ Vitamins and supplements are generally safe to consume
- ☐ Vitamins and supplements are important to my overall health and nutrition
- ☐ Vitamins and supplements are not effective
- ☐ I am knowledgeable about vitamins and supplements
- ☐ I get the vitamins and nutrients from food, rather than taking vitamins and supplements

We would like to know some basic demographics so that we can provide you with more relevant products and services, at the right time and right place.

Your age:

- 18 or under
- 19-24
- 25-30
- 31-36
- 37-42
- 43-48
- 49-54
- 55-60
- 61-66
- 67 or over

The gender identity you most identify to:

- Female
- Male
- Other

Do you participate in these activities?

	No	Sometimes	Yes
Biking	○	○	○
Hiking	○	○	○
Light exercise	○	○	○
Meditation	○	○	○
Pilates or tai chi	○	○	○
Play a team sport	○	○	○
Vigorous exercise	○	○	○
Weight training	○	○	○
Yoga	○	○	○

Do you participate in these activities?

	No	Sometimes	Yes
Camping	○	○	○
Go fishing	○	○	○
Go on birding or nature walks	○	○	○
Go to the movies	○	○	○
Golf	○	○	○
Participate in community activities	○	○	○

Personal income (SEK, gross):

- ◯ 120,000 or less
- ◯ 120,100-200,000
- ◯ 210,000-300,000
- ◯ 310,000-400,000
- ◯ 410,000-500,000
- ◯ 610,000 or more
- ◯ Do not want to disclose

Children in household:

- ☐ No children
- ☐ Children under 6-years-old
- ☐ 6-12-years-old
- ☐ 13-17-years-old
- ☐ Children over 18-years-old

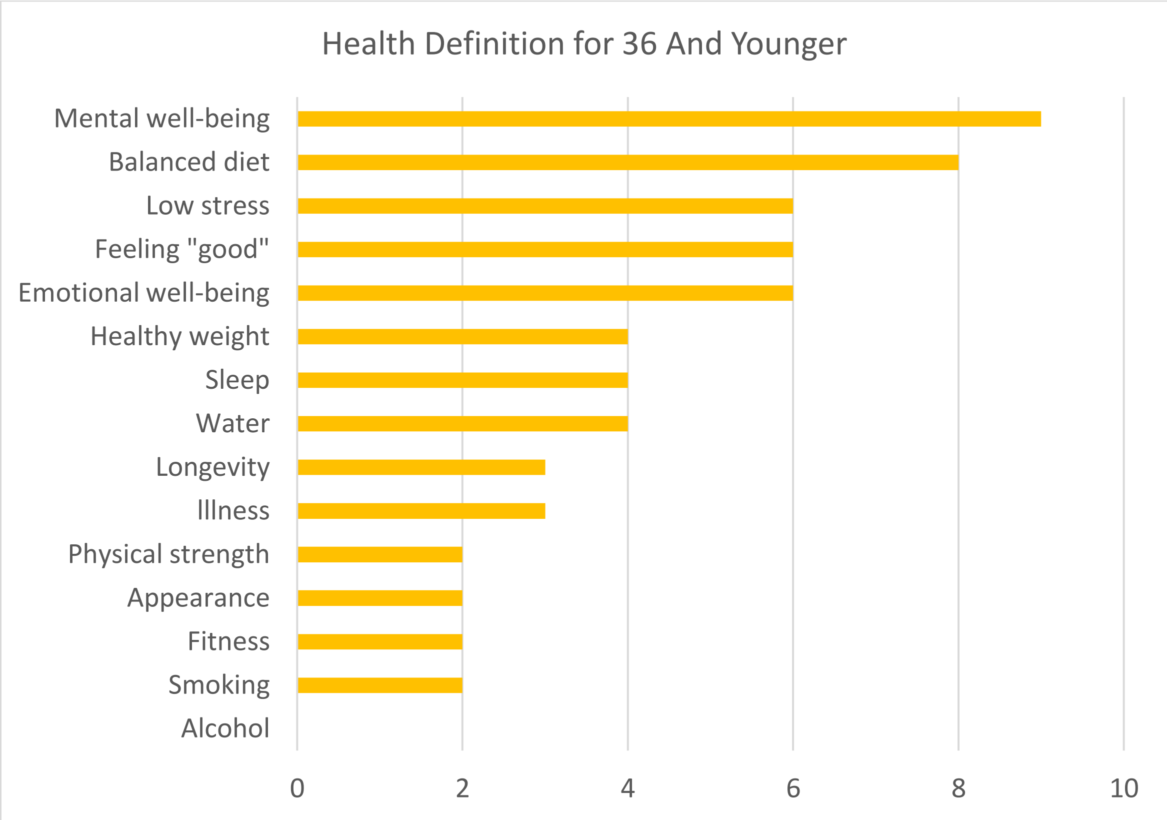
Municipality or residence:

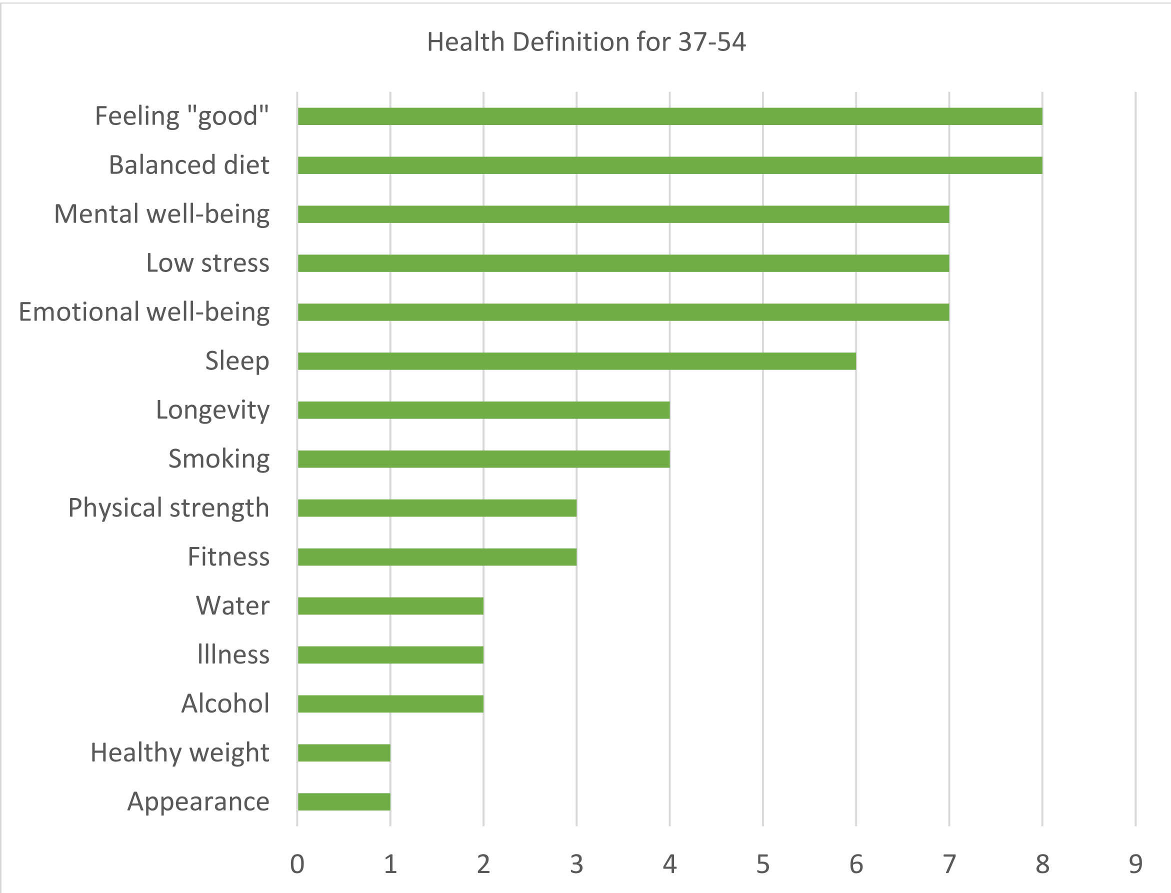
- ○ The county of Blekinge
- ○ The county of Dalarna
- ○ The county of Gävleborg
- ○ The county of Gotland
- ○ The county of Halland
- ○ The county of Jämtland
- ○ The county of Jönköping
- ○ The county of Kalmar
- ○ The county of Kronoberg
- ○ The county of Norrbotten
- ○ The county of Östergötland
- ○ The county of Skåne
- ○ The county of Södermanland
- ○ The county of Stockholm
- ○ The county of Uppsala
- ○ The county of Värmland
- ○ The county of Västerbotten
- ○ The county of Västernorrland
- ○ The county of Västmanland
- ○ The county of Västra Götaland
- ○ Other

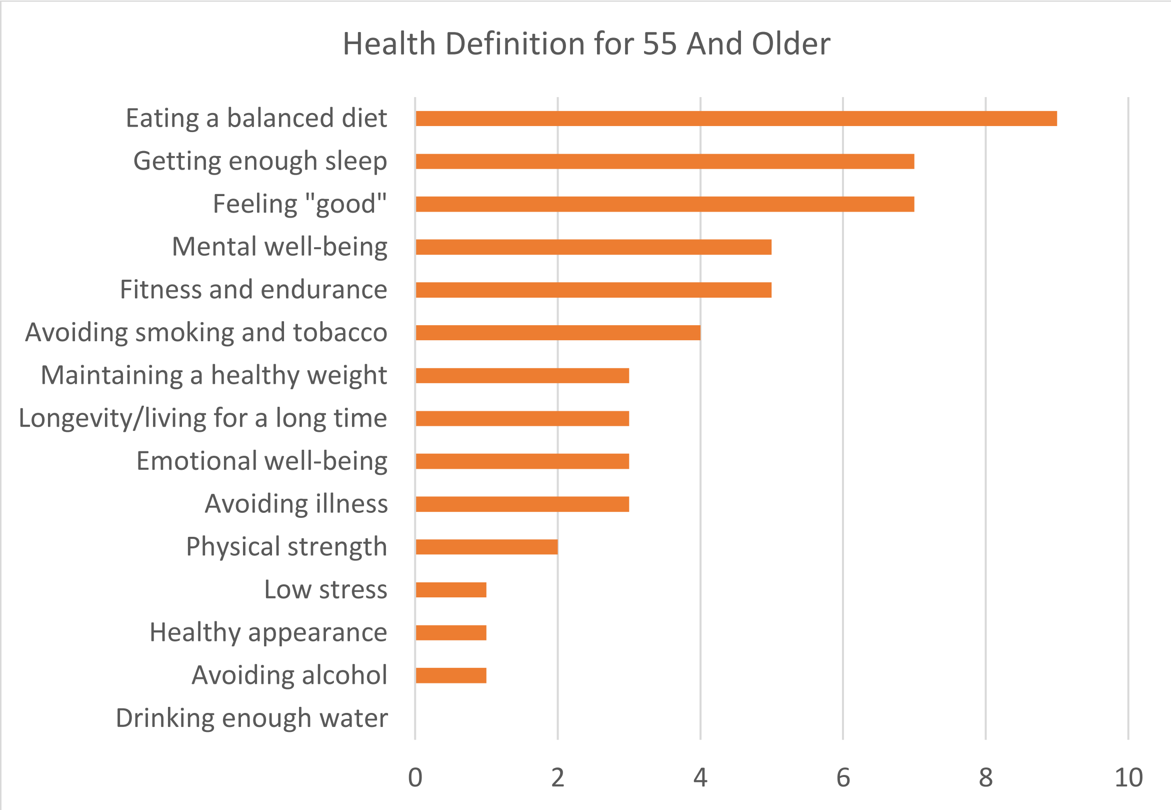
How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your eco-friendly and/or natural
product purchases?

- ◯ I have bought more environmentally friendly and organic products
- ◯ It has not affected
- ◯ I have bought less environmentally friendly and organic products

Appendix 2. Cross-tabulations for buyer personas






Health Definition for 55 And Older
Eating a balanced diet
Getting enough sleep
Feeling "good"
Mental well-being
Fitness and endurance
Avoiding smoking and tobacco
Maintaining a healthy weight
Longevity/living for a long time
Emotional well-being
Avoiding illness
Physical strength
Low stress
Healthy appearance
Avoiding alcohol
Drinking enough water
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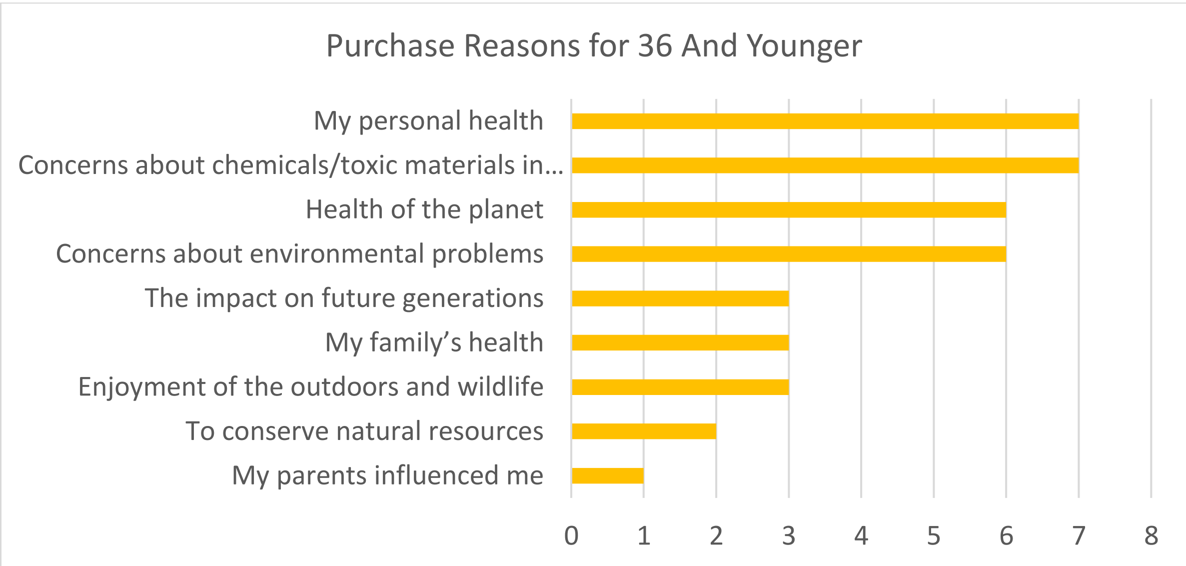
Purchase Reasons for 36 And Younger
My personal health
Concerns about chemicals/toxic materials in…
Health of the planet
Concerns about environmental problems
The impact on future generations
My family’s health
Enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife
To conserve natural resources
My parents influenced me
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Purchase Reasons for 37-54
My personal health
Concerns about chemicals/toxic materials in…
Health of the planet
My family's health
The impact on future generations
Enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife
Concerns about environmental problems
To conserve natural resources
My parents influenced me
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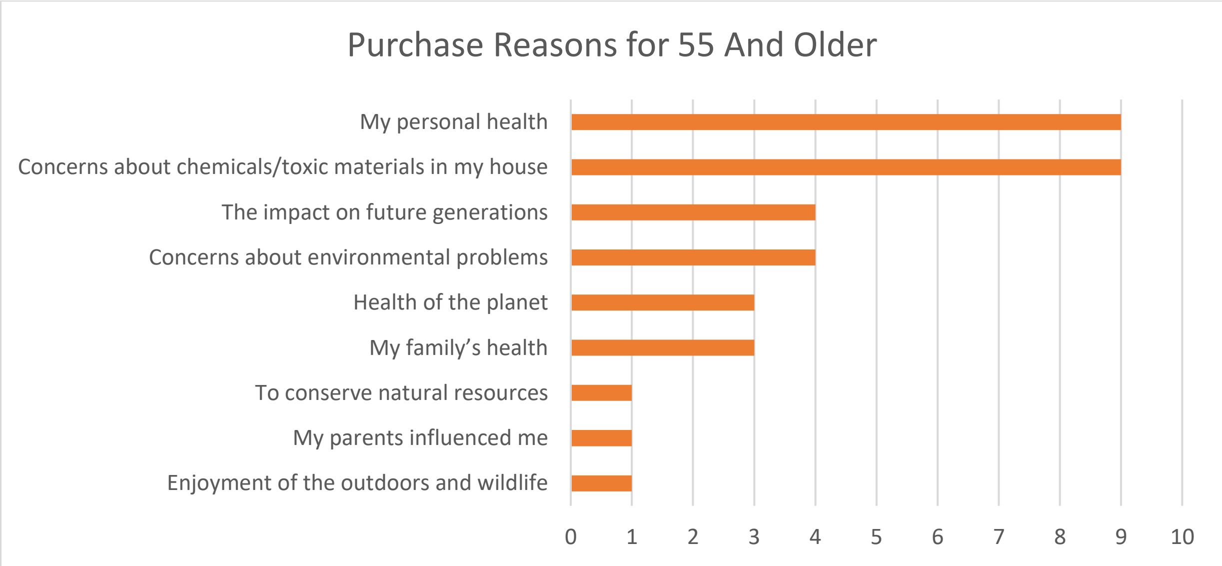
Purchase Reasons for 55 And Older
My personal health
Concerns about chemicals/toxic materials in my house
The impact on future generations
Concerns about environmental problems
Health of the planet
My family's health
To conserve natural resources
My parents influenced me
Enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife
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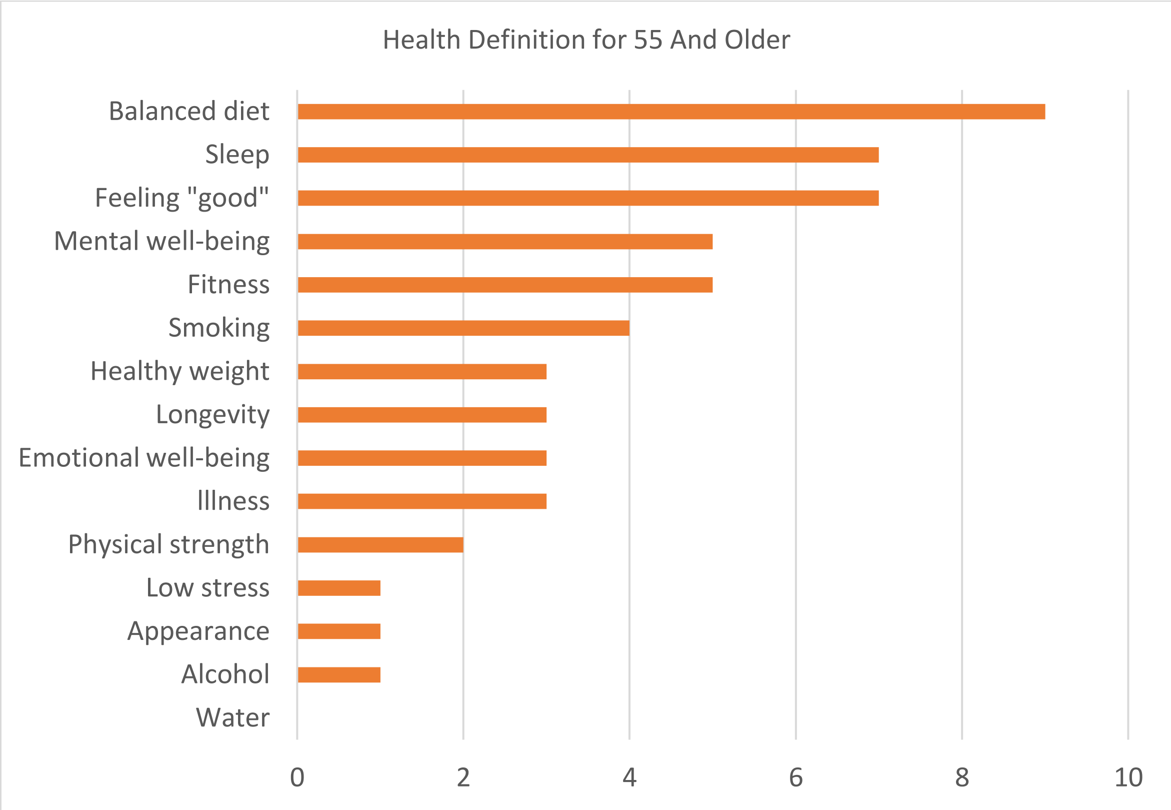
Health Definition for 55 And Older
Balanced diet
Sleep
Feeling "good"
Mental well-being
Fitness
Smoking
Healthy weight
Longevity
Emotional well-being
Illness
Physical strength
Low stress
Appearance
Alcohol
Water
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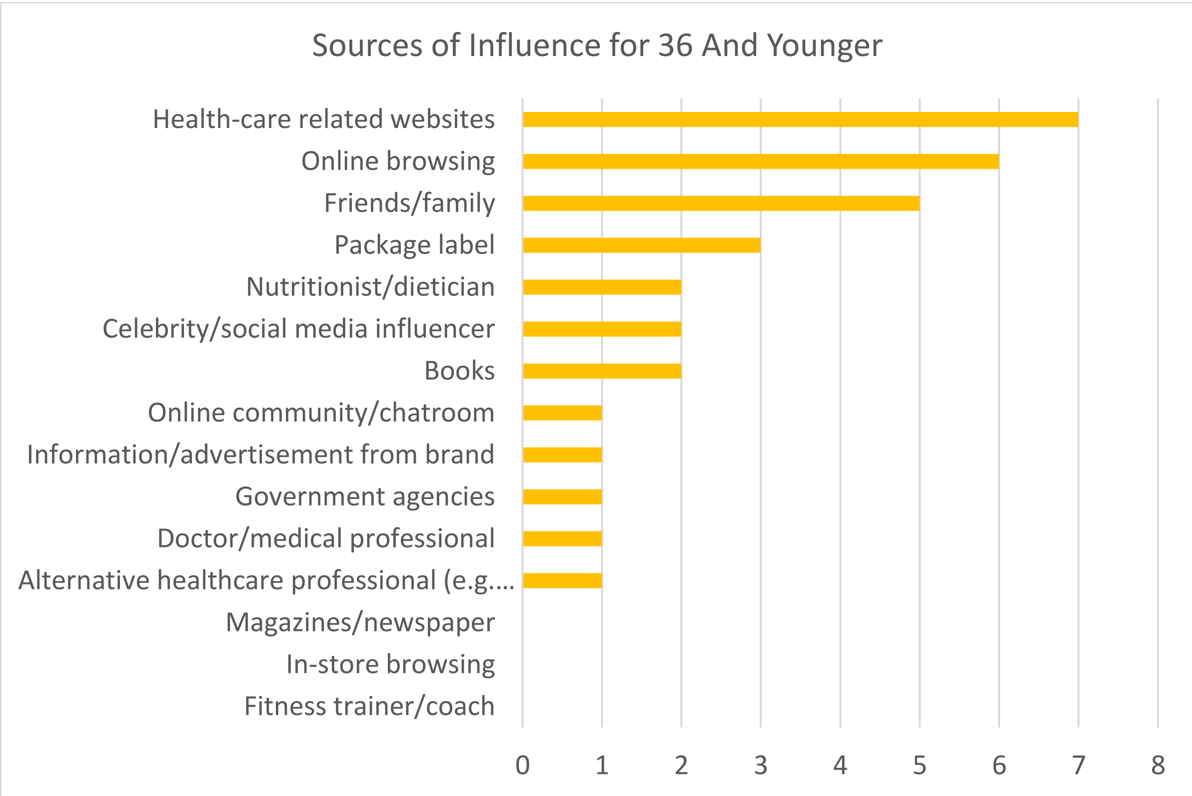
Sources of Influence for 36 And Younger
Health-care related websites
Online browsing
Friends/family
Package label
Nutritionist/dietician
Celebrity/social media influencer
Books
Online community/chatroom
Information/advertisement from brand
Government agencies
Doctor/medical professional
Alternative healthcare professional (e.g....
Magazines/newspaper
In-store browsing
Fitness trainer/coach
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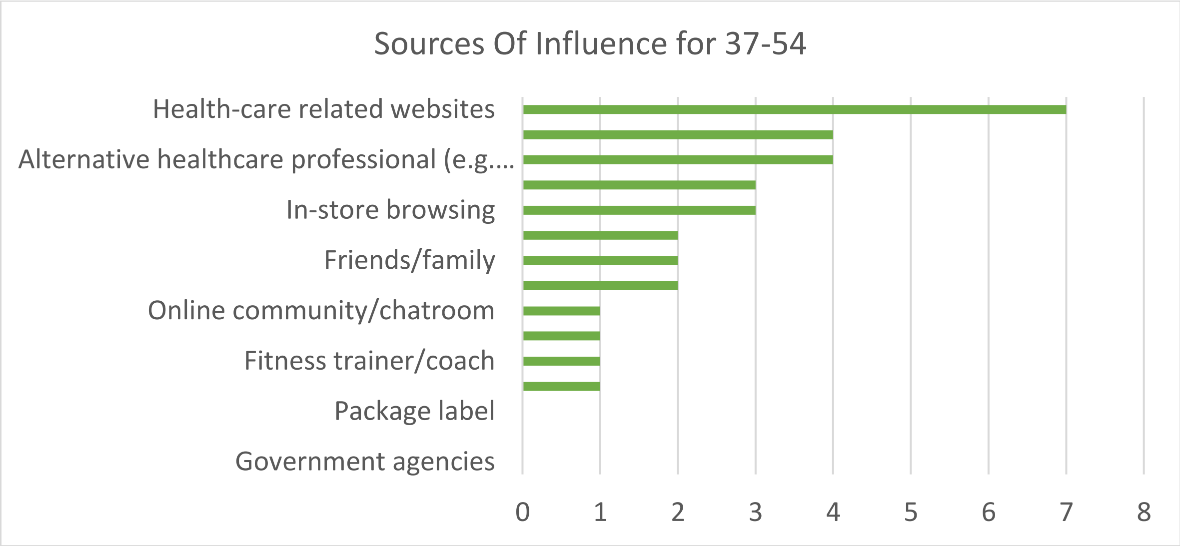
Sources Of Influence for 37-54
Health-care related websites
Alternative healthcare professional (e.g.…
In-store browsing
Friends/family
Online community/chatroom
Fitness trainer/coach
Package label
Government agencies
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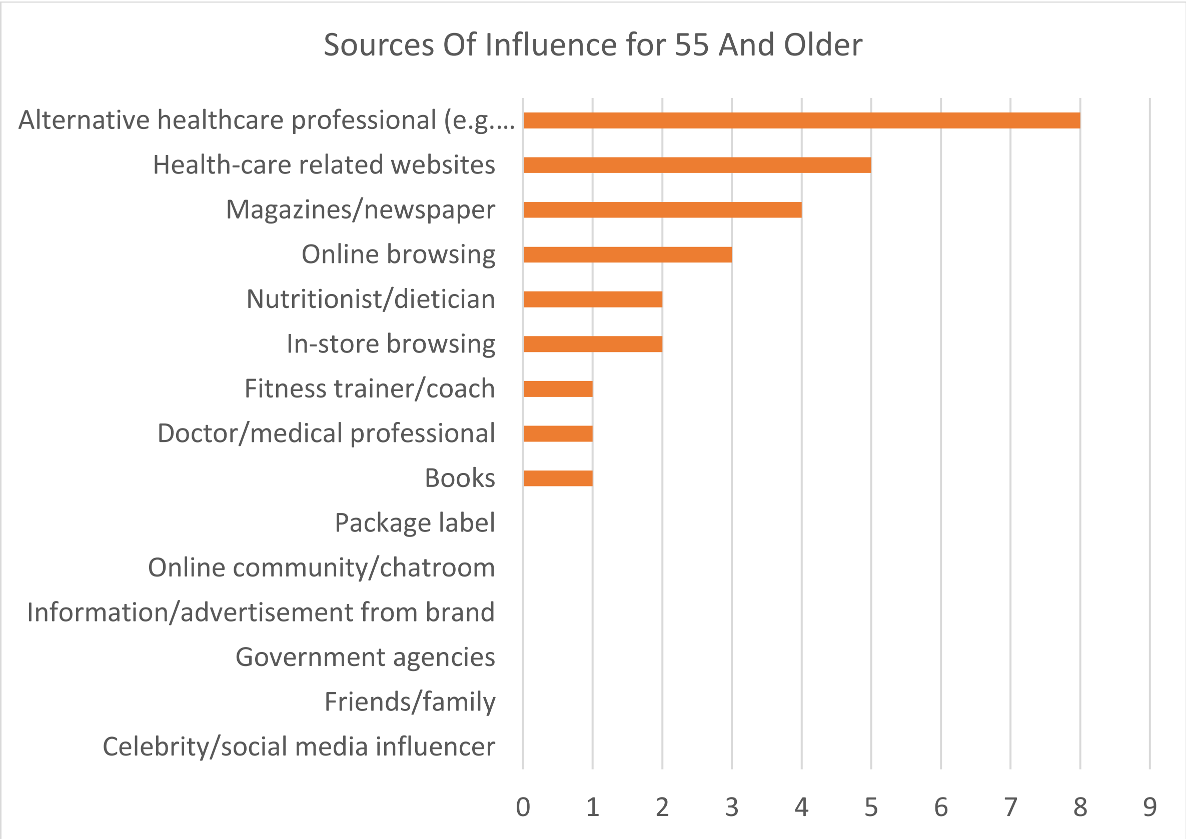
Sources Of Influence for 55 And Older
Alternative healthcare professional (e.g.…
Health-care related websites
Magazines/newspaper
Online browsing
Nutritionist/dietician
In-store browsing
Fitness trainer/coach
Doctor/medical professional
Books
Package label
Online community/chatroom
Information/advertisement from brand
Government agencies
Friends/family
Celebrity/social media influencer
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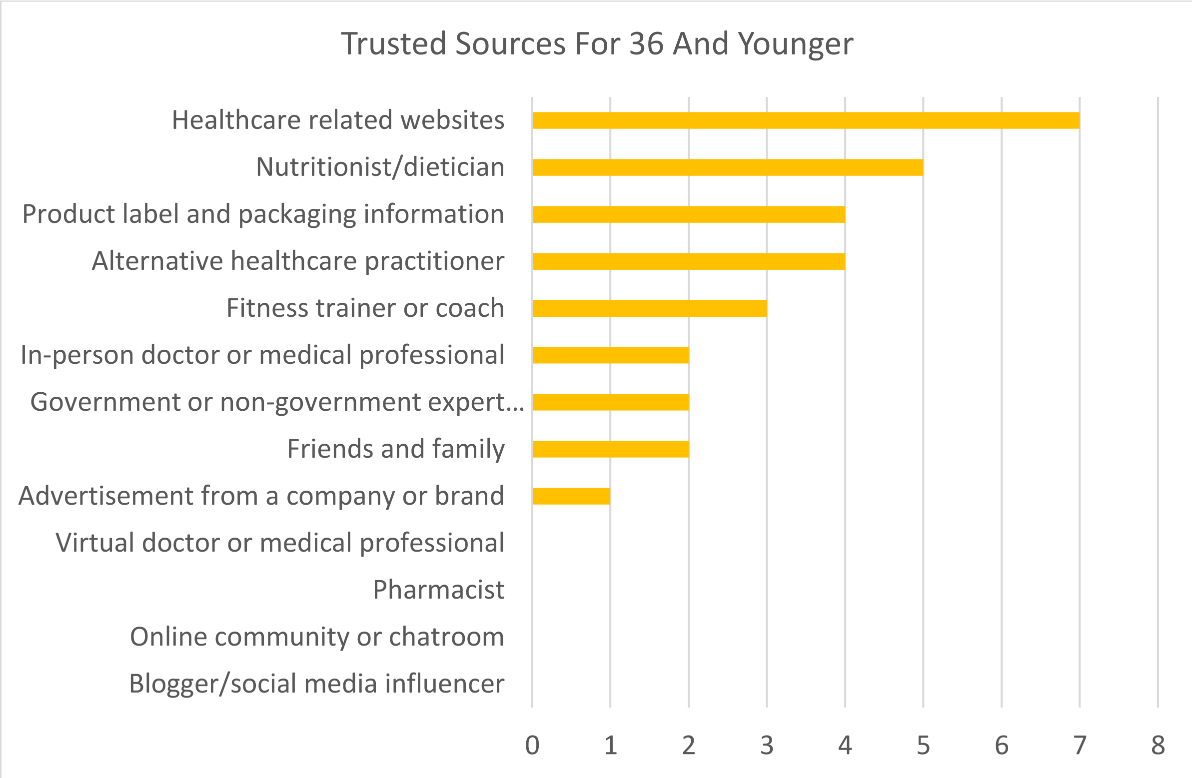
Trusted Sources For 36 And Younger
Healthcare related websites
Nutritionist/dietician
Product label and packaging information
Alternative healthcare practitioner
Fitness trainer or coach
In-person doctor or medical professional
Government or non-government expert…
Friends and family
Advertisement from a company or brand
Virtual doctor or medical professional
Pharmacist
Online community or chatroom
Blogger/social media influencer
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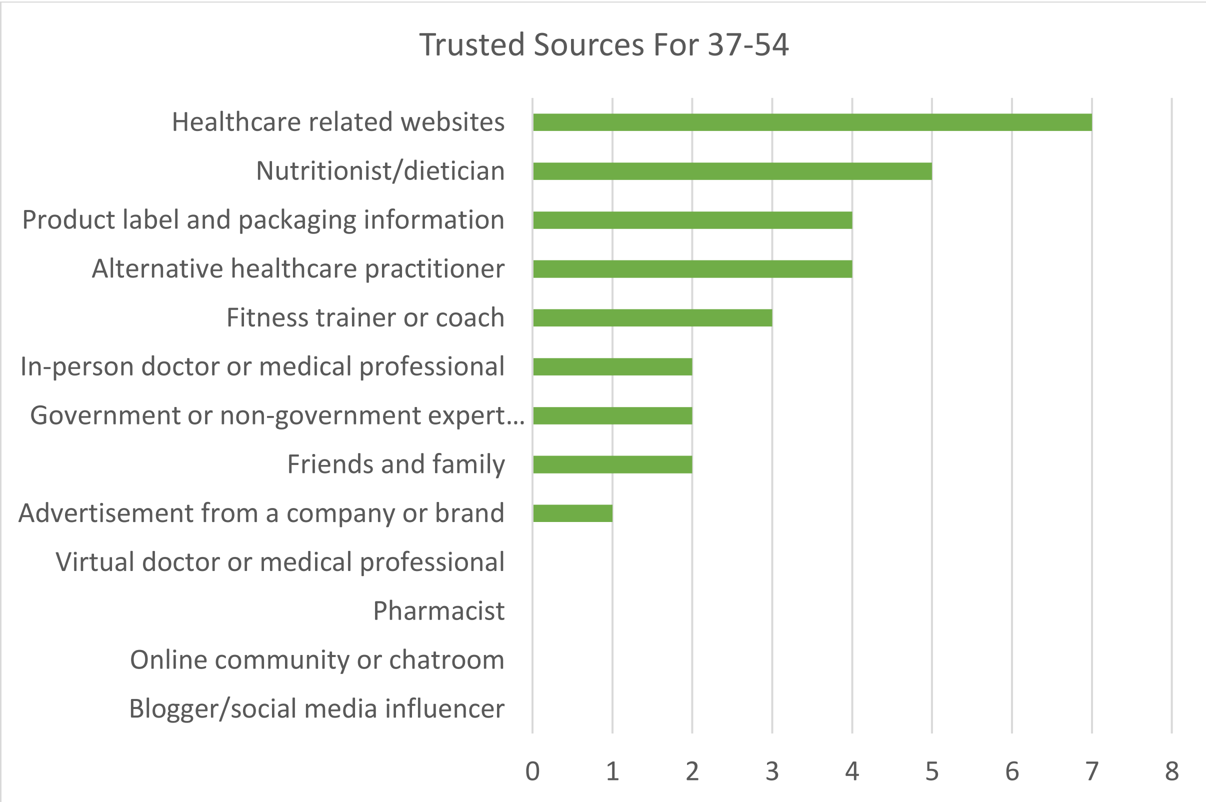
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Product label and packaging information
Alternative healthcare practitioner
Fitness trainer or coach
In-person doctor or medical professional
Government or non-government expert…
Friends and family
Advertisement from a company or brand
Virtual doctor or medical professional
Pharmacist
Online community or chatroom
Blogger/social media influencer
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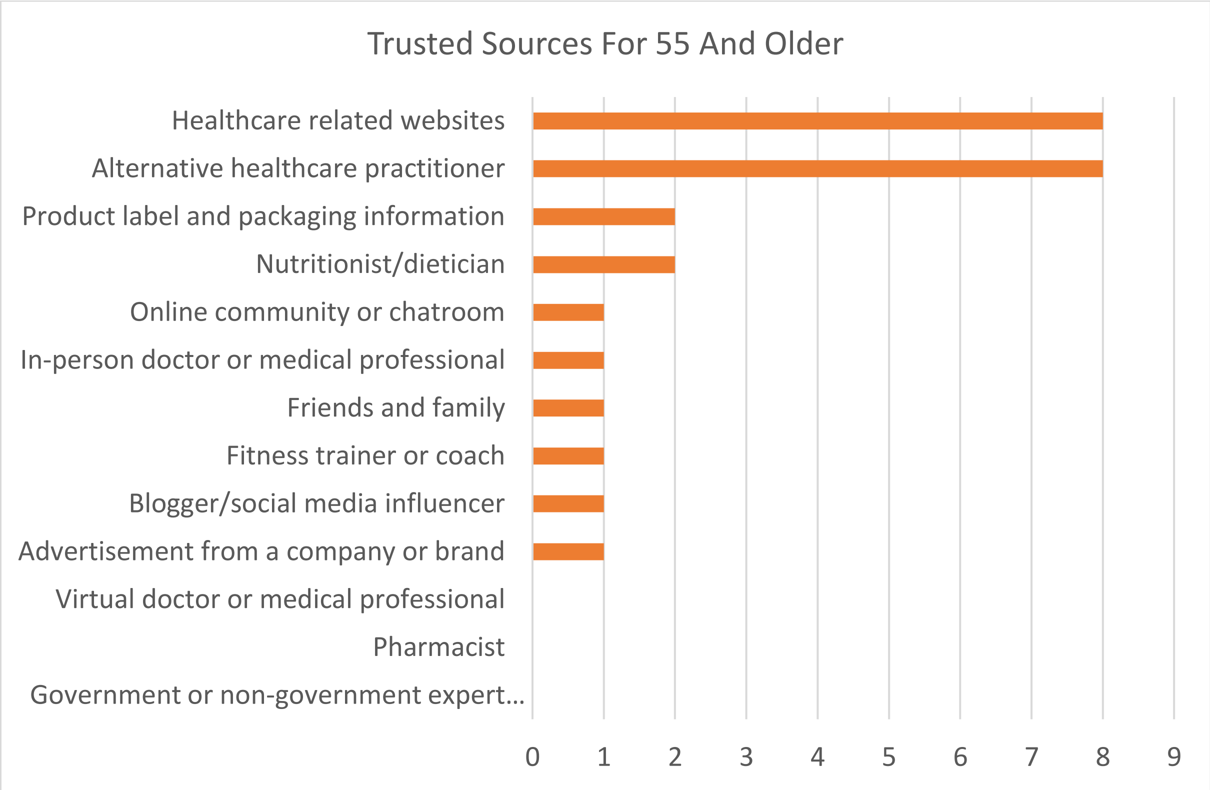
Trusted Sources For 55 And Older
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Nutritionist/dietician
Online community or chatroom
In-person doctor or medical professional
Friends and family
Fitness trainer or coach
Blogger/social media influencer
Advertisement from a company or brand
Virtual doctor or medical professional
Pharmacist
Government or non-government expert...
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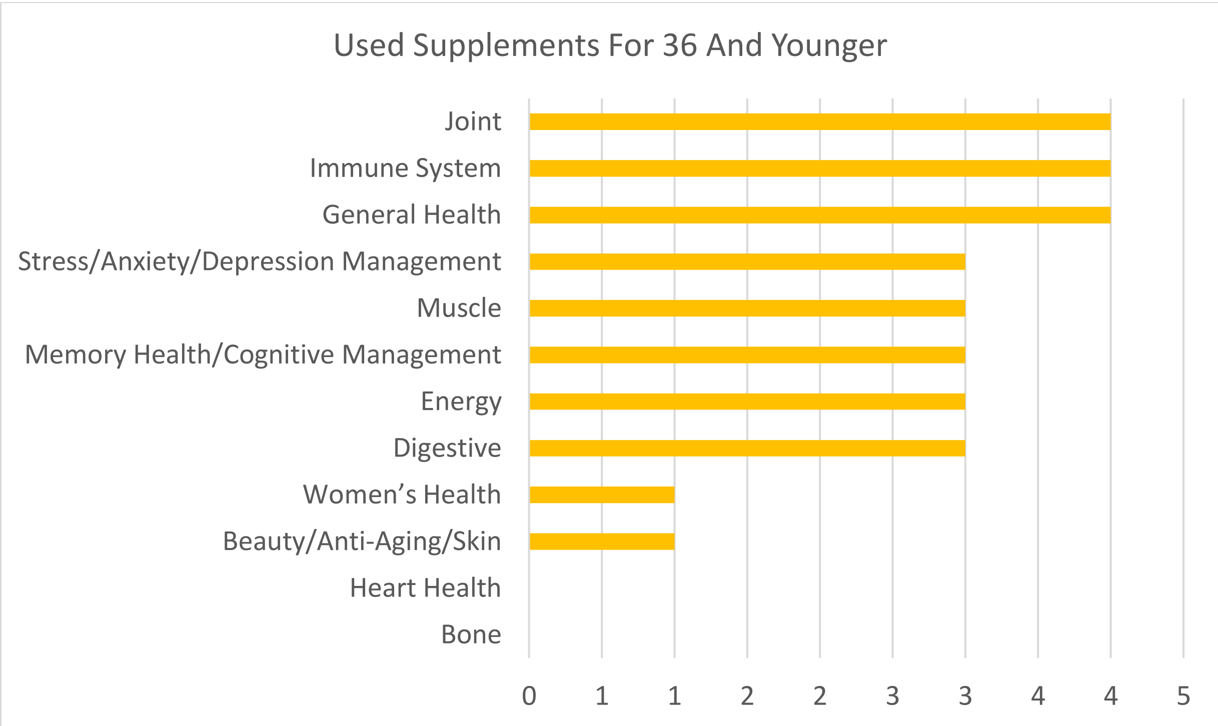
Used Supplements For 36 And Younger
Joint
Immune System
General Health
Stress/Anxiety/Depression Management
Muscle
Memory Health/Cognitive Management
Energy
Digestive
Women’s Health
Beauty/Anti-Aging/Skin
Heart Health
Bone
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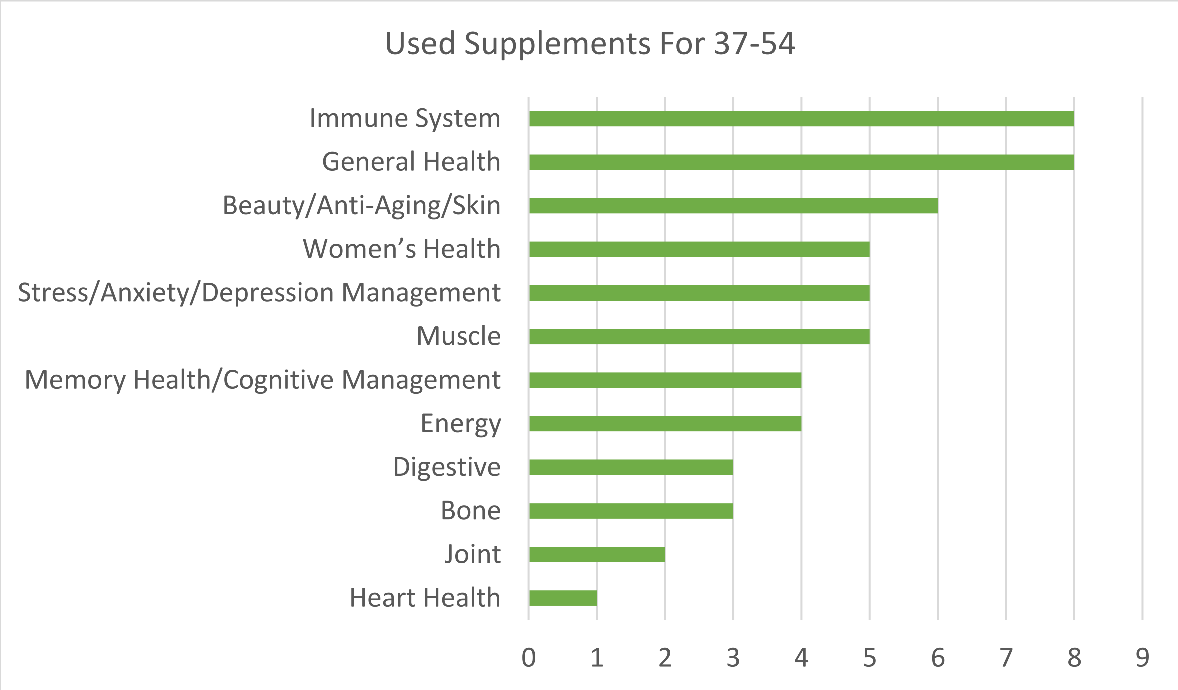
Used Supplements For 37-54
Immune System
General Health
Beauty/Anti-Aging/Skin
Women's Health
Stress/Anxiety/Depression Management
Muscle
Memory Health/Cognitive Management
Energy
Digestive
Bone
Joint
Heart Health
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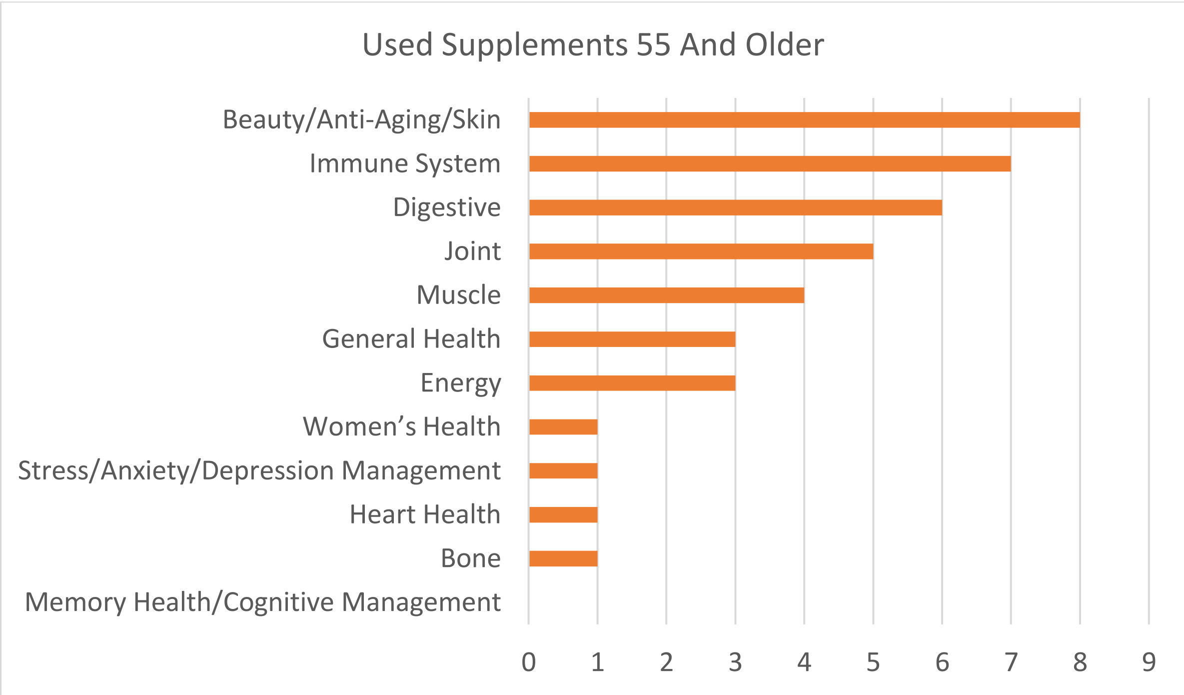
Used Supplements 55 And Older
Beauty/Anti-Aging/Skin
Immune System
Digestive
Joint
Muscle
General Health
Energy
Women's Health
Stress/Anxiety/Depression Management
Heart Health
Bone
Memory Health/Cognitive Management
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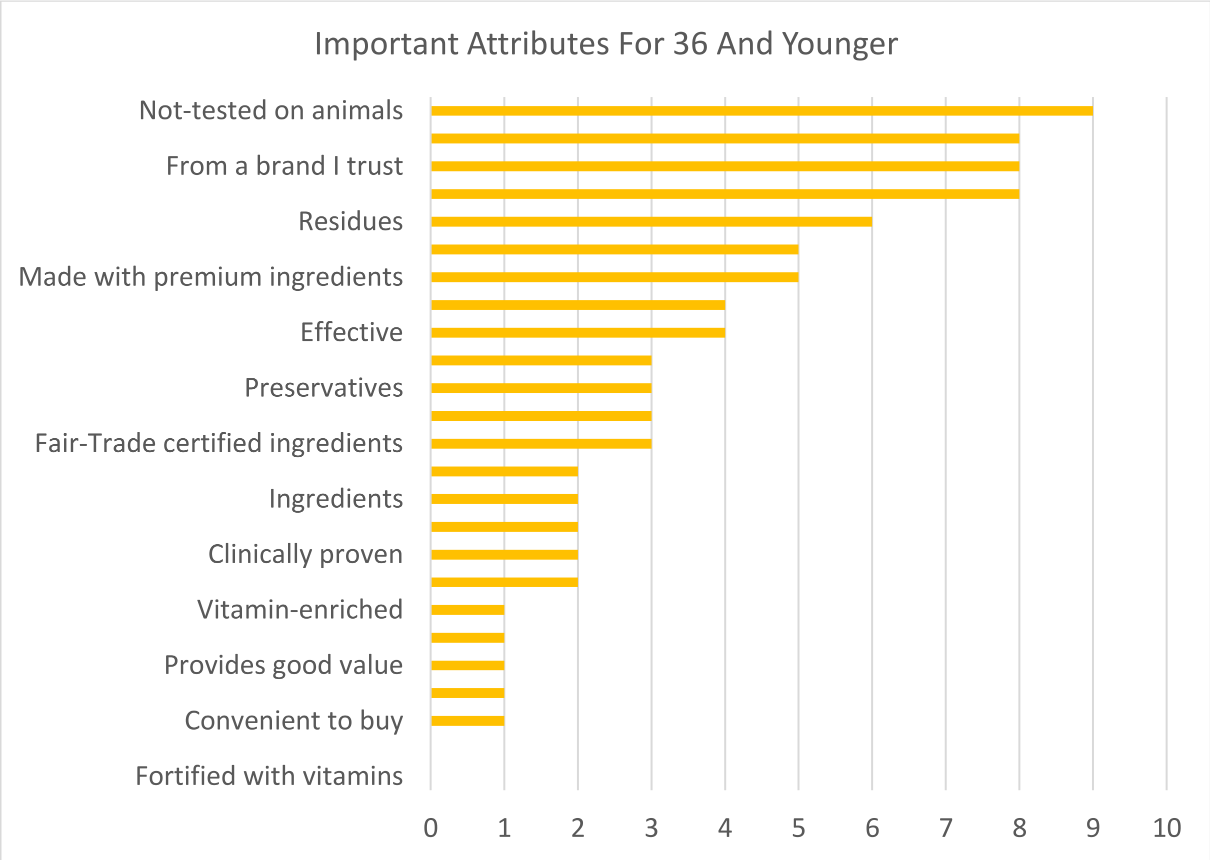
Important Attributes For 36 And Younger
Not-tested on animals
From a brand I trust
Residues
Made with premium ingredients
Effective
Preservatives
Fair-Trade certified ingredients
Ingredients
Clinically proven
Vitamin-enriched
Provides good value
Convenient to buy
Fortified with vitamins
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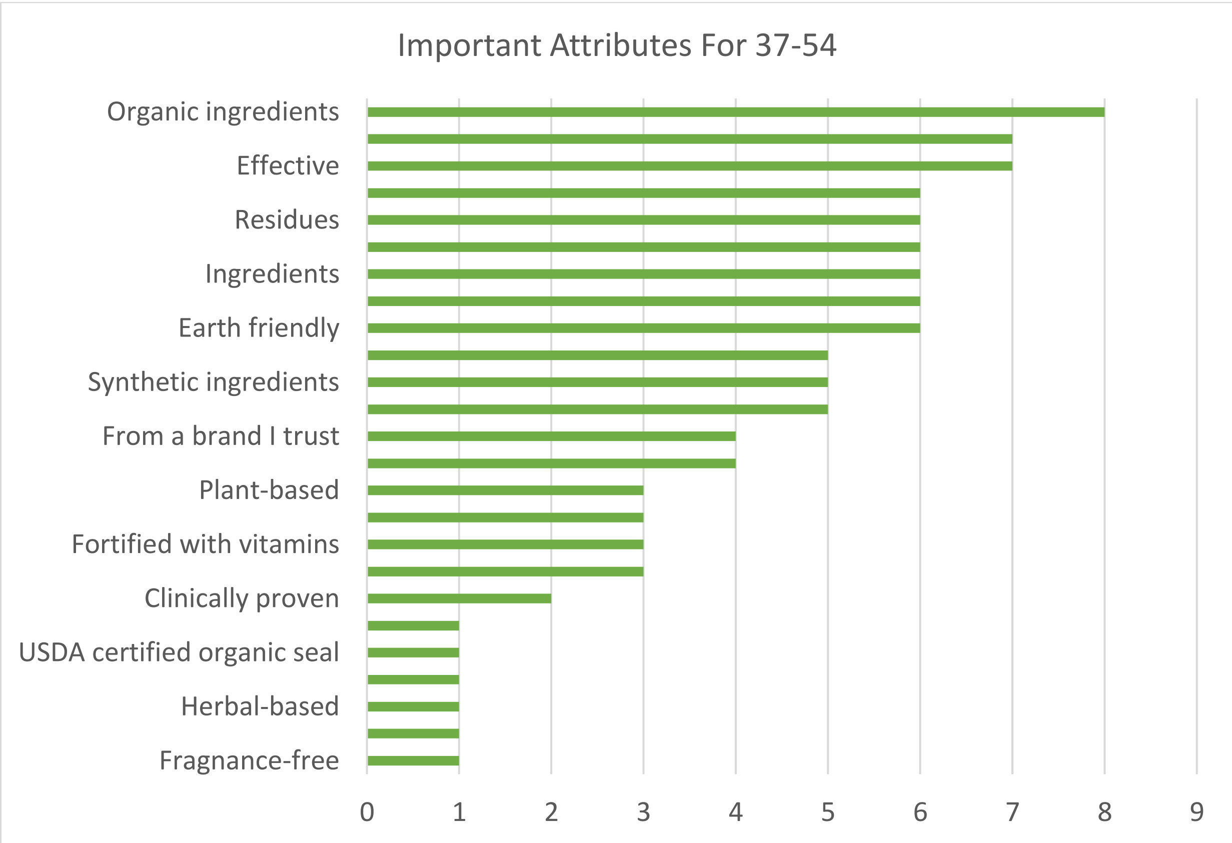
Important Attributes For 37-54
Organic ingredients
Effective
Residues
Ingredients
Earth friendly
Synthetic ingredients
From a brand I trust
Plant-based
Fortified with vitamins
Clinically proven
USDA certified organic seal
Herbal-based
Fragnance-free
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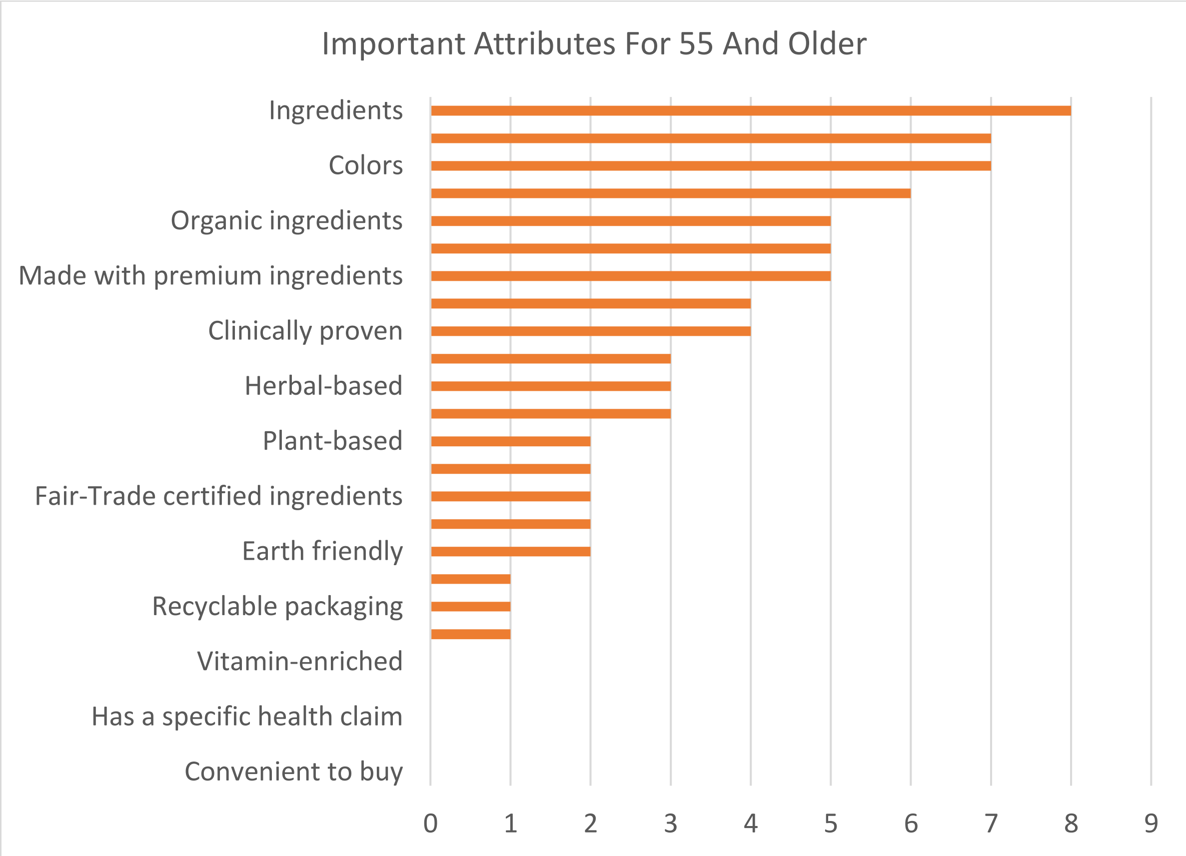
Important Attributes For 55 And Older
Ingredients
Colors
Organic ingredients
Made with premium ingredients
Clinically proven
Herbal-based
Plant-based
Fair-Trade certified ingredients
Earth friendly
Recyclable packaging
Vitamin-enriched
Has a specific health claim
Convenient to buy
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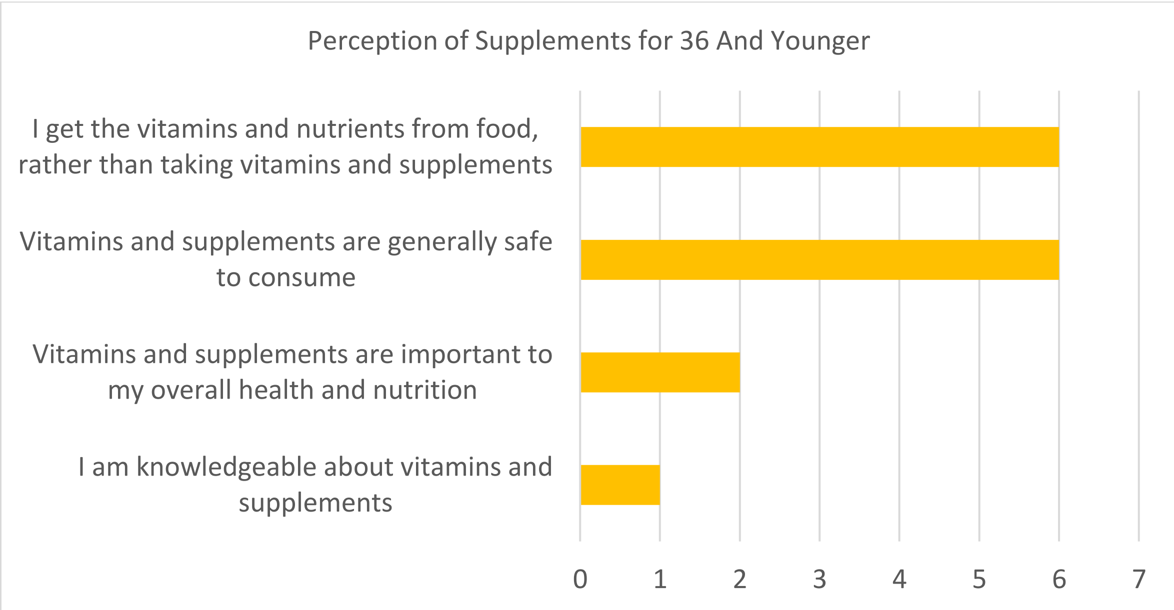
Perception of Supplements for 36 And Younger
I get the vitamins and nutrients from food, rather than taking vitamins and supplements
Vitamins and supplements are generally safe to consume
Vitamins and supplements are important to my overall health and nutrition
I am knowledgeable about vitamins and supplements
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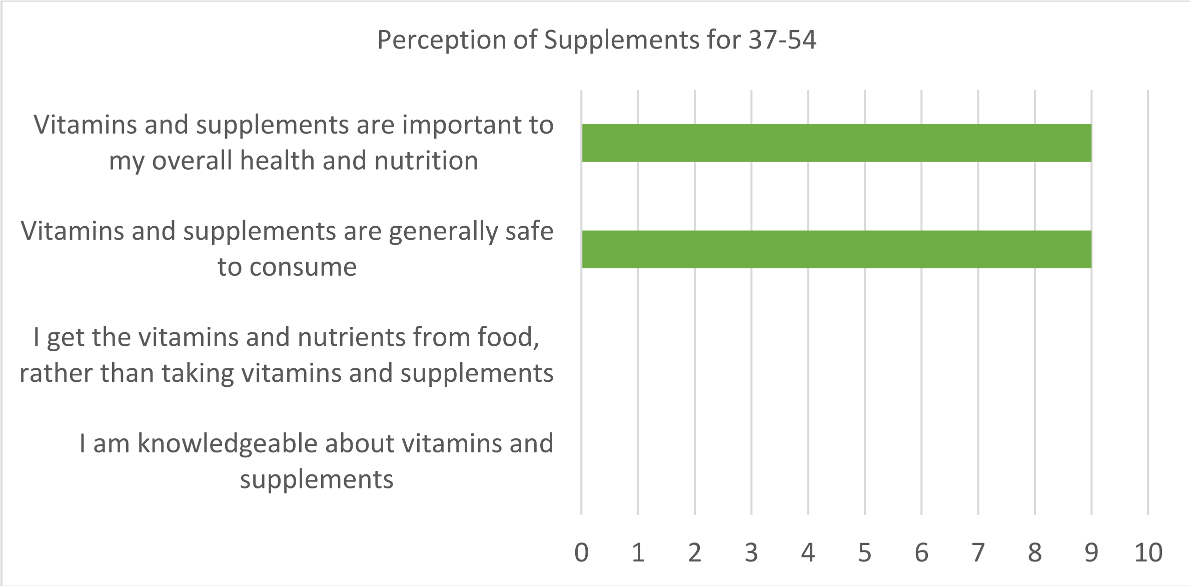
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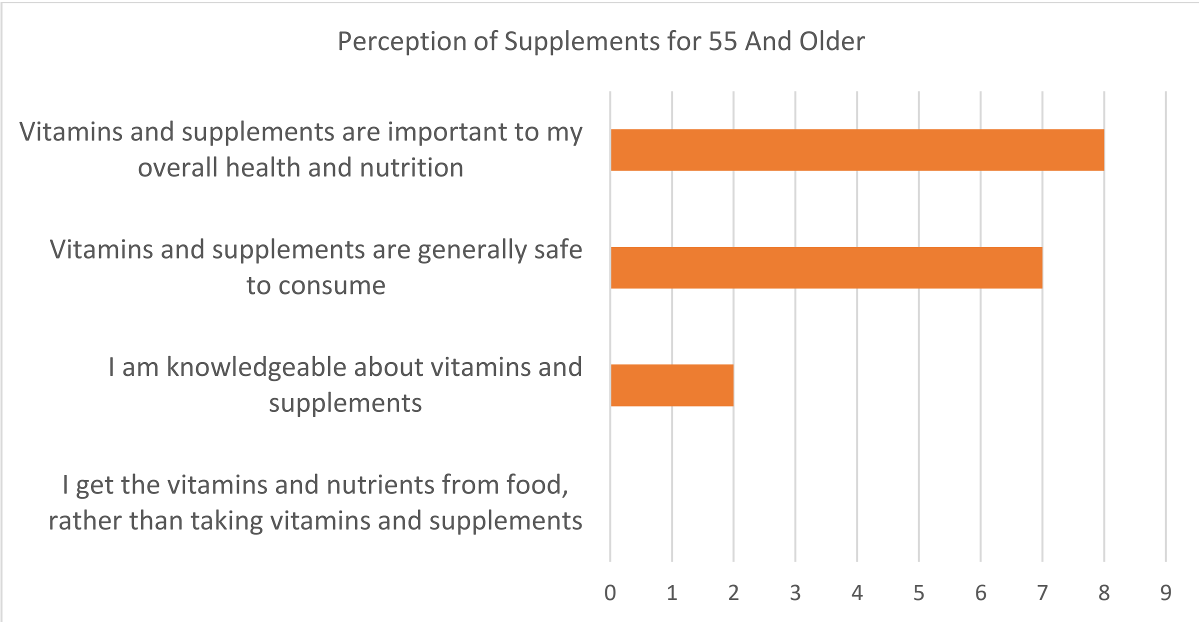
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10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Vitamins and supplements are important to my overall health and nutrition
Vitamins and supplements are generally safe to consume
I am knowledgeable about vitamins and supplements
I get the vitamins and nutrients from food, rather than taking vitamins and supplements
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Appendix 3. Interview

Target interviewee

The target interviewee is someone with the most current knowledge on the Swedish market and Happy Food Store's consumer behaviour.

✓ Heidi Waltari, Digital Marketing Manager

Number of participants	1
Duration	30min

<table>
<tr><td>Opening</td><td>I am a thesis worker conducting a research on the behalf of Ruohonjuuri Oy, to find out more about their Swedish market and customers.

With this interview we wish to get a better insight into your perspective on the issue.

• The interview will take approximately 30 minutes.
• Asking permission for recording.
• Asking permission to use name of the interviewee for the purpose of the research.
• The interviewee can speak freely, and all information is valuable
• If the interviewee does not feel comfortable with any question, please let me know anytime and we will jump into another one.
• Any questions before we get started?

Warm up questions:
• What is your favorite memory from Ruohonjuuri?
✓</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>We will start with looking at the Swedish market and how the customers respond to your marketing efforts:

• How have the sales proceeded with the online store in the Swedish market?
• How has the Swedish market reacted to moving to only online retail?
• Where do you see a gap in the customer understanding?</td></tr>
</table>

	• *How do the customers differ from the Finnish customers and how do you tailor your communication to suit them?* • *What is the best way to engage the Swedish customers?* • *Who are HFS's direct competitors?*
	We will now talk about general marketing strategy, • *Do you use your customer segments aka tribes to target marketing in different ways? (Do you plan on doing so in the future?)* • *Were the tribes made based on data or manager's judgement?* • *What kind of customer data do you record? (Or see as most valuable?)*
	Let's move onto • *What information would you find most valuable to get from HFS's Swedish customers?* • *What is the most ideal use case of the data that will be gathered through the survey? / How would you like to utilise this data?*
Closing	• Is there anything else related to the topic you would like to share with me? ✓ • Thank interviewee for the interview