RECOGNIZING CONSUMER-BRAND TOUCHPOINTS IN THE OMNICHANNEL ENVIRONMENT AND FORMING A TOUCHPOINT PATH

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ABSTRACT

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Title	
Recognizing consumer-brand touchpoints in the omnichannel environment and forming a path of them: with Philips Hue as a case brand	
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Abstract	
Consumers, brands, and companies operate in an omnichannel environment nowadays. Even though the touchpoints between a consumer and brand are widely discussed and the term used by different parties, understanding of the touchpoints in the offline and online environments is lacking and a clear touchpoint path is not recognized. All the smallest consumer-brand interactions have an impact on the consumer's brand image and evaluation of a company. Thus, it is important for a company to know all the possible touchpoints. The company can also develop and affect the consumer through the touchpoints, but they need to be recognized first; when, where, and how the brand and consumer intersect. Consumers move agilely and quickly in the omnichannel environment which affects the touchpoints and the touchpoint path becomes more varied. In order to fulfill the objectives of this study, recognize all the possible touchpoints between the case brand and consumers and to form a path of the them, a unique, two-part qualitative research methodology was created. The subjects took photos of anything that triggered them to think of the brand for a period of one month. Next, interviews were conducted in which the photos served as recalling-aid. The photos enabled the research to access the subjects' personal life where the consumer-brand intersections realistically occur. The photos also ensured that the touchpoints can be examined later in the research. The interviews included two parts; free-speaking part of the taken photos and semi-structured interview part. The results of this study suggest that the consumer-brand touchpoint path is relative short. If the consumers' first touchpoints are strong and create an immediate, good image of the brand, the path from the beginning to the purchase may be only 3-5 touchpoints long. For the case brand of this study, consumer-brand intersections that created a short path were WoM, seeing the brand in use or testing the brand. The unique research method also served successfully the purposes of the study. Additionally, it can be indicated based on the recognized touchpoints that the consumers have touchpoints evenly in the offline and online environments. Individual consumer-brand intersections that create an immediate, positive image of the case brand were also recognized through the research method.	
Key words	
Touchpoint, customer journey, touchpoint path, brand image	
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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä	
Nea-Stina Liljedahl	
Työn nimi	
Kuluttajan ja brändin välisten kohtaamispisteiden tunnistaminen monikanavaisessa ympäristössä sekä kohtaamispisteketjun muodostaminen: tapausbrändinä Philips Hue	
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Tiivistelmä

Kuluttajat, brändit sekä yritykset operoivat monikanavaympäristössä. Vaikka kuluttaja-brändi-kohtaamispisteet ovat laajasti keskusteltu aihe ja moni taho käyttää kohtaamispistetermiä, syvällinen ymmärrys kohtaamispisteistä monikanavaisessa ympäristössä uupuu. Lisäksi selkeää kohtaamispistepolkua ei ole kirjallisuudessa luotu. Pienetkin kokemukset vaikuttavat brändikuvaan ja kokonaisarvioon yrityksestä. Yrityksien tietämys kaikista kohtaamisista mahdollistaa kuluttajaan ja brändikuvaan vaikuttamisen kohtaamisten kautta. Yrityksellä täytyy olla ensin tietämys, milloin, missä ja miten kuluttajapisteet tapahtuvat. Kuluttaja liikkuu ketterästi ja nopeasti monikanavaympäristössä, joten kuluttaja-brändi-kohtaamiset ja niiden polku ovat monipuolisia.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteet olivat kohtaamispisteiden selvittäminen ja kohtaamispistepolun muodostus. Tätä varten luotiin uniikki, kaksivaiheinen kvalitatiivinen tutkimusmenetelmä. Koehenkilöt valokuvasivat mitä tahansa, mikä sai heidät ajattelemaan tapausbrändiä kuukauden ajan. Toisena osana oli haastattelu, jossa valokuvat toimivat "mieleenpalautusapuna." Kuvat mahdollistivat pääsyn tutkittavien henkilökohtaiseen elämään, jossa kohtaamiset realistisestikin tapahtuvat ja kohtaamisten myöhemmän tutkimisen. Haastattelut olivat puolistrukturoituja ja kaksivaiheisia; koehenkilöt puhuivat vapaasti kuvistaan ja tilanteista niiden takana, minkä jälkeen esitettiin kysymyksiä.

Tutkimuksen tulokset ehdottavat, että kuluttaja-brändi-kohtaamispistepolku on lyhyt. Mikäli ensimmäinen kohtaaminen brändin kanssa on vahva ja luo välittömän positiivisen brändikuvan, polku alusta ostovaiheeseen voi olla vain 3-5 kohtaamista pitkä. Tapausbrändin kohdalla tällaisia kohtaamisia olivat WoM, brändin näkeminen käytössä ja testaus. Kohtaamispisteiden tunnistaminen toteutui onnistuneesti uniikilla tutkimusmetodilla ja tuloksena oli suuri määrä kohtaamisia monikanavaympäristössä. Lisäksi tunnistetut kohtaamispisteet jakautuivat tasaisesti offline- ja online-kanavissa; kohtaamisia tapahtuu laajasti monikanavaympäristössä. Lisäksi yksittäisiä, positiivisen kuvan tapausbrändistä luovia kohtaamispisteitä tunnistettiin metodin kautta.

Asiasanat

Kohtaamisipiste, asiakasmatka, kohtaamispistepolku, brändikuva

Säilytyspaikka

Jyväskylän yliopiston kirjasto

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GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Touchpoint	An occurrence of direct contact between the customer and the actual product or service or with the representation of it inflicted by the company or a third party" (Roto et al. 2016)
Brand	Sum of the experiences that a consumer has with a company and its products, services, brand, and employees (Saleem & Iglesias 2016)
Brand image	Thoughts, associations, beliefs, ideas, opinions, attitudes, features that a consumer links to a certain brand (Anselmsson, Bondesson, & Johansson, 2014)
Trigger	Anything (situation, person, object etc) that makes a person to think of a pre-defined matter (in this case a brand)
Internet of Things (IoT)	Internet is embedded into an object or device which enables it to receive and send data (Floris and Atzori, 2015)
Touchpoint path	A chronological order of consumer-brand touchpoints (or triggers to think about a brand in the case of this study) (Rosenbaum, Otalora, & Ramírez, 2017)
Omnichannel	Usage of number of different channels, offline and online, for one instance of transaction (Tyrväinen and Karjaluoto, 2018)
Intersection	Any type of interaction, experience, or collision between two parties, in this case between the brand and consumers (Amin, 2017)
Word of Mouth (WoM)	Communication that occurs from consumer to consumer and deals with a product, company, or brand (Demirbas, 2018.)

Table 1: Glossary

1   INTRODUCTION

The topic of consumer-brand touchpoints is widely discussed but it has been recognized that a clear, recognized path of the touchpoints is lacking as well as knowledge of the offline and online touchpoints between a consumer and brand (Payne, Peltier & Barger, 2017). Nowadays, the omnichannel environment, meaning the usage of number of different channels, offline and online, for one instance of transaction (Tyrväinen & Karjaluoto, 2018), creates even a wider playground for the brand-consumer touchpoints. Consumers can be exposed to the brand in the physical offline world by, for example, someone telling him or her about the brand or about its product or seeing a billboard ad. Consumers can as well be exposed to the brand in the online environment by seeing a banner ad on social media or seeing someone's review on the brand or its product. In this master's thesis, a suitable methodology for recognizing the consumer-brand touchpoints and to form a path of them is used. A justification for the methodology's usage is presented at a deeper level since the research methodology is unique and created for the purposes of this study. The main focus of the thesis research is on the first gained touchpoints all the way through to the possible purchase; the post-purchase activities are excluded. On a practical note, as a brand knows all of the possible touchpoints with the consumers in the omnichannel environment and has a clear path of the them, the brand is able to be have a positive impact on the consumers through the touchpoints and possibly also on its brand image. Additionally, the brand is able to review which touchpoints matter – are there touchpoints the brand is not aware of but that would be essential or are there possibly touchpoints the brand is investing in while they do not add value.

Brands operating in today's world interact with consumers in online as well as in offline environments. As there are two different environments, the number of touchpoints between the brand and consumer is higher and different compared to the time when the Internet environment did not exist and the only place for interaction was the physical world. Brands face consumers more often today as well as in the complex, omnichannel world of offline and online environments. Each of these intersections between the brand and the consumer can be considered as an experience that has an impact on the consumer's opinion on the brand (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016)

Deloitte's 2019 retail forecast (2019) indicates that consumers will gain more and more power in defining which brands and companies will succeed. As consumers have a growing power to decide the brands' destiny, it is important for brands to have the knowledge of where, when, and how consumers and brand encounter. Consequently, brands can exploit these touchpoints to create a positive interaction with consumers.

1.1   Research background

In today's omnichannel world, a brand and a consumer can intersect with each other in multiple ways, at multiple places, and at almost any time (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016). Customer's total evaluation (Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016) and brand image of the company (Saleem & Iglesias 2016) are an accumulation of all the experiences, even the smallest ones, she or he has with the company. These experiences can be with the company itself, with its brand, products, services, or employees. Additionally, they can also be with a third party about the company-related matters. (Saleem & Iglesias 2016.)

Touchpoints are defined to be an "occurrence of direct contact between the customer and the actual product or service or with the representation of it inflicted by the company or a third party" (Roto et al. 2016). As all of these touchpoints have an impact on the consumer's image of the brand, it is important for a company manage them in the best possible way in order to having a positive impact on the customer. Before a company can aim to affect consumers through the touchpoints, it needs to know what the intersections between them and the consumers are. When a company recognizes the touchpoints, it can also interact with consumers via them.

Customer journey is a process involving three stages; pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase. Each of these stages of the customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016.) include various touchpoints and individual touchpoints can occur in any stage of the customer journey (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016). Hence, a company should recognize touchpoints but also touchpoint paths. This study will focus on the pre-purchase and purchase stages and exclude the post-purchase due to the case company's relatively young age.

Consumer-brand touchpoints are a widely discussed topic. Consumers' total experience with the company is a sum of all of the experiences, touchpoints, with the company (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016). Additionally, each small experience between a consumer and brand accumulates towards the consumer's brand image (Saleem & Igelsias, 2016). Consumers' total evaluation of the brand also forms based on all of the consumer-brand experiences (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016). Even though each interaction between a consumer and brand plays an important role, a clear, recognized path of touchpoints and knowledge of the omnichannel touchpoints between a consumer and brand are lacking (Payne, Peltier & Barger, 2017). Touchpoints are an essential topic for companies but still a research gap exists – therefore, this study dives into the topic of touchpoints.

1.2   Research objectives

Due to a recognized research gap in the literature, the main purposes of this research are to recognize all of the possible consumer-brand touchpoints in the omnichannel environment by using a qualitative research method that is unique and created for the purposes of this research. Based on the recognized touchpoints it is aimed to form a path of the consumer-brand touchpoints. All this is implemented with a case brand. It is proposed that the consumer operates in the omnichannel environment which makes them to move agilely in and between the offline and online environments. Thus, multiple different consumer-brand touchpoints are gained as the consumer and brand can encounter each other anywhere, anytime, and anyhow in the omnichannel world. Consequently, the consumer's, the subjects, touchpoint path will also wind back and forth between the offline and online environments.

Research objectives of this study are:
1.   Recognition of all possible touchpoints between the case brand and consumers in the omnichannel environment
2.   Review of the recognized touchpoints
3.   Forming a path of the recognized touchpoints

1.3   Data and methodology

A unique qualitative research methodology and data collection is created to fulfil the purposes of the master's thesis. The methodology includes two parts. Firstly, the subjects implement a photo-taking period of one month when they take photos of anything that makes them to think about the case brand. The photos will serve as a recalling-aid for the second part of the research, the interviews. The interviews will also include two parts, a free-speaking part and a semi-structured interview part. In the first phase of the interview, the subject freely speaks about the photos she or he has taken and the situations behind the photos. In the second phase the interviewer presents questions to the subjects. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed into text. Thus, the data of the research is the pictures taken by the subjects as well as the interview content.

1.4   Structure of the study

This study begins with the introduction to the topic by giving a summary of the research topic, justification of the research, the research objectives, the methodology, and the case company information. The structure of the study continues

with the literature review. After covering the theoretical matters, the study proceeds with presenting the research methodology as well as the development of this particular methodology. The methodology chapter also discusses the pilot that was conducted for ensuring the suitability of the research method. Next, the results of the research are presented as "raw" with example quotes and photos from the data. At the end of the results chapter, a deeper discussion and analysis of the results follow. Lastly, the discussion chapter presented with is division into sections on theoretical implications and practical implications. The study as well as the discussion chapter ends with the limitations, and future recommendations. References and appendix can be found at the end of the study.

1.5   Case brand and company information

Philips Hue is a smart lighting brand owned by a company called Signify. Signify was formerly Philips Lighting and Philips, but the lighting part of the business separated from the parent company, Philips, and formed its own company focusing only manufacturing and selling of lighting-related products and services. Philips as a company was founded in 1891 in Eindhoven, the Netherlands (Philips, n.d.). Thus, Philips Hue as a brand is part of the Philips brand. Signify is Dutch but operates in consumer and professional lighting worldwide in more than 70 countries with 6,2 billion in sales and more than 32 000 employees (Signify, n.d.). Philips Hue as a brand was first introduced in 2012 and in the following year it arrived to the Nordic market (Signify, 2020). Philips Hue is a smart lighting brand designed for consumers. The Philips Hue lights can be used via a Wi-Fi connection on a smart device, smart speakers, and smart switches. Different types of scenes, routines, and schedules can be set for the lights. Philips Hue uses an open system which enables its use with and by other brands' and companies' products and services. For the purpose of this master's thesis research, it is worthwhile to share that the logo of the brand is very colorful due to the fact that 16 million light colors are available for the Philips Hue users in the app. There are plenty of user cases with the brand, but to mention some the brand can be used as go to sleep lighting, wakeup lighting, to entertainment purposes, to create different types of atmosphere and to provide right kind of lighting for different type of activities. (Eestilä, 2019.)

The case brand itself shared touchpoints that they know occur between them and the consumer in the Nordic market. The results of which touchpoints work and which not are based on the subjects' views on these particular touchpoints. In addition to the brand-defined touchpoints, a few other consumer-brand intersections came up in the research that work significantly well or significantly poorly for the subjects. In this chapter, examples of these intersections are given based on the implemented research. Additionally, the reasons for why these touchpoints have an impact on forming an image of the case brand are also covered.

Table 2 includes a list of the touchpoints identified by the company (Eestilä, 2019) between consumers and the case brand.

Influencer posts about the brand	Brand on TV as part of a house
Newsletter from the brand	Review of the brand online
Photos and videos of people using the brand on the brand website	Trade show where the brand has a booth
Receiving customer service from the brand	Poor brand website
Article about the brand on Iltalehti	Brand at a store

Table 2: Real-life touchpoints from the case brand

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review of this study forms around the theory of touchpoints, why knowing the touchpoints is essential, and customer journey. Additional, relevant theories that have a link to the main theories are also introduced. Each of these theories is presented individually with a justification for why the particular theory is an essential part in achieving the goal of this study.

2.1   The omnichannel environment for consumers and brands

The consumer-brand touchpoints are not as clear as they used to in the past with only offline interactions between the consumers and brands. Nowadays, the intersections between the two parties occur in the complex environment of offline and online as well as the combinations of these two; the brands as well as the consumers operate in an omnichannel world (Tyrväinen and Karjaluoto, 2018). The term, multichannel, has been also used when discussing about the mix of offline and online channels but omnichannel includes more channels and is generally more interactive (Tyrväinen and Karjaluoto, 2018). Thus, omnichannel as a theory and as a term will used in this master's thesis research.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

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The concept of omnichannel highlights the usage of number of different channels, offline and online, for one instance of transaction (Tyrväinen and Karjaluoto, 2018). An example of this would be a consumer that sees the case brand's, Philips Hue's, product at a fair, after which he uses a search engine to gain more information about the product as well as the brand providing the product. Then, he walks into a retail store to touch and try out the product. After visiting the store, he uses the comparative online tools to find the lowest price. After finding the online retailer that provides the lowest price, he calls a friend to ask for a review on the online retailer. Lastly, after hearing a positive comment on the online store, he purchases the product.

How does all this apply to the consumer-brand intersections in the omnichannel environment? As one can notice, the omnichannel world brings a number of different interaction moments and places for the consumer and brand to possibly meet each other. Each of these intersections is an opportunity for the brand to interact with the consumers. In best case scenario, a brand is aware of all of the possible omnichannel touchpoints with consumers and can create positive interactions. In order to be able to address all of the interactions positively, the brand has to recognize the touchpoints with the consumers and create a path, sort of a map, of the touchpoints. In this thesis, consumer-brand touchpoints are recognized in the omnichannel environment and a path of these touchpoints in created.

2.2   Shift to offline-online combinations for consumers

The shift to omnichannel environment has occurred. Thus, a consumer operates smoothly between different offline and offline channels. Consequently, shopping and interactions can be done anywhere and anytime. Consumers do not only use one of the two options, offline or online, but they combine these two to buy as well as to search information. In addition to the customer journey including omnichannel elements, the online part itself can already contain multiple different devices. Almost half of the purchases made by consumers included more than only one device. 49 percent of all of the offline purchases in the U.S. had a digital device included in the purchase journey. (Rodríguez-Torrico, San José Cabezudo and San-Martín, 2017, 3.) The most important take-away from these figures for the sake of this study is the fact that today's consumers do not only use one channel, but multiple different ones. Thus, this creates an important need for the brand to be aware of the movements of the consumer; the consumer-brand intersections can occur at varied number of places and moments.

2.3   The current world of customer-centric thinking

Multiple theories as well as terms that place customer in the center of the brand's operations have risen over the past years. The websites are designed to follow the aspects of customer experience (CX). Additionally, the actions of customer relationship management (CRM) are currently used to satisfy the customer-brand relationship and for the brand to know its customers. (Meyer & Schwager, 2007) As this study also deals with the experience-based intersections between the consumer and the brand, a concept of customer experience management (CEM) contributes to this study. Even though customer relationship management is widely used by companies with data-based decision making and creating measures based on data, information on how a customer feels and thinks has lifted its head and became knowledge that companies want to possess. Together, CRM and CEM, create wide variety of information about the customer; data-based information like purchases and requests as well as experience-based information such as thoughts, and feelings towards the company. (Meyer & Schwager, 2007) The study deals with consumer's touchpoints with a brand; therefore, it is valuable to know what the consumer thinks while interacting with the brand.

2.4   Touchpoint theory

This study is based on touchpoints and the path that forms of the touchpoints. A touchpoint is defined as following, "an occurrence of direct contact between the

customer and the actual product or service or with the representation of it in-flicted by the company or a third party" (Roto et al. 2016). Thus, a touchpoint can be a contact between the actual company and the consumer or a contact between a third party and the consumer that encompasses a representation of the company or its products. A touchpoint between a consumer and a third party can occur, for instance, in a role of word-of-mouth, news or reviews. A representation of a company, the company's products, or the company's brand may be anything; for example, a similarly-colored object to the company's brand colors. The value of an individual touchpoint varies (Roto et al. 2016) which also makes knowing them for a company important.

Touchpoints work two-way; they can be recognized from the consumer's perspective as well as from the company's perspective (Roto et al. 2016). There-fore, it is crucial for a company to recognize touchpoints from its own point of view but also get the consumers' recognized touchpoints. Both of these views are included in this study when recognizing all of the possible touchpoints.

This study will recognize variety of different types of touchpoints, and even though they will be categorized to complement the case brand, there are four general types of touchpoint categories from the literature. These types are brand-owned, partner-owned, customer-owned, and social. All these touchpoints and touchpoint types can occur at any phase of the customer journey. (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016.) The insights of the different touchpoint types are described below in table 3.

Brand-owned touchpoints	Interaction between a customer and company. The interaction is initiated by the company or a party under the company's control. Examples of this types of touchpoints are media, ads, product packaging, and pricing.
Partner-owned touchpoints	Simultaneous interaction initiated and managed by a company or its associates. Associates can be different types of partners, such as marketing agencies or retailing partners. The line between brand-owned and partner-owned touchpoints is not always clear.
Customer-owned touchpoints	Interaction initiated by a company's customers which is not under the company's control or its partners.
Social touchpoints	Different external touchpoints created by other people around the customers affecting the customers' experiences. Example of this types of touchpoints are friends, family, and autonomous information sources online.

Table 3: Types of touchpoints (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016, 76-78)

2.5 Customer journey

According to Lemon and Verhoef (2016), customer's journey is a process with three stages; prepurchase, purchase, and postpurchase. Each of these stages include various touchpoints. Individual touchpoints may occur in all phases of the customer journey (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016). The customer journey with a company begins with the prepurchase stage. This stage includes all possible elements, all possible interactions with the brand, before the purchase stage. Examples of occurrences of the prepurchase stage are need recognition, searching for suitable options, and consideration of the company, brand, products, and purchase. The next stage, purchase, forms around the event of purchase. It includes every element and interactions with the brand that the event of purchase includes. Example of this stage are making a choice, implementing an order, and payment. (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016.) This study will focus on the prepurchase and purchase stages and exclude the postpurchase stage as the case brand, Philips Hue, is still relatively young. The third stage, postpurchase, includes all interactions with the brand after the purchase is completed. This stage may include, for instance, usage of the products, communication with the brand, service requests, and repurchase. This phase lasts from the purchase till the end of the customer's life. (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016.) This Lemon and Verhoef's (2016) customer journey will be used as a basis for the study's touchpoint path part since a touchpoint path from the very first consumer-brand intersection to the purchase is aimed to be formed after recognition of all possible touchpoints.

| Pre-purchase Stage	Purchase Stage	Post-purhase Stage
Pre-purchase Touchpoints:	**Purchase Touchpoints:**	**Post-purchase Touchpoints:**
Brand owned	Brand owned	Brand owned
Partner owned	Partner owned	Partner owned
Customer owned	Customer owned	Customer owned
Social/external	Social/external	Social/external
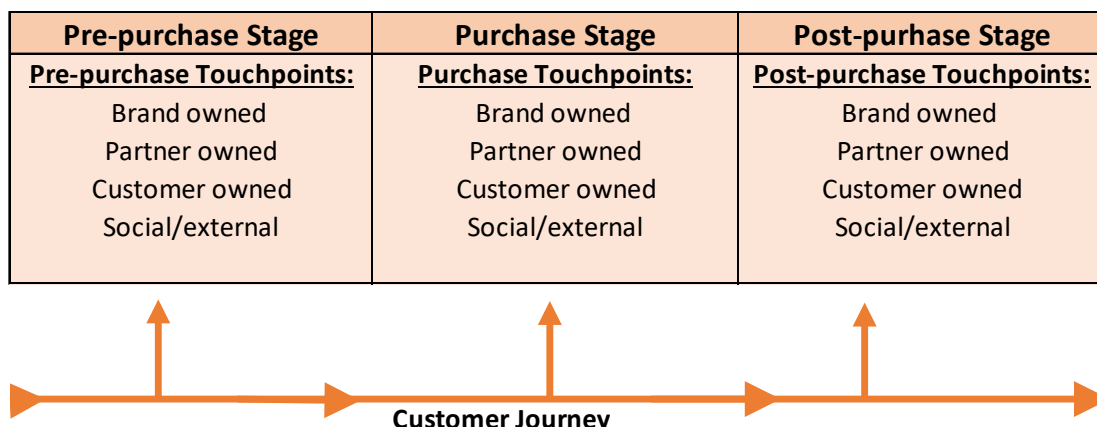
Customer Journey

Figure 1: Customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016)

Even though this study focuses more on the relationship and touchpoints of the consumer and brand without putting much focus on the "business side" of the topic (e.g. purchase and conversion), the customer journey serves as a suitable base for the idea of recognizing all possible consumer-brand touchpoints and creating a path of them. Thus, it is beneficial to have an understanding of the customer journey and how touchpoints can occur in each stage of the journey.

The customer journey with its three phases include multiple different touchpoints in the omnichannel environment. Each of these touchpoints has its own impact on the customer's overall evaluation and brand image of the company Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016). Thus, each of the process' touchpoint can be seen as an opportunity for the company to have an impact on the consumer's image of the brand. Balmer (2017) also makes a notion on the relation between recognizing the touchpoints and forming a path of them; the touchpoints should be recognized and managed first and then a touchpoint chain can be created based on the individual touchpoint information. The chain can be then consequently managed in order to create a thorough, seamless experience for customers through affecting the individual touchpoints. Managing the touchpoints and touchpoint paths then have an impact on the customer's perceptions of the company. (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy, & Pervan, 2015.)

2.6 Why knowing the touchpoints is essential?

Stein and Ramaseshan (2016) explain the importance of touchpoints and knowing them greatly. There are multiple ways, places, and times for a brand and consumer to interact with each other. As was already noted earlier, these interactions can occur in the offline or in the online environment. Customer's experience with the company or brand is an accumulation of experiences. Every "touch" between the customer and the company, product, service, or brand through different

channels can be considered a touchpoint and an experience which then accumulates towards the total experience and evaluation of the company. (Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016, 8.) Thus, it is essential for a company to know these touchpoints, when they happen, where, and how, in order to create positive experiences and positive accumulated evaluation to the customer of the company. The touchpoint-related literature also discusses moments of truth; each experience between a customer and company is a moment of truth (Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016, 8) as it has an impact on the company destiny. The first step of the solution for being in control of and having a positive impact on the customer through all of these moments of truths and touchpoints, is to recognize them; when the touchpoints happen, where, and how.

A brand is a comprehensive sum of the experiences that a consumer has with a company and its products, services, brand, and employees (Saleem & Iglesias 2016, 46). As was already stated in the previous paragraph, all possible experiences, even the smallest ones with a company, have an impact on the total experience. Now, putting that together with Saleem and Iglesias (2016) notion on how a brand is a sum of experiences, it can be also understood how even the smallest experiences between a customer and company affect also the brand image. Thus, it is logical that a company should be aware of and recognize possible intersections between the brand and the consumer.

The journey or path between the consumer and the brand includes multiple phases but also multiple intersections. As per Saleem and Iglesias (2016) stating, each of these intersections throughout the journey has an impact on the on the brand image as well as on the total evaluation of the company (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016). Also, according to Baxendalea, Macdonalda, and Wilson (2015) a holistic, aggregate information of the touchpoints throughout the customer journey should be possessed by a company. In order to gain the best knowledge of the entire customer journey and all of the possible touchpoints throughout it, the entire journey and all touchpoints should also be examined at the same time (Baxendalea et al. 2015). This also complements Saleem and Iglesias (2016) notion of all of consumer's experiences, even the smallest ones, having an impact on the brand image and evaluation of the company. When all of the consumer-brand intersections, as experiences, are in the possession of a company, they can also be exploited and the consumer's experiences and image of the brand affected.

According to Saleem and Iglesias (2016), brand is a process and develops, as customer journey does too as time passes and more interactions occur between consumers and brand. Throughout the process, there are a number of touchpoints affecting the brand experience. Therefore, the touchpoints need to be known by a company in order it to be able to carefully managing them, and having a positive impact on the customer through their experiences. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) also point out that once a company has recognized its touchpoints with the customers, it needs to be planned how the touchpoints can be influenced. That way customer experiences (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016), evaluation of the brand, and brand image can be also affected (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016).

2.7   Word-of-Mouth

As exploring the literature on touchpoints, word-of-mouth (WoM) as a theoretical phenomenon is mentioned often. WoM is a common touchpoint between consumers and brands and can be considered as a touchpoint that is initiated by a third party. Word-of-mouth is communication that occurs from consumer to consumer and deals with a product, company, or brand. This communication among consumers, about for instance a brand, is considered marketing and WoM also plays in important role in marketing. (Demirbas, 2018.) WOM is essential at the marketplace since consumer forms opinions and attitudes about products, companies, and brands based on the received information from other persons (Hanaysha, 2016). WoM also affects largely the consumers' buying behavior (Consiglio, De Angelis, & Costabile, 2018). If the other consumer providing the information about a product, consumer, or brand is significant, such as family, relatives, or friends, the received information can be added on what the perception about the target already is (Lim and Chung, 2014). It has also been discovered that if a brand is unfamiliar to a consumer it is more likely that the receiving consumer uses the information (Lim and Chung, 2014).

   Additionally, WoM can also occur in online environment. Electronic-word-of-mouth, eWoM, is defined as customers' created content in the online environment about a product or a company. The created content is visible to other people online. Examples of eWoM are giving ratings, writing articles, and reading and creating reviews. (Mishra, Maheswarappa, Maity and Samu, 2018.)

2.8   Brand and consumer-brand relationship

2.8.1 Brand

In the past, brand was mostly defined as something non-human, for instance as American Marketing Association (Loureiro, 2013) defined it to be "a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers". Fournier started the consumer-brand relationship theory in 1998 when she created the brand relationship quality model (Loureiro, 2013). She renewed the concept by attaching human characteristics to brands. Thus, a brand is seen more of a human-like partner (Loureiro, 2013). As was presented earlier, a brand is defined to be a comprehensive sum of the experiences that a consumer has with a company and its products, services, brand, and employees (Saleem & Iglesias 2016, 46).

2.8.2 Brand management

Brand is nowadays a very complex matter which includes different parts, tangible and intangible. Thus, a company managing its brand is also a widely spread thing to do. As the study deals with consumer-brand touchpoints, it is essential to have a deeper understanding on what is brand management and what are its consequences. It is also important to look deeper into the link between brand management and consumer-brand management; the study assumes that the consumer-brand touchpoints include brand management actions, and in order for a company to successfully implement brand management it has to know when and where the intersections with the consumers occur. It is argued that strong brand management is vital in developing and sustaining a company's competitiveness (Wai Jin, Lee, O'Cass and Phyra, 2017, 193). The same line of scholars also argue that good brand management and generally building brands require high level of awareness. This awareness also includes the consumer-brand touchpoints and a brand being aware of them.

2.8.3 Consumer-brand relationship

In order to gain understanding on the consumer-brand interactions, it is essential to cover the basics of what a consumer-brand relationship is. As investigating the literature on consumer-brand relationship, a few common features can be recognized throughout. Firstly, the consumer-brand relationship is often referred to include characteristics of human-to-human relationships. Secondly, the dynamics of a human-to-human relationship are also applied to consumer-brand relationship. (Ghani and Tuhin, 2018; Ghani & Tuhin, 2016.) As looking at the consumer-brand relationships, especially for the topic of this study, the recognized point of brand being an active partner of the consumer-brand relationship is essential; the brand is treated almost as a person and individual characteristics are attached to the brand – just like to a human (Ghani and Tuhin, 2018).

The formation of customer-brand relationship deals with brand and its elements as well. The product(s) that a brand offers must be important enough for the consumer (Ahearne, Bhattacharya and Gruen, 2005). For example, if a consumer is allergic to pets, pet products are not of interest to him or her. Secondly, consumers need to have a clear comparison set which enables the brand's characteristics and benefits more distinct. It is easier for a consumer to understand and perceive the brand's characteristics among others to which he or she can compare them instead of just perceiving the brand on its own without any comparative points. (Ahearne, Bhattacharya and Gruen, 2005.) For instance, if Philips Hue's smart bulb is looked at in a void without any traditional nor smart lights to which it can be compared, a consumer might have difficult in perceiving the product and the brand. When the consumer has Philips' traditional bulbs, competitors' smart lights, and other Philips Hue products together with the Philips Hue smart bulb and all of them form a comparison set, it is easier for a consumer to perceive the brand and the product and possibly form a relationship with it.

Thirdly, consumers need to be included in the happenings, offerings, and people of the brand at a frequent level. As consumers identify themselves with the brand, they are also more willing to support the brand to reach its goals. (Ahearne, Bhattacharya and Gruen, 2005.)

The formation of the consumer-brand relationship plays a big role in the touchpoints and forming a path of the touchpoints because such wide and varied range of elements have an impact on the relationship and on the way a consumer thinks about a brand. The formation of the consumer-brand relationship already includes touchpoints. When one can understand the basics of a consumer-brand relationship it creates a basis for recognizing the consumer-brand touchpoints and forming a path of them; the touchpoints are part of the consumer-brand relationships. In addition to this, as the positive consequences and requirements of a good consumer-brand relationship were given, the deeper content and impact of the consumer-brand touchpoints can be discovered.

2.9   Literature review summary

Consumers, brands, and companies operate in the omnichannel environment which creates a large variety of different touchpoints. That also means that there is large variety of different type of consumer-brand touchpoints occurring all the time, in offline as well as in online environment. Consumers and brands can intersect with each other whenever, wherever, and how ever. Each of these intersectional experiences, even the smallest ones, have an impact on consumers. In order to a company to manage these intersections, the intersections, touchpoints, have to be recognized first. As was stated earlier in the literature review, once a company has the knowledge of the touchpoints, it can benefit from them by managing the touchpoints and having an impact on the consumers' and customers' brand image, total evaluation of the company, and total experience with the company. Customer journey plays a big role in the touchpoints too as the touchpoints form a chain and it is beneficial for a company to have a knowledge the touchpoints chain as well. Touchpoints can occur at any stage, pre-purchase, purchase, or post-purchase, of the customer journey. The type and level of individual touchpoints vary; some touchpoints have a stronger impact on consumers than others. Given all this about touchpoints, their affect, and the benefits that a company gain from having a knowledge of the touchpoints, it is essential for a company to recognize and know all of its touchpoints with consumers and consequently form a path of them. First for a company, comes the recognizing of the consumer-brand touchpoints and the path of the touchpoints. Then after that, the knowledge can be exploited by the company in having an impact on consumers through the touchpoints.

3   DATA AND METHODOLOGY

First, a thorough development with justifications and benefits of the research methodology is presented. The discussion about the research methodology's development is implemented at a deep level as the research methodology is a unique combination of two qualitative methods and plays an important role in the study. Next, a step-by-step description of the research methodology is given. This follows with presenting the requirements for the research subjects together with a description on how and where the subjects are found. After the methodology and empirical sample are discussed, the chapter ends with the limitations of the research methodology.

3.1   Research methodology development

As will be presented in the next sub-chapter with step-by-step description of the research methodology, this study will use a two phase qualitative research method; the first stage includes the subjects taking photos of anything that makes them think of the case brand and then in the second stage interviews are being held.

A qualitative research method is used. In this case, qualitative research provides deep, explanatory answers from the subjects that successfully fit the topic. The subjects will have a chance to form their own answers by using their own words which gives the research usable insights into the consumers' confluence. The aim is to examine the consumers in their own personal lives and possible intersections with the brand in the natural environment. Thus, consumers themselves create the environment in which they intersect with the brand. In order to capture the touchpoints and enable the usage of them in the research, the touchpoint moments and triggers have to be recorded somehow. Then, these recorded triggers will be used as a base for the verbal interviews and the interviews can be recalled back to the triggers and to the moments in the subjects' natural, personal life.

Identifying consumer-brand touchpoints implies longitudinal research where consumer intersects with a specific brand is studied over time. Data collection over longer time scale introduced two problems into the study; a possible memory bias and lack of access to the subjects (consumers) personal life. These problems also started the entire development of the research methodology; the study aims to recognize all possible touchpoints that the consumers experience which also means examining and tracking their personal life, but how can the research access and track these touchpoints occurring in the consumers' personal life and how can the subjects remember the touchpoints after the longer time scale?

3.1.1 Solving the problems of tracking touchpoints in consumers' personal life and recalling back to them later in the research

As was discussed earlier, even the smallest experiences with a brand affect consumers' image of the brand (Saleem et al. 2016). When it comes to examining the entire customer decision journey and all of its touchpoints, Baxendalea et al. (2015) discuss about an important matter; it is difficult for research subjects to remember all of the occurred touchpoints. Given these two previous notions, it would mean that the experiences with the brand, touchpoints, are also difficult to remember later on. Thus, MacDonalda et al. (2015) used real-time experience tracking (RET) to capture all of the consumer-brand touchpoints, also the ones that could not be tracked by other methods, within a period of one week. This method involved the subjects sending a text message by phone whenever they intersected with the particular brand. That way the all of the possible touchpoints could be captured and also recalled later on the research, for instance in interviews.

The same idea with MacDonalda et al. (2015) for the same problem solving reasons is exploited in this research; all of the possible intersections between the brand the consumers are aimed to be recognized, also the ones that the consumers cannot recall later on as they also have an impact on the brand image through feelings. In order to the research subjects being able to remember even the smallest intersections with the brand later on in the interview phase and in order to the research successfully being able to assess the touchpoints and form a path of the touchpoints, so called 'picture-taking recalling-aid' is used. In this method the subjects take a picture of a trigger that made them thin of the brand which leaves a memory stamp for the future actions and recalling discussions in the research. The picture-taking enables the subjects and the researcher to explore also the touchpoints that cannot necessarily be captured by other research methods, such as surveys. As the intersections occur in the subjects' personal life as a part of their daily basis without an obvious link to the research environment, for instance an interview situation where everything depends on the human memory. The taken pictures are sent to the researcher by text message and they are used later in the interview stage. McDonalda et al. (2015) use their recalling method, RET, to gain knowledge on the whole variety of touchpoints occurring and their impact on the brand consideration; the same idea will be used in this study but just to log all of the possible consumer-brand touchpoints and to form a path of these touchpoints. Thus, the problems, of not having an access to the personal environment of the subjects and the subjects no being able to recall back to the touchpoint moments, are solved by using this particular research method.

The picture-taking method will include collecting all the possible triggers that make the subjects to think of the particular brand to identify a wide variety of consumer-brand touchpoints. This is based on Saleem et al. (2016) idea on how each experience with a company or its products or services can have an impact on the brand image and evaluation. Thus, any intersection for a consumer with a brand, even though it would not be a proper, theory-based touchpoint, can have an impact on the brand and brand image. For example, a consumer, Anna, loves

pizza but suddenly she discovers the she has a celiac disease and can only have gluten-free products. Thus, she has a problem since she can only have gluten-free pizza. She remembers that someone has sometime mentioned her a brand called GluF Pizza that offers delicious gluten-free pizza. Consequently, she thinks of this brand because it might solve her problem of not being able to have the food she loves. Thus, this raising problem creates an intersection with the brand as the brand is able to provide a solution to Anna. Anna feels positively of the brand without having a proper, theory-defined touchpoint with the brand and still this intersection creates positive image of the brand; in this case, the need, feelings, and WoM have created an experience with the brand.

3.1.2 Visual research and world

Even though MacDonalda at al. (2015) research methodology greatly solves the initial research-related problems of this study and serves suitably the purposes of this, their methodology will be modified for this study. We live in a visual world which was already recognized in 1996 by Gombrich: "We are living in a visual age. We are bombarded by pictures from morning to night. Opening our newspaper at breakfast we see photographs of men and women in the news, and raising our eyes from the paper, we encounter the picture on the cereal package. (Gombrich, 1996, 41.) As we live in a visual world, the researches that are conducted should also take this into account. Emmison and Smith's (2007, ix) book goes deep into the visual research methods, justifications, and benefits. As people's and consumers' lives are based on visuals, visual research methods should also be conducted in order to capture the research objectives. The visual of people's lives are not limited to forms of photograph, ads, and shows on TV, but they are also objectives, clothing, buildings, body language, and even eye contact possessing meanings through visuals as photographs do. (Emmison and Smith's, 2007, ix.) They describe well the role of visuals in research: "Visual research is no longer just the study of the image, but rather the study of the seen and observable." (ibid, 2007, ix).

Given this importance of visual in research, not just photography but also everything people see and observe in a form visual, the research methodology of this study complements the visual as well in order to meet the objectives and to build on top of the methodology deployed by McDonalda et al. (2015). Thus, the consumers, or the subjects, of this research take pictures of the touchpoints they experience during the period in order to the study and research to complement the concept of visual in people's life and in research.

3.1.3 Storing brand knowledge as images

The consumers store knowledge of the brands as a form of pictures (Koll, von Wallpach & Kreuzer, 2010). The reason for this is simply the way the human brain works; human beings do not have the required verbal skills to form words of the received multisensory information. Hence, the knowledge is stored in the brain

in non-verbal form – pictures. There is also a natural reason for people not being able to store all the knowledge in verbal form; 60 percent of the information people receive travels through the visual system of the brain and stores up in non-verbal form. (Koll, von Wallpach & Kreuzer, 2010.) Despite the older age of the Koll et al. (2010) study, it is used for this research due to its basic idea coming from the way brain works; people storing brand information in their brain as a format of pictures in 2010 and at the time of this study has not changed. Due to consumers usually storing the knowledge in a visual form, the interview subjects capture photos of situations, objectives, or whatever it is that triggers them to think of the case brand. These photos are then sent to the researcher by SMS. Questions based on these photos as well as on other topic-related matters are created for the interviews. The photos are also used as references in the interview in order to the subject being able to refer back to the initial triggers. An example of an interview situation with a captured trigger follows.

> Interviewer: *"In this photo A, taken on September 10th, you have seen a banner ad of a smart bulb. Why did that trigger you think about Philips Hue? What did follow after this event?"*

The photo of the touchpoint or trigger occurring in the online environment is brought up and the subject can recall back to the triggering moment and reason with the aid of the photo. Then, the interviewer is able to present questions about the particular touchpoint and the interviewee is able to answer them as she or he has the visual stamp of the trigger in her or his mind.

According to Koll, von Wallpach & Kreuzer (2010), people think through narratives which leads to the point that when consumers think of a brand or a product, they have this information in their minds in form of episodes and stories. As Koll and others also refer, the best way to collect this information is through replaying the episodical stories. In terms of the research method of this study, this means that the interviewees store the intersections with the brand in their brains in the form episodical stories and when the storing happens they capture a picture of the trigger. Additionally, the research also has a trace of the trigger and can have clear representation of the touchpoint. Later on in the interview, the episodical story is accessed in the interview by asking the subject to reproduce the story with the help of the picture, create it verbally, and access the intersection situation again, and answer questions about the trigger.

3.1.4 Recalling back to the touchpoint moments with the aid of photos

Recalling comes down to the human memory; humans are aware of a stimuli that occurred in the past (Leigh, Zinkhan and Swaminathan, 2006, 105-122), for instance, an experience linked to a brand. Recalling is also a crucial matter for any brand to consider; if we as a brand do advertising, what affects the fact that the consumer exposed to the advertising can recall back to it? Recalling measures the

level of awareness of interaction with a brand in this case. Consequently, awareness is used to measure the effectiveness of communication. When awareness is reached, attitudes toward the brand or a product are created. (Moriarty 1983; Rossiter and Percy 1983.)

According to Leigh at all. (2006, 105-122), successful recalling requires supplying of a general or temporary contextual cue in the situation of an interview. Additionally, the cue that is supplied cannot be too obviously linked to study brands to avoid bias in participant data collection. As following Leigh at all (2006) and investigating the triggers that make consumers to think of the brand in this study, the recalling is contextually supported in the interviews by providing the pictures, the subjects have captured themselves, as contextual recalling aids. The primary aim is to let the subjects to speak freely and that way gather the needed information. If the first part of free-speaking does not give all of the needed answers, the secondary phase includes the interviewer presenting questions based on the pictures as well as on the topic.

3.1.5 Visual ethnography

The research method of this study and its benefits can be compared to visual ethnography; it is a research method that allows the researcher to get extremely close to the matter under inspection and creates accurate and authentic data in a visual format through the eyes of the subject. Visual ethnography is exploited by researcher studying marketing and consumers. Ethnography means observing a subject at the field and then conducting interviews at the scene. The visual addition to the method becomes when the subjects him or herself records the inspected matter. Thus, the research data is eventually in a form of visual text, it is authentic, and it possesses integrity. These elements create benefits, such as validity, when examining marketing and consumers. The benefits also include having access to the consumer's point of view and having a visual representation as data of that point of view – this is also the aim of this study. (Schembri & Boyle, 2012, 1252.) As is usually done in visual ethnography, the interviews of this study will not be conducted immediately after the end of the visual part at the scene of where the photos were taken by the subjects. This is due to practical reasons; the researcher and the subjects might have a large proximity from each other and the researcher need time to base also some interview questions on the collected photos. The interviews will be still conducted as soon as possible afterwards, within 1-7 days. The earlier explained recalling aid is used for this purpose too.

Visual ethnography also provides an analysis method for this study. Typically, visual ethnography uses an analysis method that is based on organizing the data, in this case visuals, notes, and transcribed interviews. This arranging of data can take more than just one round as the data is arranged into relevant and meaningful units that link to the topic that is examined in the study. (Schembri & Boyle, 2012.) The data of this study will also include photos as the visuals, notes

of the photos, and transcribed interviews. The data will be analyzed by segmenting it into categories relevant to the study. For instance, touchpoints relating to WoM, touchpoints relating to the case brand's products, and touchpoints relating to events.

3.1.6 Forming the interview questions

The interviews are semi-structed as some interview questions are formed beforehand, but some are also intuitive based on pre-formed question themes.

The first phase of the interview includes the subjects freely speaking about the photos they took. The researcher also forms and asks questions about the photos. These interview questions are based on the gaining knowledge of the experienced touchpoints and the situations about them. Additionally, there are questions about what type of image did the specific touchpoints create to the subjects about the brand. These types of questions are also used in visual ethnography when conducting interviews after the visual "field" phase of the research (Schembri & Boyle, 2012). Examples of the photo-based questions are below.

> *"Why did this photo make you think of the brand?"*
> *"What kind of image did this situation behind the photo create to you of the brand? Why?"*

The case brand gave real-life touchpoints for the use of this study (found in introduction chapter under case company heading). These touchpoints have been recognized by the case brand from their customers' real-life experiences and they will be used to form some of the interview questions as well as to gain knowledge of them from the subjects' perspective. There will be interview questions dealing with these real-life touchpoints based reviewing the touchpoints as well as to examine whether they are ones that occur often according to the subjects. Examples of these types of interview questions are below.

> *"Have you experienced the following intersection with the brand?"*
> *"What is your opinion of the intersection?"*
> *"What kind of image would it create to you of the brand and why?"*

Rest of the interview questions are focused on the following themes: gaining knowledge of all possible intersections and touchpoints that the subjects might have had with the case brand, touchpoints the subjects would like to have and why, touchpoints having an impact on image of the brand, and what type of touchpoint paths have the subjects had or would like to have. Examples of these types of interview questions are below.

> *"List all situations where you have seen or thought of the brand."*

3.2   Step-by-step description of the methodology

Each phase of the research methodology and data collection is presented in a format of text and supported with a visual representation in figure 2.
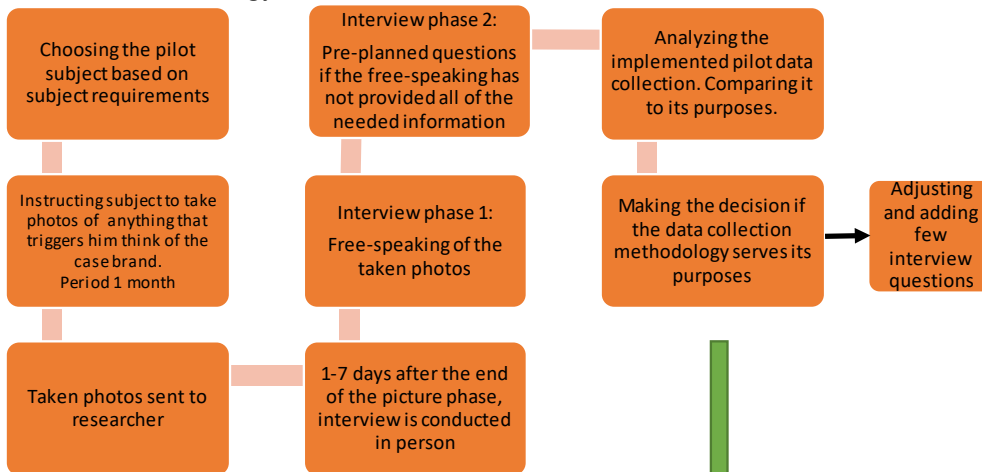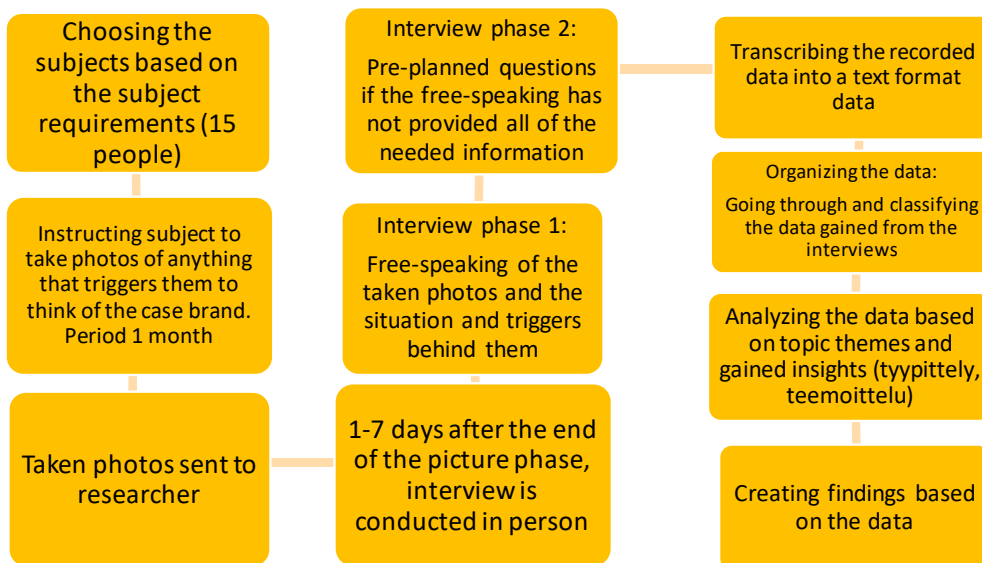

Figure 2: Research methodology

3.2.1 Pilot test

The data collection starts with a pilot version of the research; the pilot subject takes the pictures of anything that triggers him to think of the case brand and sends them to the researcher. This period lasts for a period of one month. In a later subchapter the purpose of the picture-taking, recalling-aid, is described.

Within seven days after the completion of the picture-taking phase, an interview with the subject is held. The instructions for the subjects to take the pictures were intentionally kept vague so that they would not direct the subject's thinking. The period between the end of the picture taking and the interview was kept as short as possible so that the subject would remember as specifically as possible the triggering moments and the details of the triggers and intersection with the case brand.

The interview part included two parts; a free-speaking part and a semi-structured interview part. First, the respondent was told to freely tell about the photos and the triggers. Here, the photos served as recalling aids. The reason for the free-speaking and not presenting questions for the subject at this point is to avoid setting any limits or directive tips for the speaking. Once the free-speaking from the subject's side was done, additional questions were presented to the subject if the interviewer had not received all of the necessary information needed for the thesis research. A list of the interview questions is provided in appendix C.

The conclusions from this pilot are that the methodology designed for this study can be applied to a study of consumer-brand touchpoints with the following changes: some interview questions added and adjusted from the pilot to the actual research. The picture-taking phase of the methodology captured and provided touchpoints and intersections with the brand that could not have been captured otherwise or the subject could not have remembered without the picture as an aid. The taken pictures also worked as a suitable aid and basis for the interview part of the methodology. Lastly, the pictures were a visual representation of situations that could not be fully presented orally. The steps of the methodology and data collection are kept as it was in the pilot for the actual research of this study.

3.2.2 Sample selection and recruiting

The initial aim was to have 12-16 subjects taking part to the research in order to gain reliable and credible data. As the thesis aimed to gain knowledge on the online and offline consumer-brand touchpoints, it was important to make sure that the research subjects were active in both of these environments. This set certain requirements for selecting the research subjects. Thus, the announcement of the possibility to participate in the research was posted on a couple of different Facebook groups where the members did not know the researcher but met the participation requirements. People being part of any Facebook groups are also most likely active in the online environment and have consumer-brand intersections in the online channels. Additionally they use social media which was required for the subjects.

In addition being active in the online and offline environments, the case brand targets mostly 20-60 years old people (S. Eestilä, personal communication, 2019). Thus, the subjects were required to be in that age scale. They were also required to live in their own home in order to have the ability to control the

brands and products of their own home. Subjects from different geographical areas were aimed to be recruited in order not to have all of the subjects and data based on one certain. People from different genders were also aimed to be included. Lastly, the subjects needed to own a smart phone as that is covers the online channel and the case brand operates through an app as one usage option.

Three Facebook groups were chosen for the subject recruitment; IoT – Internet of Things with 20 000 members, Technology News with 34 440 members, and Sisustushullut with 33 682 members. Unfortunately, only a few research subjects were gained through the Facebook group advertisement. Additionally, it was also noticed that not all of them met the research sample requirements despite the message of the advertisement. At this point, the research was started with the eligible people so far.

As the Facebook group advertisement did not efficiently and reliably work with finding eligible subjects, snowball sampling was decided to be used. With this particular method the researcher could ensure the subjects would meet the sample requirements as people the researcher knew were more trustworthy in recruiting subjects the researcher did not know while still meeting the sample requirements. The snowball sampling created results quickly, and subjects who used social media and Internet in their daily basis and owned a smart phone were found from different age groups, geographical areas, and genders. The total sample size ended up being 15 people.

3.2.3 Chart of the subject demographics

Subject identification	Age	Gender	Geographical location	Personal Interests
Subject A	29	Female	Metropolitan area	Interested in smart lights
Subject B	27	Female	Metropolitan area	Interested in home automation
Subject C	33	Female	Eastern Finland	Interested in decoration
Subject D	43	Female	Northern Finland	Interested in lighting
Subject E	25	Female	Central Finland	Owns IoT products
Subject F	31	Male	Metropolitan area	Owns IoT products
Subject G	30	Female	Central Finland	Interested in lighting
Subject H	28	Female	Metropolitan area	Owns IoT products
Subject I	54	Female	Metropolitan area	Interested in decoration
Subject J	52	Female	Eastern Finland	Interested in decoration
Subject K	26	Male	Metropolitan area	Home automation
Subject L	31	Female	Metropolitan area	Decoration
Subject M	37	Male	Metropolitan area	Home automation

Table 4: Sample demographics

3.2.4 Methodology after the pilot

After successful completion of the pilot study, 15 eligible subjects were chosen for the research. The requirements of the sample are described later on in this chapter. All of 15 subjects were instructed to take photos of anything that triggers them to think of the case brand, Philips Hue. Any type of limits were not placed for the pictures; they would be anything from other person talking about the brand, seeing the brand online, or just a thought of the brand because of a dark room. The picture-taking would go on for a period of one month. Only the necessary instructions were given to the subjects in order not to bias the subjects thinking. The picture-taking period and following interviews were implemented during the dark season in Finland, from November to January, in order to keep the circumstances same for all of the subjects. The dark season is extremely important time for a lighting brand like Philips Hue as the need of light is at its highest (Eestilä, 2019); due to this all of the research periods were aimed to be conducted during the dark season.

The subjects got to decide when and how they want to send the pictures to the researcher. All of them chose to send the pictures by a text message at the end of the period or by adding the photos to a shared folder during the period. 1-7 days after the one month long picture-taking period had passed and photos were also at the possession of the researcher, interviews were conducted. Similarly to the pilot, the interviews included a free-speaking phase where the subjects went through the photos they had taken and told about the photos as well as the triggers behind the photos. After the free-speaking part, the interviewer presented questions to the subjects; they could be about the photos or about other relevant matters linked to the research topic. Thus, the interview was a combination of structured and semi-structured interview methods. Among the questions, there were also real-life-based touchpoints from the case brand in order to gain insights to the already occurring, real-life touchpoints from the subjects.

All of the interviews were recorded by the subjects' permissions as well as the photos used in the thesis by the subjects' permissions. All of the participants of the research will be kept anonymous and only referred as indicators. The recorded interview data was transcribed into a text format. After the data was in a text format, it was organized and classified based on different themes of the thesis. The organized data was analyzed based on different themes of the study by using typology and theming as analysis methods. Lastly, results were created based on the data.

4   RESULTS

The results are given as "raw" and further discussed in the results chapter. The results chapter is structured based on the sections in the literature review chapter. Subheadings are formed and structured based on the most common touchpoint themes that were discovered from the methodology and data. For instance, the main topic of a section is the touchpoints, and the section is divided into sub-sections of WoM-related touchpoints, need-based touchpoints, and darkness-related touchpoints. The sub-sections provide also quotes and pictures as examples from the data linked to the particular finding presented.

There are data and results that are based on the subjects' real-life experiences. Additionally, some knowledge is based on the subjects' hypothetical or expectational answers. These matters have not occurred but the subjects state that they would be likely to happen. This type of data is referred by 'would work' answers as the subjects, for instance, state that some touchpoint would work positively with the case brand.

4.1   Description of the sample

As the research was running with the 15 subjects in the picture-taking phase, two of them dropped out. As the methodology is long and takes effort and time from the subjects, they felt like their personal lives could not accommodate the extra work. Thus, the research started with 15 subjects but ended with 13.

The table 5 describes the sample by giving the basic variables for each of the research subject. As was discussed and justified in earlier chapters of the study, each research subject is required to be active on social media and Internet on daily basis. Additionally, they need to own a smart phone. The aim for the sample was to include people from different age groups and geographical areas of Finland.

Subject identi-fication	Age	Gender	Geographical location	Personal Interests
Subject A	29	Female	Metropolitan area	Interested in smart lights
Subject B	27	Female	Metropolitan area	Interested in home automation
Subject C	33	Female	Eastern Finland	Interested in decoration
Subject D	43	Female	Northern Finland	Interested in lighting
Subject E	25	Female	Central Finland	Owns IoT products
Subject F	31	Male	Metropolitan area	Owns IoT products
Subject G	30	Female	Central Finland	Interested in lighting
Subject H	28	Female	Metropolitan area	Owns IoT products
Subject I	54	Female	Metropolitan area	Interested in decoration
Subject J	52	Female	Eastern Finland	Interested in decoration
Subject K	26	Male	Metropolitan area	Home automation
Subject L	31	Female	Metropolitan area	Decoration
Subject M	37	Male	Metropolitan area	Home automation

Table 5: Sample demographics 2

The sample includes people from four different age groups. The sample also includes people from four different geographical regions of Finland. Both, female and male, are represented even though there is a higher female representation in the sample. Relevant personal interests are also included in Table 3.

Each quote or photo in the results and discussion is marked with a subject identification letter, for instance E, which enables the reader to refer back to the sample table to see the basic demographics of the interviewee. The identifications can be found from the table above.

4.2 Photo-taking specifics

As the unique picture-aid technique was part of the research methodology, this part of the methodology and its results are presented and discussed as its own sub-chapter.

In total, the thirteen research subjects took 105 photos. The number of taken photos varied on a scale from 1 to 33. On average, one subject took 8,1 photos which was approximately two photos a week. A chart of the taken photos per each subject can be found in figure 3 and the numerical specifics of the photos in table 6.
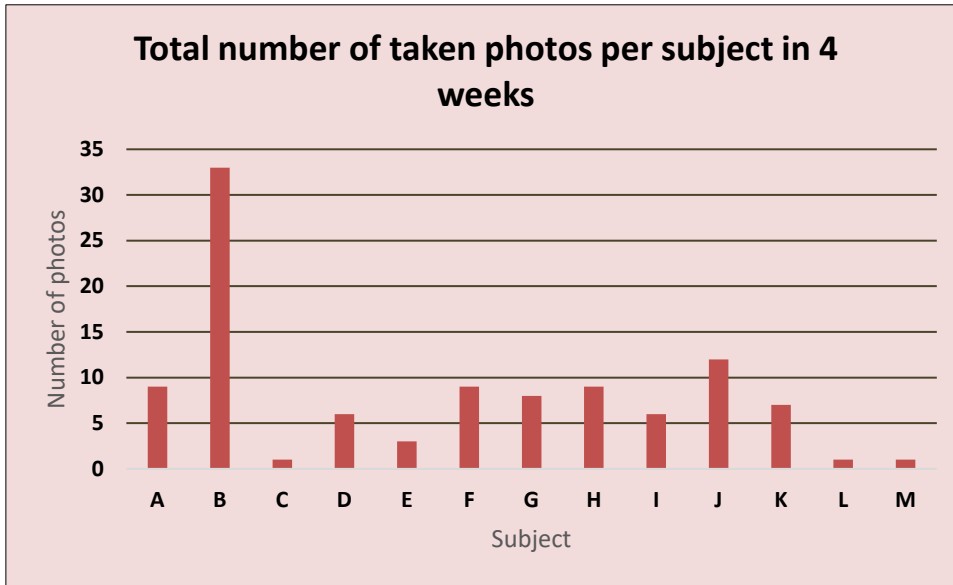
Figure 3: Taken photos per each subject

Total number of photos taken	105
Average number of photos taken per subject	8,1
Total number of triggers gained through photos	116
Total number of unique triggers gained through photos	43
Number of theory based touchpoints of the triggers	13
Division between online and offline triggers	64/58items 52,5%/47,5%

Table 6: Insights of the taken photos by subjects

The most common taken photos by the subjects in the research are categorized and presented in the table 7. Each of the theme behind the photo is presented with an example of the experience that realistically happened in the research. The case brand itself, in some format, was relatively visible in the taken photos. Additionally, photos, or scheenshots, taken from social media were very common which also makes the online-based photos common. The social media photos included paid content from the brand as well as organic content from the brand and from the subjects' connections. As will found out in the next sub-chapters for the need-based touchpoints in the entire research, need-based photos were also common. The subjects had places and spots at their home were they would have needed Philips Hue and that triggered them to think of the brand. Even though thinking of the brand's features, in this case its ability to create atmosphere, are brand and product specific triggers and touchpoints they were fairly common in this research. Something that the subjects saw or felt, made them to think of the case brand as this atmosphere can be also created by the brand.

Theme of the photo	Example touchpoint (happened in the research)	Number of photos taken
Related to darkness	Dark room, dark, street, dark yard	8
Related to lighting	Beautiful natural light, a lamp	16
At home environment	Dimmable bulb at home	17
Outside of home environment	Shopping mall wall lights	7
Brand itself visible	Online ads, brand app, brand's organic social media posts	36
Seeing brand's product	Seeing brand at other person's home	5
Based on need of the brand	Adjustable light needed for a table, solution for forgetting to turn lights off, solution for difficulty of waking up	16
On social media	Organic content from brand, ads, others' posts about lighting	47
Something that makes to think of brand's ability to create atmosphere (brand-specific)	Serene feelings, seeing natural light	8

Table 7: Photo categories

In Appendix D, all of the triggers and touchpoints that came up through the picture-taking phase are presented in a table.

4.3   Omnichannel

The subjects moved in the omnichannel environment going back and forth between the offline and online channels. They had equally offline and online touchpoints. In total, all of the touchpoints that came through the research split between offline and online almost exactly equally; 52 items or 52,5% of all recognized touchpoints occurred in the offline environment whereas 47 items or 47,5% occurred in the online environment. When looking closer at the omnichannel division of touchpoints through the photo-taking phase of the research, the percentual division is exactly the same; 52,5% and 64 items from online and 47,5% and 58 items from offline.

Division between online and offline touchpoints from the entire research	52/47 items; 52,5%/47,5%
Division between online and offline touchpoints from the photo-taking phase of the research	64/58 items 52,5%/47,5%

Table 8: Division of touchpoints in omnichannel

4.4   Touchpoints

Almost hundred different triggers to think about the case brand, Philips Hue, were gained through the research. Appendix E includes a table of all the possible

intersections and touchpoints. The table indicates which subjects have experienced the intersection or touchpoint, is it part of the online or offline environment, did it come up in the photo-taking phase of the research or in the interview phase, and was the intersection actually experienced by the subject or was it an intersection that would work positively for the subject.

On average, one research subject has gained 10,2 triggers or touchpoints with the brand overall. This speaks for the point that was mentioned in the introduction part of the results chapter; the case brand, Philips Hue, is still relatively young with seven years of existence.

Total number of unique touchpoints	99
Average number of unique touchpoints experienced per subject	10,2
Total number of unique triggers gained through photos	43
Division between offline and online triggers	52/47 items; 52,5%/47,5%
Most common types of touchpoints	Other person has the brand's product/seeing, testing Other person talks about the brand or its products. Problem/need that the brand could solve. Seeing brand at trade show. Seeing the brand at retailer store.

Table 9: Insights of touchpoints and intersections

When it comes to the most common and most effective touchpoints from the research, in terms of having a positive impact on the subjects' image of the brand, there were four of them: Other person has the brand and the subject sees the brand in usage, testing the brand somehow, WoM, and problem or need that the brand could solve. These four touchpoints were repeated in many subjects' answers when they were telling which experiences with the brand have created a positive image of the brand to them. Thus, these are touchpoints that have happened in real life. Additionally, these touchpoints were also ones that the subjects brought up when they determining which touchpoints would create a positive image of the brand to them but the touchpoints would not have needed to happen in real life. The touchpoints themselves and reasonings why they work so well are discussed more in depth in the results and in discussion chapters about touchpoints (section 5.1.2). The following sub-chapters will present the results related to the most common and efficient touchpoints. Additionally, other relevant touchpoints that were discovered in the research are covered as well.

4.4.1 Word-of-mouth

Other person telling about the brand was a common and effective intersection according to the subjects. This was recognized from the experiences that the subjects had had with the brand but also from the "would work" answers. Most of the subjects had had a positive WoM experience which had led to forming a positive image of the brand. Most of the WoM information that the subjects received had come from close people, such as friends and family. Below is a quote example from subject E on how her first experience with the case brand was WOM and how big of a role the positive information had on her image of the brand right from the first experience.

> Subject E: "*(First experience with the brand) I heard from a person I know about Philips Hue. Multiple different products. Versatile selectin. It is really modern brand and modern products. Positive image. I heard good about the products and from that I deduced that they are modern. When I heard that you can control lights with smart phone that brought to my mind that it is a modern brand because smart phones are such big part nowadays.*"

In addition to the subjects having positive WoM experiences with the case brand and the experiences having a positive impact on the image of the case brand, WoM was also widely recognized as an experience that would have a positive impact on the brand image. In other words, when the subjects were asked which experiences with the brand would create a positive image of the brand ('would work') they stated that if they heard from other person information about the brand that would have an impact. Thus, WoM can be recognized as an effective way to affect the brand image according to the subjects' experiences that have already occurred but also according to their opinions.

Below are two quotes from the subjects where they tell how WoM would work in terms of forming an image of the case brand.

> Subject I: "*Surely in Philips Hue's case the fact that someone you know tells you about it and complements. Surely that is the most idealistic (to see Philips Hue).*"

> Subject M: "*The most idealistic would something like when a compeer presents it. A friend who has gotten it (Philips Hue) and look I have this great.*"

Most of the WoM situations among the subjects were ones where the other people had bought or had used the brand and shared their experiences. That way the subjects themselves were able to get their part of the experience form an image of the brand based on that. Subjects' quotes below give explanations more in depth why the WoM experiences with Philips Hue worked or would work well in forming a positive image of the brand. The reasons are the received insights and content from the other person, valuing the close person's opinion and adding that to own view, and in general people believing in close people's spoken word.

Subject E: *"Other person's spoken word's content was the reason (for WoM being so efficient in her case). I heard compliments about the products and therefore deduced that it (brand) is modern. I heard that you can control your lights from your smart phone and that brought to my mind that it (Philips Hue) is a modern brand because smart phones are such big part of today."*

Subject B (about the photo 4): *"In this photo it comes out well that I am visiting my friend and he had a Philips Hue light there at the table. So that automatically made me think of the brand and we actually started talking about it more and she told about her experiences and what all can be done so kind of Word of Mouth procedure happened."*

Figure 4: Subject B's photo

Subject G also brought up how seeing other person's reactions while using the brand would affect her image of the brand. Examples of situations like this given by the subject were the interaction happening at someone's house or the interaction happening at a retail store.

Online reviews

Online reviews were generally stated as touchpoints that would have an impact on the image of the case brand. User cases of the brand, reviews of the products, and general opinions on the brand were examples from the subjects' situations of the online review touchpoints. The subjects had experienced the review touch-

point themselves in real life and they also stated that reviews would be something that would affect their image of Philips Hue. Below are quotes from the subjects and their opinions on seeing a review of the case brand online.

> Subject H: *"I definitely look at the reviews and take them seriously. Like I know when I first got smart lights I looked at the reviews just to see how easy they were to set up. Or like how long they lasted. Or are they beneficial. I like a lot of people look at the reviews."*

> Subject M: *"Yes, if it gets good reviews from a source that I trust. I could be a some type of expert site or one of the rare influencers of whom I have a positive image, so yes these would affect (on brand image). It of course depends on whether it's reviewed positively or negatively. … If it gets bad reviews with good reasoning this decreases my valuation of the brand."*

> Subjects D: *"They are good when I am myself getting something so I try to always look at what other people's opinions are. If there is a lot negative that affects. I like to look at others' opinions a lot."*

When it comes to touchpoints that would not work in terms of creating a positive, or would even create a negative image of the brand, according to the subjects there were two clear ones from the touchpoints given by the case brand. First of them was the newsletters. The subjects did say that the case brand's newsletters might be interesting in terms of content but they said that they rarely either subscribe for newsletters or if they do they do not read them almost at all. Example quotes about receiving newsletters from the case brand can be read below.

> Subject G: *"That (receiving a newsletter from the case brand) would leave actually a kind of bad image with me. Well yeah. It's kinda funny to think that. Getting an email is kind of annoying to me. And receiving mail is just waist of money."*

> Subject H: *"Yeah, I don't know. No, I would probably just delete it (received newsletter from the case brand). I don't read that much of email."*

4.4.2 Testing and seeing usage

Seeing or testing the brand or its products was one of the most common and effective touchpoints experienced by the subjects with the case brand, Philips Hue. A situation that had occurred often and was experienced effective in forming a positive image of the brand immediately, was seeing or testing the brand at other person's house. This was strongly linked to the brand's products and their practical elements. Other examples of the touchpoint were seeing or testing the brand at a retail store or at trade shows. The subjects said that experiencing the brand in person was important in forming an image of the brand. This was based on the thought that the brand's products get the message and idea, controlling lights

and what that can bring to the user, at the best possible way by seeing the brand in use or testing it themselves. Below is an example quote from subject G and how her first two touchpoints with the brand were seeing the brand in use. After these two touchpoints, her third one was already purchasing the brand. In the next sub-chapter, it will be presented more in depth how seeing or testing the brand in person has a shortening affect the touchpoint path.

> Subject G: *"I had seen it because my friend had it and that is how I first saw it. And then after that I saw a friend post about it on Instagram."*

In addition to the subjects' real-life experiences at other people's houses, trade shows and stores and basing their answers on them, most of the subjects also stated that seeing or testing the brand would be an idealistic touchpoint with the brand. Therefore, in addition to actually having the experiences at the background and basing the touchpoint's effectiveness on them, the subjects also had their own opinions in line with their experiences. Below is an example quote from subject E about her most idealistic first experience with the brand.

> Subject E: *"(The most idealistic first experience with the brand) Concretely would see (the brand). If one is looking for some luminaire so one would see it at a trade show or at other person's home and would see it (the brand) in real life. Immediately comes that I want it."*

In addition to seeing and testing being a common and effective touchpoint in the experiences with the brand as well as in the 'would work' answers, it was also a common element in the pictures taken by the. Even though a month was a relatively short period of time to experience triggers to think about the brand, a couple subjects were able to capture the seeing and testing touchpoints during it. All of these particular types of touchpoints were experienced at someone else's house when the subject saw Philips Hue in use. Below in figure 5 and 6 are two examples of these pictures.

Figure 5: Subject E's photo

Figure 6: Subject B's photo

4.4.3 Tradeshows

When it comes to seeing the brand in use and testing it, tradeshows were stated extremely efficient for forming a positive image of the brand. Plenty of the research subjects had already seen the case brand at a fair which had led to a positive impact. They were able to see the brand in use at the fair as well as to test in there. The subjects also defined tradeshows as touchpoints that would have a

positive impact on the brand image when they were asked to name any touch-points creating a positive image of the case brand. Below are the subject E and L's quotes for justifying the tradeshow's efficiency.

> Subject E: "*Tradeshows where Philips Hue is present and experts are telling about the products and show how they work.*
> *But usually at a fair for example the products are placed well in a way that you can try them and not much asking questions is required.*"

> Subject L: "*At the fair my view changed and got the idea of how many variations there are and was able to see different options.*"

4.4.4 Darkness

Darkness as itself and the needs it creates were common triggers for the subjects to think about the case brand, Philips Hue. The surrounding darkness made the subjects aware of any type of light in the dark and that light was associated with Philips Hue. Below is an example quote and picture of a situation like this.

> Subject A about picture 7: "*This is kind of a blink of light in the middle of the darkness. There would have been extremely many of this same type of situations (thinking of Philips Hue in darkness) if I a photo had been taken every time. An opportune season to think of Philips Hue and light systems.*"

Figure 7: Subject A's photo

The darkness also created a need of light for subjects which then triggered them to think of Philips Hue. The quote by subject I and picture 8 are examples of how

the darkness is creating a need for light or for the brand which consequently made the subjects to think of the case brand.

> Subject I about picture 8: *"When it is dark and light is needed. Energy saving with light. Light is needed. Here, I am looking for the fact that it is too dark. The city of Helsinki could use LED and controllable light."*

Figure 8: Subject I's photo

Lighting-related touchpoints

A touchpoint that the subjects brought up was light and lighting in general since they made an association from them to the case brand. The subjects drew more attention to the natural light during the dark season since there was less of it in winter. Consequently, the natural light was then associated with the lighting case brand. An example quote and picture from the subject A are below.

> Subject A about picture 9: *"Beautiful light, beautiful natural light. Which in my opinion is the most wonderful thing about the Philips Hue lamps that one gets a beautiful and natural lighting. They give a kind of nature's own light atmosphere also to home."*

Figure 9: Subject A's photo

4.4.5 Need-based touchpoints

The subjects had needs as touchpoints. As the case brand could fulfill the needs, the needs triggered the subjects to think of the brand. Below are two examples of these 'need-based' touchpoints. The first one, subject D, thought of two activities or situations where the brand would be needed as a solution for a problem; difficulty to wake up in the morning and tendency to leave lights on when leaving home. The second example, from subject F, is from his home where he has a spot for which he would need a lighting system. This need makes him think of the case brand.

> Subject D about picture 10: *"This is kind of a morning wanderer so she would need kind of a gleam that would shock awake. Brand came to my mind because maybe the lighting could help wake up in the morning. She is also gets flustered that did I turn all lights and hot plates off so the brand could provide this and that is why it came to my mind. It would ensure that lights are off from all places and would get awakening in the morning."*

Figure 10: Subject D's photo

Subject F about picture 11: *"Here, Philips Hue comes to my mind because it would be the meaning at some point to get some type of light system to the table. Something behind the computer, what are the products again. Every time when I see this I think about the fact that what I should get. This picture reminds me of existence of Philips Hue."*
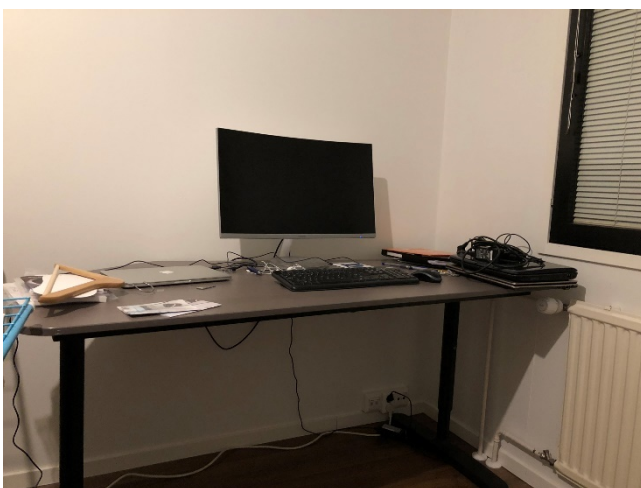
Figure 11: Subject F's photo

The subjects had experienced problems which then consequently created a need for the case brand. This need was then a trigger to think about Philips Hue.

These types of situations to which the case brand could have provided a solution were dark yard (subject F), dark room (subject D), dark spot at home (subject D), feeling of safety (subject H), and dark building façade (subject I). All of these problems were mentioned as triggers to think of the brand and were captured by taking a photo. The photos are presented in figures 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16.

Figure 12: Subject F's photo

Figure 13: Subject D's photo
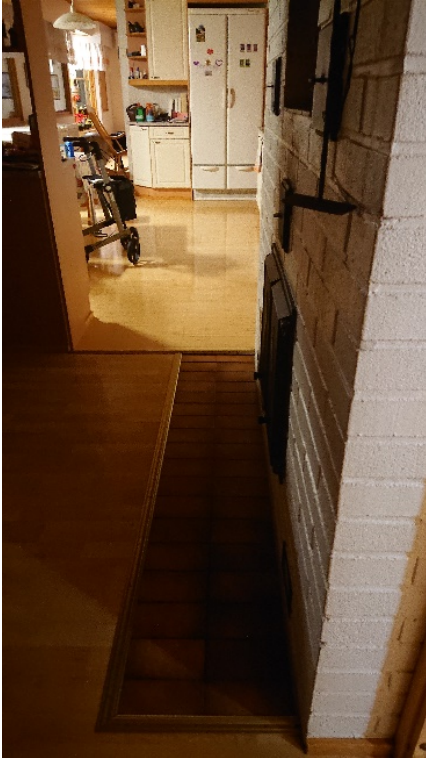
Figure 14: Subject D's photo

Figure 15: Subject H's photo

Figure 16: Subject I's photo

4.4.6 Through other brands or products

An intersection that came up in the research was created by today's digital environment. This intersection between the consumers and the case brand was finding Philips Hue through another IoT brand. Two of the subjects, subject H and F, had had their first thought of the case brand when they had gotten other IoT brand's products. Subject H has gotten a Google Home smart speaker through which she wanted control her lights, and that way found out about Philips Hue. For the subject F, he had gotten a home automation system from Apple and wanted to automate other parts of his home as well. After that he heard from other person that he could control his lights through the Apple Homekit that he had gotten earlier.
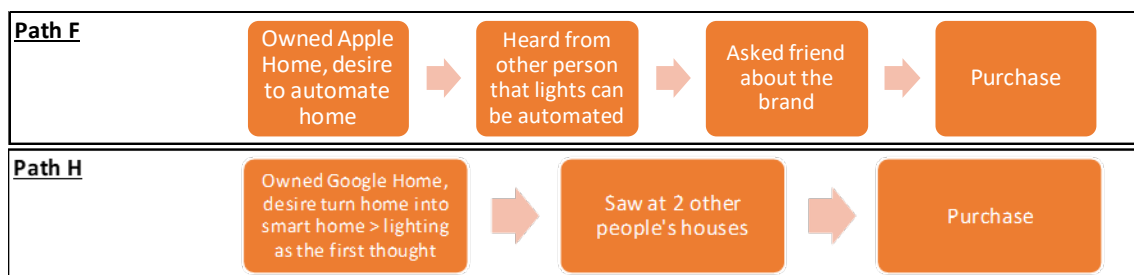
Figure 17: Subject F's and H's touchpoint paths

Subject L also mentioned that she would gain a positive image of the case brand through other IoT brand. Subject B also stated the below quote about creating a brand image based on the different IoT brands.

> Subject B: "*(touchpoints that would create a positive image of the brand) Then there is that whole automation world so if I have a reliable Internet automation device and I am told that you can link smart lights to it I would get excited about*

the brand right away and I would get a really good image because it works together with already well working Internet product. For example I have Google Home, what it is, smart speaker to which you can talk and I heard Hues are compatible with it."

Additionally, especially in the pictures taken by the subjects, other lighting related matters made the subjects to think of the case brand, Philips Hue. Examples of these types of the triggers were lamps from other brands, outdoor lighting exhibitions, a social media account name including the word 'lighting' and compering other lighting brands to the case brand. In this trigger's case, the subject needs to know, at least at some level, what the brand is about in order to make these associations. Example quotes can be found below and example pictures in figures 19, 20, and 21.

The subject A had seen the word 'lighting' on a social media post's account name. As the case brand is also a lighting brand, the general term triggers her to make the association between the two.

Subject A (about the picture 18): *"Iconic lighting was an apposite and it somehow describes the Philips Hue brand and the word 'lighting' made me think of the brand."*

248 tykkäystä

Figure 18: Subject A's photo

The subject B had seen a retailer's social media post about luminaires that are not the case brand's. This triggered her to think of the case brand and also to compare the picture's luminaires to the case brand. Philips Hue is a smart lighting brand and can be controlled with smart actions so the subject wondered if the picture's lights can be controlled similarly.

Subject B (about picture 19): *"Netrauta's ad on social media on luminaires which make me think of Philips Hue even though the picture doesn't have Philips Hue but somehow I thought at that point that can these lights be controlled like Philips Hue can be."*
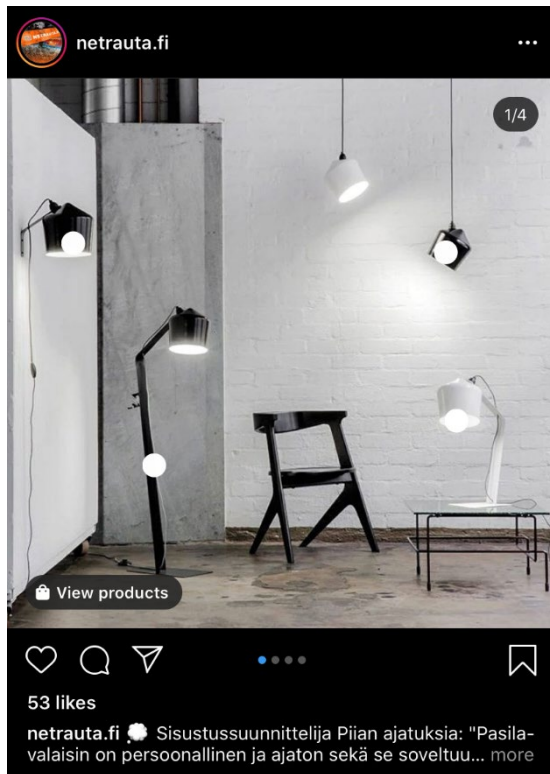
Figure 19: Subject B's photo

The subject B had seen a social media post about electronic candelabra so the candelabra as another lighting related object triggered her to think of the case brand.

Subject B (about picture 20): *"This is on Facebook and here is a candelabra some of my friends that I follow posted this. And that made me think of Philips Hue through the fact that here electronical lights are used."*

Varaslähtö jouluun.
Pikkupoikana kotona kyntteliköt laitettiin vasta 1. adventtina.
En vaan malttanut odottaa. 🫣

Figure 20: Subject B's photo

4.4.7 Online

Social media

As was found out in the previous sub-chapter, the subjects gained touchpoints in the online environment; the common feature of these previous touchpoints were lighting-related matters and they were all experienced on social media (Instagram and Facebook). These photos and insights of them can be found above and are not repeated here.

Video content

A touchpoint that is stated by the subjects as an effective one when it comes to gaining a positive image of the case brand, was video content. A video would be linked to the seeing or testing touchpoint that's value was discussed earlier; the video format would be able to meet the element of consumers seeing the brand in use. The subjects also strongly expressed how a video would be able to show the brand's entire idea of controlling lights. A video was stated as an effective way of seeing the brand's idea conveniently and quickly while it would have a positive impact on the brand image. The video content could, for example, be seen as an introduction video of the brand on YouTube or as an ad on social media. The video content's efficiency as a touchpoint, the subjects had not seen any video contents from the brand. Below are a few quotes from the subjects for the video touchpoints.

> Subject K: "*(Intersections with the brand that would create a positive image of the brand)… Also, some type of social media marketing, and the ad is an ad where you*

immediately see how Philips Hue works. Like first install app, second connect bridge etc. How mysticism can be eliminated right away. Like the DNA ads on TV where the old lady just connects her router…"

Subject K: *"(Seeing a photo or video on the brand's website) Photo is neutral but a video of someone using would be more positive. Because seeing someone else doing makes it look desirable."*

Subject M: *"(Seeing a photo or video on the brand's website) Well any other else lighting system could work with photos but my opinion is that as dimming and color changing is the thing, absolutely a video."*

When it comes to online touchpoints between the consumer and Philips Hue, there was an interesting finding among the subjects. When the research dealt with the brand's website, it was assumed to be in good, clear shape as the brand was seen as a technology brand and technology brands were assumed to know how to handle their websites. Nine of the thirteen subjects clearly expressed this. If the Philips Hue website were to be unclear or messy when the subject had ended up there, it would have created a negative touchpoint and impaired the subject's brand image.

Subject D: *"It (messy website) would have been a disappointment because I have a really modern and forerunner image of the brand. I would be a disappointment that their website would not be as fantastic."*

4.4.8 Other touchpoints

Afternoon newspapers read online
Among the real-life touchpoints given by the case brand, the second touchpoint that would not create a positive image of the case brand according to the subjects was an article on an afternoon newspaper (Iltasanomat or Iltalehti). There were two main reasons for the Iltasanomat or Iltalehti article not to create a positive image of the brand, and they were a messy site and a wrong kind of source. Below are quotes from the subjects for the case brand's articles on the afternoon newspapers.

Subject L: *"They are so messy that from them no (gaining a positive image of the case brand). In my case, it needs to be interesting, match my interests and should be something, for example a picture that is tempting. For example, Iltasanomat and Iltalehti's sites are so messy, many pictures ad color and all that it is hard to catch and it just gets lost in there. But for example HS (Helsingin Sanomat) would be more clear and from there it could be caught."*

Subject M: *"I think that they are so indifferent medias. It doesn't really matter. If the information within it, if I clicked on something for some reason and read it*

would need to be extremely interesting and eye-catching. I think the last time that I clicked on a technology side news like this was about Samsung's flip phone and the only thing that I remember from that is that it was *** of expensive. So it didn't leave anything. They are so irrelevant as medias that to me it (the brand image) would come from somewhere else."

Touchpoint development through brand history

Other than just the Philips lighting products were also linked to the Philips Hue brand. For instance, the subject I stated in a positive tone how they had already had Philips products, appliances and technology, for long. In addition to subject I's notion, the picture in figure 21 was taken by subject K and it includes a Philips-branded projector.
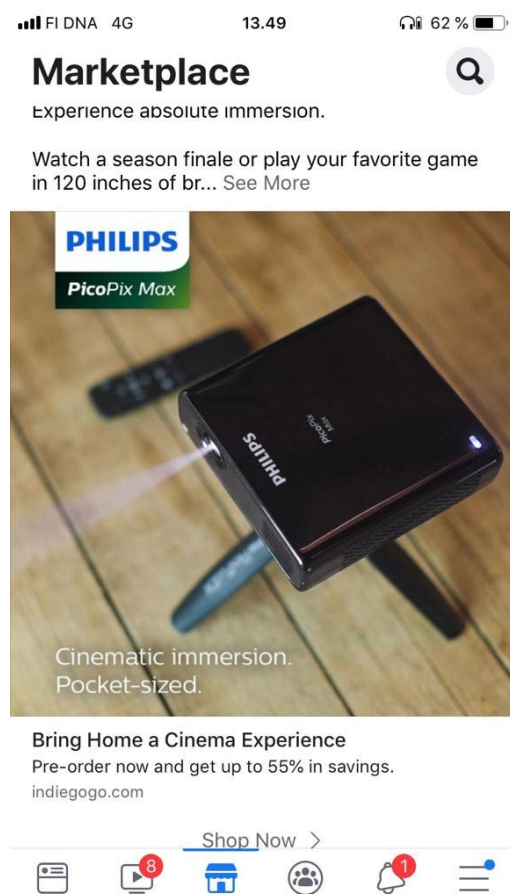
Figure 21: Subject K's photo

Brand colors and features

It was discovered in the research how the brand's colors, logo colors, and brand's products' colorful features came through in the research. Philips Hue's logo includes multiple different colors changing gradiently. The brands' products, smart lights, include a lot of different color options. Consequently, some colorful objects triggered the subjects to think of Philips Hue. For example, subject A took a picture of a colorful sky and a colorful shopping mall wall because they made

her think of the brand. She also complimented the brand and its features when talking about these photos and the situations behind the photos.

> Subject A (about picture 22): *"Cool, fun lighting and the color variety made me think of Philips Hue."*

Figure 22: Subject A's photo

4.5   Customer journey and touchpoint path

A path of the touchpoints and intersections was created for each of the research subjects. A clear, graphical presentation of each subject's path can be found below in figure 23. The paths are based on the subjects' real-life experiences. There are two subjects that did not have real-life experiences on which to base the touchpoint path. These subjects' paths were formed of their answers for the "what would most likely happen in you" questions. Even though a touchpoint path as a term is used in the results, the subjects' paths also included other experiences with the brand that are not theoretically proven touchpoints. Earlier was stated how intersections and triggers are also used as terms alongside the term touchpoint. The paths include intersections but the path-related term is kept as a touchpoint path and not modified to be "intersection path", for example.

4.5.1 Short touchpoint paths

When it comes to the case brand's touchpoints path, the most important finding is the shortness of the path that arouse from the subjects' experiences with Philips Hue. The touchpoint path played out to be short in the beginning of the journey.

The average number of touchpoints between the first intersection and the last one, the purchase, was 4,5 touchpoints. As can be seen in figure 23, despite three subjects, all touchpoint paths were 3 to five touchpoints long. One subjects even suggested she would just make a purchase as a second touchpoint after seeing an influencer with the brand as a first touchpoint.

Most of the touchpoints from the first intersection with the brand to the purchase touchpoint were based on something else that ads. Commonly, the subjects had heard about the brand from someone else or seen it somewhere, for instance at a tradeshow or at someone's home. Most of the path's touchpoints were initiated by someone else and not by the subject herself or himself which made the paths also highly controlled by someone else than the subject.

Figure 23 includes each subject's touchpoint path. Despite subjects C and D, all paths are based on the subjects' real-life experiences. Subjects C and D ("Would" paths in figure 23) formed their hypothetical touchpoints paths that would be most likely to happen due to missing the full real-life based paths. Orange and red touchpoints of the paths are offline touchpoints and yellow and pink touchpoints are online touchpoints. The colors also indicate whether the path was formed based on real-life experiences (orange and yellow) or on hypothetical information (red and pink).

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Each research participant's path with the case brand

Path A

| Other person told about the brand | → | Other person told about the brand #2 (ecological side heard) | → | Purchase + other person showing how the product works |

Orange = Offline touchpoint
Yellow = Online touchpoint

Red = Offline touchpoint
Pink = Online touchpoint

Path B

| Other person told about the brand | → | Saw brand in use | → | Purchase |

Path C ("Would" path)

| Influencer posts about the brand | → | Purchase |

Path D ("Would" path)

| Other person tells about the brand | → | Sees brand at retail store | → | Sees brand at trade show | → | Review about the brand online | → | Googles the brand | → | Other person posts about the brand on social media | → | eTrailer's social media ad | → | Social media ad from the brand | → | Sees brand on eTailer's site | → | Sees brand on retailer's flyer | → | Purchase |

Path E

| Other person told about the brand | → | Tested the brand at other person's house | → | Saw other person's social media post about the brand | → | Started following brand on social media | → | Saw social media ads from brand | → | Saw brand at trade show | → | Saw TV commercials about the brand | → | Saw Good Morning Finland episode about the brand | → | Purchase |

Path F

| Owned Apple Home, desire to automate home | → | Heard from other person that lights can be automated | → | Asked friend about the brand | → | Purchase |

Path G

| Saw brand in use at other person's house | → | Saw other person's social media post about the brand | → | Purchase |

Path H

| Owned Google Home, desire turn home into smart home > lighting as the first thought | → | Saw at 2 other people's houses | → | Purchase |

Path I

| Other person told about the brand and complimented | → | Saw other person's social media posts about the brand | → | Started following the brand on social media | → | Googled the brand | → | Purchase |

Path J

| Saw Good Morning Finland episode about the brand | → | Other person told about the brand | → | Saw at other person's house | → | Purchase |

Path K

| Other person told about the brand | → | Saw the brand in use at other person's house | → | Purchase |

Path L

| Tested the brand | → | Saw the brand at trade show | → | Saw the brand at trade show #2 | → | Saw the brand at other person's house | → | Purchase |

Path M

| Other person came to show the brand to our house | → | Saw the brand at trade show | → | Purchase |

Figure 23: All subjects' touchpoint paths

The content of the touchpoint paths is covered more in depth in the following sub-chapters.

4.5.2 Short touchpoint path; seeing the brand and WoM

The subjects' touchpoint paths were short especially when the subject had positive first touchpoint with the Philips Hue brand, and when the touchpoint included an experience of seeing the brand's products in use, testing the brand's products, or other person telling about the brand. There were two clear experiences with the brand where these elements were fulfilled and a short touchpoint followed between the first touchpoint and the purchase; a close person had Philips Hue at their home and they showed it to the subject or the subject got to test it and when a close person told about Philips Hue to the subject. Below you can see an example from the research where the subject's first touchpoint was seeing the brand in use which created a positive image of the brand and the purchase followed straight-forward after the first touchpoints unlike in the theory's customer journey.

> Subject G: *"I had seen it (Philips Hue) because my friend had it and that is how I first saw it. And after that I saw a friend post about it on Instagram"*

After these two touchpoints the subject's third touchpoint was to search online where she could buy Philips Hue and then the fourth one, purchase, followed quickly after at a retail brick and mortar store, Best Buy (abroad).

The next quotation from the interview gives an example of the subject's short path where the first touchpoint with the brand was a friend complementing Philips Hue.

> Subject J: *"I had heard from a person I know. Then I saw at other person's home. Then **** came to set up the lights (purchase and someone else installing the buyer's lights)."*

In both of these example cases, the third touchpoint was already the purchase and the touchpoint path ended up being extremely short. The first touchpoint included another person telling about the brand and showing the brand's products.

At least three subjects (J, I, H) mentioned straightforward how the first touchpoint with the brand had a very effective impact on them. All of these three subjects had had two touchpoints before the purchase and the purchase itself was already the third touchpoint.

> Subject J: *"This, that I hear from someone else and they admire it, there it is (decision to buy). Especially, if one is looking for something like that (lights) or I was not even looking for lights and still the first encountering worked really well."*

4.5.3 Short touchpoint path and social media

Seeing other person's social media post served as a touchpoint that created a positive image of the brand and consequently a short touchpoint path. In subject G's case, she had seen the brand at a friend's house first, then she had seen a social media post from some other person about the brand, and lastly after that the purchase followed. In subject I's case, she had seen a social media post from a friend about the brand which lead to following the brand itself on social media. After the following she stayed in the online environment and searched information about the brand on Google.
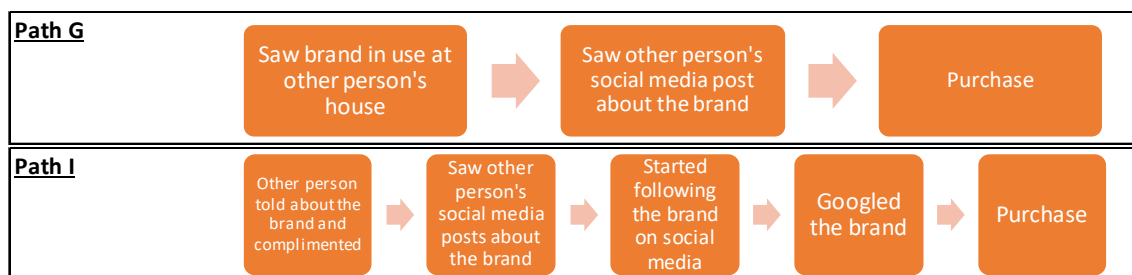

Figure 24: Subjects' touchpoint paths with social media related intersections

4.6   Analysis of the results

4.6.1 Touchpoints

Word-of-Mouth
Subject G also made an interesting comment on the way the touchpoint of seeing the brand on social media works. In general, seeing a post from someone else about the brand creates a positive image of the case brand. This would rather lead the subject to go to the brand's website to search for more information than directly buy the product. In contrast, she made a point how seeing the brand in person in use would rather lead her to go to a store and making a purchase than going to the online environment. In other words, the social media post in the online environment would keep her in the online environment whereas the physical experience in the offline environment would keep her in the offline environment and would optimize the decision to make a purchase in her case. Her quote about the matter can be seen below.

> Subject G: *"But if I saw it on like social media I would like to research it. So like having like an online presence that would drive me to go on the website versus to going to the store through seeing it somewhere in person."*

Testing and seeing usage

Seeing the case brand, Philips Hue, in use or testing it was already earlier described as an important and shortening part of the intersection path. All of the research subjects defined somehow experiencing the brand in use as an effective way to form an image of the brand. The most important, single reason for this was getting the idea what the brand does and what it can do for its user. For instance, subject J said, *"They (the brand's products) cannot be understood before you can play with them yourself"*. There were also multiple experiences where the subjects had seen or tried the brand at other person's home. That way they were able to see what the brand can do for its users. Quoting the subject B, she stated that, *"Positive image once again because I see normal people using the brand"*. This tells about the consumers need to see the brand or its products in use at "normal" scene by "normal" people as it is used in real life. Also, the fact that the subjects were able to see what the brand could bring or do specifically "for me" was met through the seeing and testing intersections. Subject F said the following about his experience with the brand, *"The image was much better after I was able to try it (Philips Hue) and I was able to adjust it to be suitable for myself"*.

Real-life examples from the subjects of the testing and seeing usage touchpoints were seeing the brand at a tradeshow and being able to test it there and seeing the brand at someone home and being able to test it there.

Darkness

The seasonal darkness that was ongoing at the time of the research proved to play an important role in the subjects' triggers to think about the case brand. This was especially visible in the photo-taking. The subjects seemed to be extra aware of lighting related matters in general since the dark period of a day was long and the sun was out only for a little while if even that. When the dark surroundings made the subjects aware of the needed light it also consequently made them think of the case brand, as it is a smart lighting brand.

It was also noticed that the dark season and surrounding darkness created a need of light for the subjects which made them think of Philips Hue and also created a need or wish to have the brand. Philips Hue, as a lighting brand, provided or could have been providing a solution to the subjects' problem of darkness. These types of triggers occurred at the home environment but also in the outdoor environment.

Lighting-related touchpoints

The research was purposefully implemented at the high season of lighting brands, in the winter with the ongoing dark season. Due to the long periods of darkness, the natural light that was seen was more appreciated by the subjects which also created touchpoints. Consequently, as was presented in the results, the subjects made connections between the natural light and Philips Hue.

Need-based touchpoints

The need of light did not only limit to the matter of darkness; the subjects also had situations, spots, and activities for which they would have needed the case brand. Thus, these situations, spots, and activities created needs and wishes to have the brand for these particular occasions as a solution. In order to be able make these connections between the need and the brand's product features, the subject had to at least know what the brand does. Thus, some level of familiarity was required to form these associations.

Touchpoints through other brands and products

Even though "through other smart device brand" is not necessarily a theory-based touchpoint, in today's world where different devices and brands can be linked to each other and a whole network of devices and brands used through the Internet, the compatibility of different brands should be taken in account when discovering touchpoints and paths of the smart device brands. A competing brand, or at least it seems like a competing brand as it is a different brand, can actually help other brand to reach consumers, have an impact on them, and create more consequent touchpoints for themselves. For both of the subjects who had had gotten to know Philips Hue through other brand, the compatibility (with Google and Apple) had created a positive image of Philips Hue due to the fact that it would be convenient to use multiple different brands at the same time. Additionally, both Google and Apple, are world's most valued brands (Forbes, 2019) so connecting the case brand physically and mentally to these brands has a positive impact on the case brand's image.

4.6.2 Customer journey and touchpoint path

The touchpoint paths of this study were short from the first experience with the brand to the purchase touchpoint. The research subjects had such strong and positive intersections with the brand that the purchase followed quite soon after the first intersection. Even though only the customer buying process without a clear, standard touchpoint path was given in literature, which was also the reason for this research due an existing research gap, the 2-4 touchpoints long touchpoint path from the first intersection to the purchase stage can be suggested to be short. Based on this research, the reason is the strong first touchpoints between the consumers and the brand; once the subjects had experienced certain immediately positive image creating touchpoints, such as WoM and seeing or testing the brand in usage, reaching the purchase touchpoint did not require any other or that many additional touchpoints anymore.

Word-of-mouth as first touchpoint
It was common that the subjects' first intersection with the brand was when other person told them about the brand. These situations were usually experienced after the other person had purchased the brand and shared opinions or user cases with the research subject. The subjects also stated that the word-of-mouth situations were efficient and gave immediately a positive image of the brand. None of the subjects said that the word-of-mouth touchpoints would not have created a positive image. In addition to basing the efficiency on their experiences, the subjects' 'would work' answers were in line with the real-life experiences and indicated that word-of-mouth was an ideal first experience with the brand.

Based on the research, it can be stated that in the case of Philips Hue, positive word-of-mouth or personal experience or brand observing in use experience with the brand create an extremely positive first touchpoint which also makes the path to the purchase stage extremely straight-forward and short.

Short touchpoint path and experience-based touchpoints
As can be seen from the subjects' three item long, experience-based touchpoint paths in figure 25, the first two touchpoints are only hearing other person telling about the case brand or seeing the brand in use despite one exception. Both of the first two touchpoints before the purchase are linked to somehow experiencing the brand. For the first one, someone else has had an experience with the brand in person and then shares this with the subject. For the second one, the subject herself or himself has an experience with the brand. After these two experience-related touchpoints the third one was already the purchase in some of the subjects' cases. The experience-related touchpoints had created such a strong and positive image of the brand and its products that the subjects were already ready to make the purchase. In addition to being able to create experiences with the brand, WoM and seeing the brand in use were also reliable touchpoints as the subjects trusted them and were ready to make the purchase after them.

When it comes to the first touchpoints between the subjects and the case brand, most of the subjects had had an experience with the brand in the offline environment. Seeing the brand in use or other person telling about the brand were common, effective experiences with the brand and they also followed with short paths until the purchase happened. Most of the subjects also state that other person telling about the brand, seeing or the testing the brand in person, or seeing a video of the brand would be experiences that would create an immediate positive image of the brand. In other words, the subjects would like to experience the brand in use or hear about the experiences with the brand in use from someone else in order to create a positive image of the brand. This can be linked to the subjects' short paths that followed after the offline intersections with the brand; the subjects were able experience the brand in use or hear about other people's experiences through these offline touchpoints as they also stated would be ideal for them. Thus, the offline intersections of seeing the brand in use or someone else talking about their experiences with the brand were ideal and fewer touchpoints were required before purchasing.

| Path A | Other person told about the brand | → | Other person told about the brand #2 (ecological side heard) | → | Purchase + other person showing how the product works |

| Path B | Other person told about the brand | → | Saw brand in use | → | Purchase |

| Path G | Saw brand in use at other person's house | → | Saw other person's social media post about the brand | → | Purchase |

| Path H | Owned Google Home, desire turn home into smart home > lighting as the first thought | → | Saw at 2 other people's houses | → | Purchase |

| Path K | Other person told about the brand | → | Saw the brand in use at other person's house | → | Purchase |

| Path M | Other person came to show the brand to our house | → | Saw the brand at trade show | → | Purchase |

Figure 25: Subjects' touchpoint paths with experience-based intersections

Short touchpoint path in comparison to 'would work' answers

The subjects also defined that the most ideal experiences with the brand would be when other person tells about the brand to them or when they see the brand in use. The subjects' 'would work' answers are in line with their own experiences which explains the short real-life touchpoint paths; they define that these certain experiences would work which also occurred in real life. Following are example quotes from subjects defining which experiences with the case brand would create a positive image of the brand.

In subject M's case, he stated that if other person told him about the brand that would be the most ideal situation to gain a positive image of the brand. His real-life path had two intersections with the brand before purchase and the first one was when a friend came over to his house to test the brand and told how it works. Thus, the 'would work' and the real-life experience match and consequently created a short path.

Subject M: *"The most idealistic would something like when a compeer presents it. A friend who has gotten it (Philips Hue) and look I have this great thing."*

Figure 26: Subject M's touchpoint path

In subject J's case, she stated that the most ideal situation to form a positive image of the case brand would be when other person told her about the brand. Her path from first intersection to the purchase stage was four stages long and the second intersection was other person telling her about the brand. Thus, also her 'would work' answer and real-life experiences matched and consequently created a short path.

Subject J: *"This, that I hear from someone else and they admire it, there it is (decision to buy). Especially, if one is looking for something like that (lights) or I was not even looking for lights and still the first encountering worked really well."*
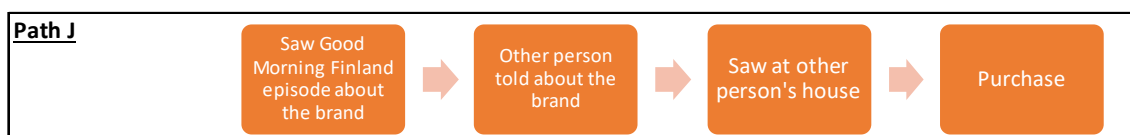
Figure 27: Subject J's touchpoint path

The subject K stated that he needs to be able test and feel the brand's products which would be the most ideal situation for gaining a positive image of the case brand or any brand with physical products. His path was three items long and the second one of the items was when he did see the brand's products in use. Thus, also his real-life experiences and expectation-based answers are in line and consequently a short path followed.

Subject K: *"I need to be able to see it and use it and ask questions. Cause I can't, I don't just learn by someone explaining it to me or just by reading about it. I am a hands-on learner. I would want to go to a store in this case."*
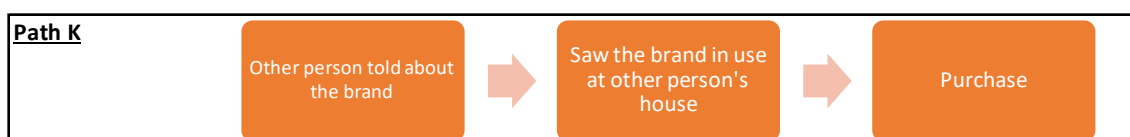
Figure 28: Subject K's touchpoint path

Content of the touchpoint paths
In terms of content of the paths all of the subjects' paths were generally relatively similar with each other. As described earlier, most the of the paths from the first intersection with the brand to the purchase touchpoints were short. In addition, all of the experiences and touchpoints with the case brand along the path were experience-based. Another observation of the subjects' paths is that most of the intersections with the brand were initiated by someone else. Only a few, subject

F and I for example, had intersections with the brand that they initiated themselves. Other than that all of the intersections with the brand, for instance other person telling about the brand, other person showing the brand, and other person posting on social media about the brand, were initiated by someone else and sort of brought to the subjects. Despite the fact, that most of the intersections with the brand were initiated by someone else, the subjects ended up initiating the purchase themselves and they also did this relatively fast. This might be lack of marketing from the case brand's side but it can also be stated that the intersections initiated by someone else hold power and work efficiently.

5   DISCUSSION

A clear path of the consumer-brand touchpoints is lacking (Payne, Peltier & Barger, 2017). Thus, the purpose of this study research was to recognize all of the possible consumer-brand touchpoints that can occur in the omnichannel environment and form a path of them. Additionally, the touchpoints and intersections between the consumers and the brand were reviewed in terms of having an impact on the brand image. All of these matters were researched by using a unique two-path qualitative methodology. The research was implemented with a case brand which was Philips Hue. The first phase of the research methodology included the subjects taking pictures of anything that triggered them to think of the case brand. This part of the methodology and the photos provided the researcher an access to the subjects' natural, personal life where the touches with brands are generally experienced in real life as well. The photos worked as a re-calling-aid in the second phase of the research methodology, the interviews. The interviews were also divided into phases as the first one included the subjects' free-speaking about the photos they had taken and the second one included the interviewer presenting questions to the subjects. The results of the study were based on the visual data as well as on the spoken and transcribed data. Now, the results are further discussed. The discussion chapter is divided into theoretical, managerial, and methodological implications. These sub-chapters are then divided into sections based on themes that follow the structure of the literature review chapter.

Some consumer-brand intersections that are not touchpoints according to theory came up in the research and were experienced by the subjects. Thus, the term touchpoint is used but also in addition the that the terms "trigger" and "intersections are used in the study. Trigger is an initiative that made the subjects to think of the case brand. Intersection can be anything that the subjects experienced related to the case brand. Thus, touchpoints, trigger, and intersection are all used as terms side by side.

There are data, results, and discussions in this study that are based on the subjects' real-life experiences. Additionally, some knowledge is based on the subjects' hypothetical or expectational answers. These matters have not occurred but the subjects state that they would be likely to happen. This type of data is referred by 'would work' answers as the subjects, for instance, state that some touchpoint would work positively with the case brand.

When it comes to the results in terms of the case brand, it can be noticed that the brand is relatively young, just seven years, as most of the consumer-brand touchpoints and triggers thar arouse from this research position between the initial first experience with the brand and purchasing the brand. Only few post-purchase experiences were brough up by the subjects or by the brand.

5.1 Theoretical implications

The consumers, customers, and companies operate in an omnichannel environment (Tyrväinen and Karjaluoto, 2018). Consumers are agile and quick in their movements in the offline and online channels as well as between them (Tyrväinen and Karjaluoto, 2018). It can also clearly be seen in this research how the subjects move in the omnichannel environment as all of them have touchpoints and triggers from online and offline channels. In total, all of the triggers and touchpoints that came through the research split between offline and online almost equally; 52 items or 52,5% of all recognized triggers or touchpoints occurred in the offline environment whereas 47 items or 47,5% occurred in the online environment. Thus, the touchpoints distribute between offline and online equally. There were also a couple of triggers, for instance using an Internet-enabled device, that could be considered to be occurring in the offline and in the online environment side by side. Thus, the theory on omnichannel environment is in line with the results of the research. Consequently, the consumer, customers, companies and brand operate in the omnichannel environment.

The word-of-mouth as a touchpoint was experienced by many subjects. The WoM touchpoints had created a positive image of the brand and also shortened the touchpoint path from the beginning to purchase. Most of the WoM touchpoints were with close people, such as friends and family. Thus, these pieces of information about the brand or its products have had impact on the subjects image of the brand. This is also in line with Lim and Chung's (2014) statements on relevant people's, such as family and friends', saying having an impact on the receiving consumer. Additionally, given the case brand's young age, seven years, the brand can still be considered to be relative new and unfamiliar among consumers. As per Lim and Chung's (2014) findings on how consumers are more likely to use the WoM information received when the brand is unfamiliar, the WoM information about Philips Hue that the research subjects had received has had an impact on their image of the brand.

Word-of-Mouth (WoM) was discovered to be a common and also efficient touchpoint based on the research subjects' real-life experiences but also on their opinions on touchpoints that would create a positive image of Philips Hue.

Even though seeing the brand physically in person was stated to be the most effective touchpoint, seeing the brand on other person's social media in the digital environment was an effective touchpoint as well. Even though the subjects widely stated that seeing an influencer posting about the brand would also create a positive image of the brand, all of the subjects' real-life experiences on social media with the brand came organically from people they know. Seeing other person's post about the brand can be linked to WoM. Seeing someone else using or talking about the brand on social media could be considered as electronic-word-of-mouth (eWoM) (Mishra et al. 2018). As WoM was stated to be extremely efficient in this research in shortening the path from beginning to purchase and in

forming an immediate positive image of the brand, the word-of-mouth in the online environment, especially on social media, created a positive image of the case brand. The eWoM experiences that the subjects had had, had come from friends, and they were visual contents of the brand's products and how the brand was being used.

When it comes to touchpoint types and WoM as well as eWoM, these touchpoints belong to the social touchpoint category that was covered in the literature review (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Social touchpoints are external touchpoints that are created by other people around the customer himself or herself and these touchpoints affect the customers' experiences with the brand. Social touchpoints can be between the customer and her or his family and friends or between the customer and an anonymous party for in online or offline environment. (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016, 76-78.) Thus, WoM and eWoM are both social touchpoints.

As was covered in the results' WoM section, subject G also brought up an interesting point of how seeing other people's reactions while they interact with the brand would affect her image of the brand. The subject's point can be linked to Saleem et al. (2016) theory on all experiences, even the smallest, having an impact on the consumers' brand image and evaluation. Seeing other people's reactions while they interact with the brand creates feelings to the viewer. Consequently, these feelings have a role in forming an image of the brand with which the other person interacted.

It was stated in the literature review that even the smallest consumers' experiences with a brand can have an impact on the customer's overall experience (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2016) and brand image (Saleem et al. 2016). Thus, brand is a sum of these experience with the brand, company or product (Saleem et al. 2016). In this study, plenty of very small intersections with the brand occurred. When the subjects were asked to determine which intersections with the brand would create a positive image of the brand, number of different experienced intersections and 'would work' intersections were included in the answers. Thus, small, big, theory-based touchpoints, and other intersections, all, created experiences with the subjects and consequently affected their image and overall experience of the brand. This is in line with the theory. Additionally, Stein and Ramaseshan (2016) also stated that each touchpoint and experience has its own impact on the customer experience, which was also the basis for examining the topic of this study. Now, that all the possible touchpoints and intersections are discovered through the research, they can be exploited by the brand as each touchpoint is an opportunity for the brand to have an impact on the customer.

5.2   Practical implications

A number of practical implications that companies and brand could exploit arouse from the results of the research. Firstly, the fact that the consumers' touchpoint path from the first intersection with the brand to the purchase could be

made extremely short and that way also consumers won into customers relatively fast is worthy for companies. In terms of the case brand, when the first intersections with the brand were other person telling about the brand or seeing the brand in use or testing the brand, the impact on the touchpoint path was shortening while the first intersections created a positive image of the brand to the consumer. If a brand is able to find consumer-brand intersections that work this well immediately it can turn the consumer into a buying customer with only a few intersections between the consumer and the brand before it. Consequently, these intersections have an immediate and strong impact on the brand image which creates a good consumer-brand relationship from the very beginning.

One of the objectives of the study was to simply recognize all of the possible consumer-brand touchpoints for the case brand. This was achieved and it can be exploited by companies. The unique research methodology provided a way to access and examine the consumers in their natural, personal life where the consumer-brand touches occur. That way an insight of which touchpoints and intersections work in creating a positive image of the brand was able to be discovered. After the research and its results, the brand is able to invest in the intersections and touchpoints that create the most value to it as well as invest in the touchpoints and intersections through which the brand is able to have an impact on the consumer. Or as Davis and Longoria (2003, 1) put it, "company is in control of its own destiny" when they know their consumer-brand touches and "they (companies) put their brand's success in the hands of others" when they do not know their consumer-brand intersections.

When a company has the knowledge of its consumer-brand touchpoints and intersections it is also able to recognize the ones that are not worth of investing in. There might be a case where a brand is investing in advertising through television commercials while it does not have an impact on the consumers' brand image at all or it does not encourage them to make a purchase. While that occurs, the consumers might perceive the brand and purchasing much better if the brand was visible on their social media or they would hear from a friend and her experiences with the brand. Knowing the consumer-brand intersections and touchpoints and which ones are effective works also the other way; it might create insights for a company to let go of something and move onto something else that actually has a better impact on the consumers.

The case brand with its products operates still in a relatively new and innovative industry of home automation and Internet-of-Things. As was noticed in the case of Philips Hue, the other, "competitive" home automation brands created touchpoints for Philips Hue as well due to the fact that the brands and their products are compatible and they can be linked to each other via the Internet. This is something that the home automation companies should consider, for instance, in their marketing activities; why not collaborate and advertise how the brands can be used together. There already are collaborations like this, for example, in a format of product bundles of smart speakers and smart lights. The competitor is not always pure competitor when it comes to home automation.

As was noticed in this research, not all of the effective consumer-brand interactions were theory-based touchpoints. It was determined that for this thesis' results the term consumer-brand touchpoint as well as the term consumer-brand intersection are used since such many non-theoretical defined interactions, intersections, occurred in the research. It can be suggested that companies should also focus on the consumer-brand intersections, especially on the ones that are found effective in creating value, and not only on the traditional touchpoints. Intersection can be anything that makes the consumer to think about the brand, such as WoM in the case of this thesis, and has an impact on the consumer's image of the brand. If the company can somehow affect positively the consumer through these effective intersections, for instance through WoM, it benefits the company. For instance, if marketing activities that affect the content and tone of the WoM can be implemented by a company, it can develop the brand image.

The research methodology of this study could also be considered as a practical implication for companies dealing with their consumer-brand touchpoints and intersections. The instant action taking, in this case taking a picture, when a consumer has an experience with the brand is valuable information for the company and enables it to have an access to the environment where the consumers normally bump into the brand, their personal life. The instant action taking creates a record of the consumer-brand intersections which enables the company to generally recognize the interactions, assess them, and take actions, for instance implement marketing activities, based on them. Thus, this thesis' research method is suggested for companies when examining the consumer-brand touchpoints and intersections.

It was noticed how the history of the Philips brand had its impacts on gaining touchpoints and intersections with the Philips Hue brand. Even though Philips and Philips are nowadays two separate companies and brands with different products lines), lighting and healthcare, personal care and so on (Eestilä, 2019), other than just the lighting Philips products were also linked to Philips Hue. This is a brand and company specific notion but it is brought up in this study due to the fact that the subjects' history with the brand, their previous attitudes, ideas and features linked to the case brand, had an impact on the touchpoints or intersections they formed later during this research. A good example came from subject K (figure 29) who took a picture a Philips-branded projector that made him think of the case brand, Philips Hue. It is far away from the lighting brand, Philips Hue, but it still made the subject to think of the case brand even though it is a completely different product. The subject's history with the brand had an impact on him creating touchpoints or intersection with the Philips Hue brand nowadays. This is just a small notion but it is brought up to remind that the past with a specific brand has also an impact on the touchpoints and intersections that the consumer create today.
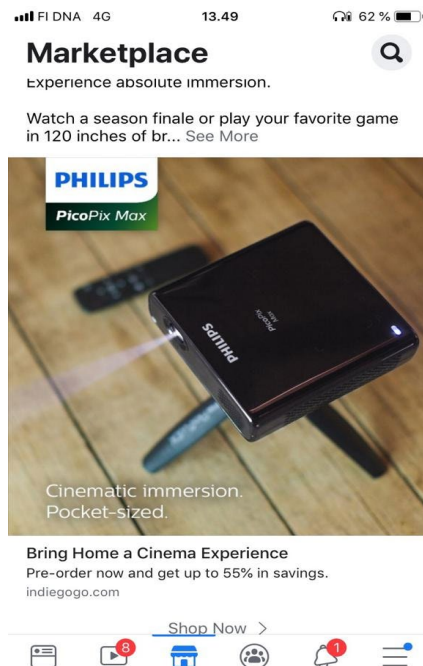
Figure 29: Subject K's photo

5.3   Evaluation of the research

As the unique research methodology played such an essential role in this study and in the results, the executed research methodology is compared to the objectives of this research and to the method's theory-based purposes that were defined earlier in the methodology part of the study.

In total, 99 unique consumer-brand touchpoints were recognized through the research. Thus, it can be stated that the research methodology of this study served well in fulfilling the first research objective as both, the picture-taking stage as well as the interviews, provided with a large number of recognized touchpoints between the subjects and Philips Hue. Additionally, the touchpoints were able to be reviewed as well as the most common and efficient touchpoints were able to be recognized through the research. Lastly, the third research objective, forming a path of the touchpoints, was also successfully met with the research method as a clear touchpoint was formed for each of the subjects by the knowledge gained in the picture-taking and interview stages of the method.

As evaluating the research method in terms of its suitability to the researched topic, the research met its requirements and served its purpose. The combined data of visuals and spoken information that was gained with this particular method, gave a good access to the large variety of different touchpoints that consumers experience. The research was longitudinal and demanded reasonable time and effort from the subjects. Due to this feature, deeper insights, such as real-life experiences with the brand, were discovered. On the downside,

two subjects did drop out of the research in the middle of it, which is natural, but still also describes the demanding method.

There were multiple important justifying reasons to use the more unique, two-phase qualitative methodology for this study. The methodology worked successfully and gave an access to the subjects' natural, personal life where the consumer-brand touchpoints and intersections are experienced. As was stated earlier in the methodology chapter, research subjects tend to forget the experienced consumer-brand touchpoints which leads to the fact that they cannot be dealt with when interviewing the subjects or whenever the touchpoints would be examined somehow (Macdonalda, and Wilson, 2015, 235-253). The methodology provided a solution for this as the taken pictures worked as recalling-aid in the interviews; it was possible for the research to examine the consumer-brand intersections even though they had occurred in the past because the photos enabled the referral back to the intersection moments. The taken photos also created a trace of the consumer-brand intersections which was the aim with the study and research methodology.

Emmison and Smith (2007, xi) stressed the importance of visuals in research in general in order to meet the demands of today's visual world that we live in. The visuals are not just photography anymore, but also observations of the world and people as visual. Thus, research in general should also include visuals. In this research method the subjects were able to express themselves as visual observators as they were given the task to take picture of their observations. It was also determined in the methodology's theory part that consumer store their knowledge about a brand in a form of pictures (Koll, von Wallpach & Kreuzer, 2010). In the study, the subjects took pictures of anything that made them think of the case brand and that way were able to explain their brand image efficiently as it already existed or was forming in their minds in a picture format.

The data of this study included photos as well as the interviews' spoken information. Schembri and Boyle (2012) determined how having both, visuals as well as text as data, as in visual ethnography, is beneficial and provides deeper, more authentic insights than just having the interview data. This worked successfully also in this study. The same line of authors also stated (2012) how getting an access to the consumer's point of view in visual ethnography is highly beneficial. This was also managed to conduct in this study as the taken pictures gave the power to the consumers and provided their pure point of view.

When it came to the interview part of the research, some type of cue of the moments in the past had to be given to the subjects in order to them to be able to recall back to the previous moments. This cue had to be temporary and contextual and not too contributory in order to create credible data. (Leigh at all., 2006, 105-122) The taken pictures by the subjects worked greatly as suitable cues in the interview situations; they provided a temporary and contextual "tip" for the interviewees but did not direct the speaking while the interviewer was able to stay mute.

If the triggers and touchpoints from the picture-taking phase and from the interview phase are compared to each other, it can be seen that certain triggers

and touchpoints are gained by taking picture of them but they are not mentioned in the interviews. As was presented in the research methodology and literature review chapters, the traditional methodologies might not capture certain type of touchpoints or the subjects might forget them by the time of the interview (Baxendalea, Macdonalda, and Wilson, 2015, 235-253). This can be also noticed in this research; small, quick touchpoints or triggers that are part of the daily basis, for example a bulb at home, is included in the photo-taking phase but in the interview phase. Below is an example from subject C's answers. Thus, the method design of this study was extremely suitable; for instance, the pictures taken by the subjects in this method combated the poor memory problem.

Figure 2: Subject C's photo

Subject C about picture 30: *"Well no we use this lamp at home always when **** (the subject's baby) is going to sleep so always at night time or at evening time. Then the lighting is kind of a little more dimmed and because of the light's adjustability the brand came to my mind."*

As can be seen in the above picture and quote, through the picture-taking method the subject has been able to capture and remember the situation also later. Any other this type of triggers or touchpoints that are related to the lamps at the home environment, are not mentioned by the subject in the interview phase even though questions concerning the gained touchpoints or triggers are presented to her. This is consistent with Baxendalea et al. (2015, 235-253) theory.

Reliability
If the study was repeated by someone else, the results would be similar. A factor that might slightly change the results, would be if the subjects were at a different stage of their customer journey. For instance, if the subjects happened to be far in the post-purchase stage, the touchpoints might be different. Additionally, the sample size for an experimental type research method was reasonable and therefore the reliability of the study is good. The theory suggested that consumers gain many of different types of touchpoints at each stage of the customer journey; this also occurred in the results of this study.

As was covered in the development of the research method chapter, one of the many benefits of visual ethnographical types of research methods is the data's authenticity and integrity (Schembri & Boyle, 2012, 1252). This study's data included also visuals which created reliability. Thus, the research data is eventually in a form of visual text, it is authentic, and it possesses integrity.

Validity
The results of the study are a true representation of the situation. Consumers can experience touchpoints wherever, whenever, and however, and this happened in the study. The company also agreed on the results; for example, when a consumer is able have a touchpoint where she or she can test the product or when a consumer has a positive WoM touchpoints it gives a positive image of the brand right away. The most effective touchpoints of this study are also a representation of the current situation. (S. Eestilä, 2020.)

It can be stated that the research objectives of this study were successfully met; a large variety of touchpoints were recognized and a path of them were formed. Additionally, the unique, more experimental research method served greatly the purposes of this study.

5.4   Limitations

The results of this study should be taken in account with some limitations. These limitations are described next.

The data and results of this research base on the case brand of the thesis, Philips Hue. The brand operates in the industry of Internet-of-Things and home automation. When it comes to the results, they should be acknowledged with the information about the case company and the industry in which it operates. The results cannot be directly applied to all brands and industries. The thesis research also includes parts that are implemented to mostly benefit the case brand or the industry in which the brand operates. In addition, IoT and home automation as industries are still relatively new. The data and results of this research might not be at its most relevant at the moment but the case might be different in the future when the industry itself grows and expands. The customers and customer within

the industry might still be early adapters and operate differently than the "average" consumers and customers. This should be also kept in mind when dealing with the data and results of this master's thesis.

Even though the unique, two-phase qualitative research provided valuable benefits, the sample size could always be bigger to make the data and results more reliable. The 13 subjects provided treasured insights of the thesis topic but some information could have also be strengthened with higher number of subjects and possibly as a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. For instance, a quantitative research methods could be used to get a high number of consumers' touchpoint paths with a brand and to form a quantity-based, "standard" path of subjects. With a combination to that, qualitative research could be used to gain the insights, for instance feelings attached to those touchpoints, in addition to the numerical knowledge.

Since the subjects were instructed to take pictures of the triggers that made them to think of the case brand and they were aware of the ongoing research, this might have encouraged them to also think of the brand more than they would outside of the experiment. Even though the methodology provided with a way to get an access to the subjects' personal life there is also a chance that the subjects started to "look for" triggers through which they could think of the brand.

In contrast, some subjects might have forgotten to take pictures too. They might have had a triggering experience but as the photo-taking was an extra effort it might have led to them forgetting to take a picture of the trigger. The backup-plan for this was to ask the subjects in the interview about any additional triggers occurring throughout the picture-taking period of which they did not take a picture.

As the snowball sampling was partly used, there was always a chance the sample was biased, even with some definite pre-requirements that needed to be met in order to be part of the sample.

Even though the research method was unique and enabled an access to the subjects' personal life and intersections with the brand, the method was also long and time-consuming for the subjects. Whereas a traditional, qualitative research interview takes a short period of time, the methodology of this thesis research required over a month of the subjects' time and effort.

5.5   Future research

The final chapter of the master's thesis provides the future recommendations that arouse from the research.

As was recognized in the beginning of the study, there is a research gap when it comes to recognizing all of the possible consumer-brand touchpoints and forming a path of them. There are some non-academically critical sources giving long touchpoint maps and academic sources, as presented in the theory framework chapter, that give customer journeys with multiple stages. It is obvious that

this particular research does not fill the requirements to state that the touchpoint journey would be shorter in reality and would include other triggers or intersections than just the theoretically defined touchpoints, but for the sake of future research it is worthy to mention that these long consumer or customer journeys should be possibly challenged. It was clearly recognized from this research that a consumer only needed 2-4, in some cases only 1-2, intersections with the brand before a purchase already occurred. Of course, these intersections had to be of certain ones and effective ones, but still the journey was short. If a brand is able to create extremely effective first touchpoint, or intersection, could it also apply on other brands at a wider level? Or could this be because Philips Hue's product is such good match to consumer needs of today, especially for early adopters of IoT technology? It is so easy for the consumer to firstly order a product while keeping in mind that the product can be returned if does not please one, secondly test it, and thirdly return it, that is already one effective touchpoint enough to put the consumer on this path? This is something that could be researched more closely in the future.

In addition to length of the touchpoint path, it is important to look closer the definition of a touchpoint and whether an expanded version of it could be used when examining the consumer-brand experiences. The subjects of this study experienced a variety of different consumer-brand intersections that were right on the boarder of being theoretically justified touchpoints. These intersections still had an impact. Some of these non-theory-based touchpoints that were experienced by the subjects while having a strong impact on their image of the case brand were a need of home automation devices (case brand operates in the home automation industry) and darkness (case brand is a lighting brand). Should these naturally, without any actions from the company developing intersection be also researched when examining the consumer-brand relationship, brand management, and where and how should a brand invest in when it comes to developing the brand image? Given the insights of this research, the answer might be yes.

Relative to the previous paragraph, the whole definition of touchpoint and its role should be also taken under a closer inspection. As some of the "touches", such as darkness creating a need of light, the consumer thinking of the brand because of that need of hers, and consequently forming a better picture of the brand as the brand can help her with that need of hers, could the "traditional" definition of touchpoint possibly be challenged with a definition of touchpoint that cover the consumer's life at a wider and deeper level? Or could a new term for these consumer-brand intersections that have an impact on the brand image be developed? An optional term could be intersection points. This new term and the idea behind it could then be used for forming the consumer-brand journey. The term and idea could also be used by brands for having an impact on the consumer through the "newly discovered" consumer-brand intersections. These non-theory-based touchpoints, intersections, the term behind them, and their impact on the brand image and consumer-brand relationship could be an interesting, researchable topic in the future.

In this study, purely and only the touchpoints and intersections between a brand and a consumer were recognized, a path of them formed, and stated that even the smallest intersections have an impact on the consumer's brand image, the next step would be to dive deeper into the individual touchpoints and intersections. A possible future research question could be how individual touchpoints or intersections affect the brand image or the consumer-brand relationship. Additionally, it could be examined how long these impacts last and what is the impact of a combination of different intersections; what if the first experience is X and creates a positive image because of XYZ but then the second intersection is Y and creates a negative image because of ABC? The deeper impacts of single interactions and reasons for these impacts could be researched next.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Pictures from the pilot methodology

Picture #1
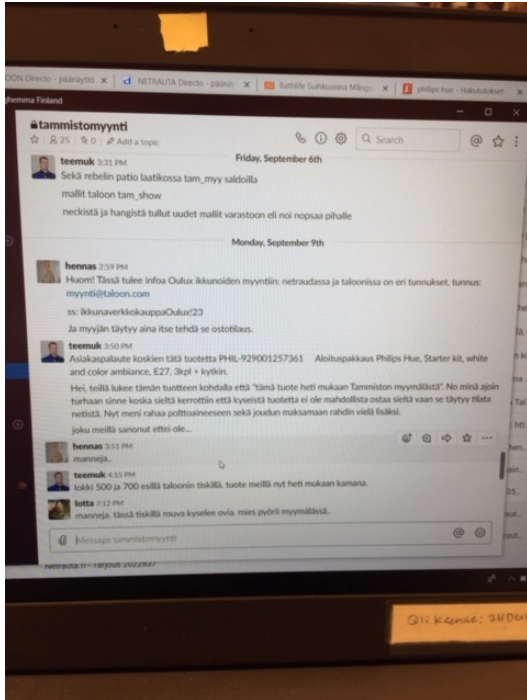
Picture #2

Picture #3

Appendix B

1. Tell freely about the photos you have taken.
2. Had you heard or seen the brand Philips Hue somewhere before this project? Where and how?
3. What kind of image did you get of the brand when you first saw it? ➔
4. What kind of situation would be idealistic for you to see Philips Hue and why? (Could have happened or can also be a situation that hasn't happened but would be ideal to you)
5. Would you think that your idealistic first situation with the brand is also something that would likely happen to other people? ➔
6. Is this most idealistic first experience with the brand also the most likely first experience? Why, why not? ➔
7. Do you think that a smart lighting brand is a brand that requires experiencing or seeing the product? Why? ➔
8. If you think the brand in general, which touchpoints with it would be something that would create a positive image of the brand to you? Why?
9. If you think of a situation where you end up going to the brand's website, what kind of touchpoints or experiences you would have needed to have before that?
10. If you think of a situation where you end up going to the brand's store or a retailer's store where they sell Philips Hue, what kind of touchpoints or experiences you would have needed to have before that?
11. Where would you search for information about the brand?
12. List all of the possible situations where you have seen or thought of the brand (you don't need to list the ones that have already been mentioned earlier in the interview)
13. Then put these touchpoints with the brand in an order that would be most likely to happen to you.
14. Would you say that a smart lighting brand's brand image is linked to its products? Why?
15. What do you think of retargeting; let's say you search for Philips Hue in Google and then you start receiving Facebook ads from Philips Hue – what are you thoughts on that?
16. Next, I will list different types of situations where you see or experience the Philips Hue brand. Freely comment on them, would they have a good impact on you or a bad one, and why, have you experienced them and so on.
    a. An influencer posts something about the brand
    b. On TV, smart lighting as part of someone's home (for instance, a home décor show or something)
    c. Newsletter from the brand
    d. Review of the brand online

     e. Brand website with pictures and videos of people using smart lighting

     f. Trade show where the brand is present

     g. You receive good customer service from the brand

     h. You go to the brand's website and the website is confusing and unclear

     i. Iltasanomat/Iltalehti

17. Put the following intersections with the case brand in an order that would most likely happen to you. You may remove intersections if they would not happen to you at all.

     a. Social media ad from the brand

     b. Purchase

     c. Other person tells about/shows the brand

     d. You Google the brand

     e. Online review

     f. Other person likes or posts something about the brand

     g. You see the brand through a brand retailer's flyer

     h. You see the brand at a tradeshow

     i. You see the brand at an online retailers website

     j. You see the brand at a brand retailer's store

     k. An influencer posts something about the brand

     l. Article of the brand on Iltalehti or Iltasanomat

Appendix C

Trigger to think of the brand (Philips Hue) from the photo-taking phase	Offline/Online	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Darkness, need of light in the darkness	Offline	X								XXX				
Beautiful nature's light	Offline	XX												
Fun lighting of shopping mall wall	Offline	XX												
Social media picture of lighting related product (lamp, candelabra)	Online	XX	X											
Something in online environment (interior décor photo,) makes think of the brand's features/usecases	Online	X								XX	XXXXXXX			
Beautiful color tones of natural light	Online	X												
Modern technology of lighting	Offline	X												
Social media ad from the brand (an ad that's not been seen before)	Online		XXXXXXXX									XX		
Other brand, shoe brand Minna Parikka, linked to the researched brand as they did a collaboration	Online, Offline		X							X				
Other person has the brand's product	Offline		X									X	X	X
Other person telling about the brand or its products	Offline		X									X	X	X
Repetition of the brand's social media ad that has been seen already earlier	Online		XXXX											
Organic Facebook post from the brand	Online		X											
Philips Nordics' Instagram ad on home appliance	Online		XXXXX											
Instagram ad says "LED lights" on it	Online		X											
Friend's Instagram photo of Christmas celebrations and lights	Online		X											
Retailer's online ad on the researched brand	Online		X									X		
Online retailer's ad on luminaires	Online		X											
Online retailer's ad on non-smart lights and thought 'can these lights be controlled like Philips Hue'?	Online		X											
Organic Instagram post from the brand	Online		X											
Ad on how 96% of customers recommends the Philips home appliance	Online		X											
Brand's Instagram story	Online		X											
Brand's app	Online		X											
Facebook ad from Philips Lighting	Online		X											
Brand's social media ad on influencer's post about the brand	Online		XXX											
Dimmable lamp at home and its user cases	Offline			X				XXX	X					
Non-smart light at home	Offline										XXX			
needed to be controlled remotely, difficulty in waking up, dark room, dark spot at home, dark yard, safety, dark building	Offline				XXXX				XX	X	X			
Compatible product/brand (iPad) to the researched brand and its products	Offline						X							
Brand's product's use	Offline						X							
Dark yard that would need automated light	Offline						X		X					
Different tones of light at home, thought of the adjustable light	Offline						XX							
Retailer's flyer on deals	Offline						X							
Any technology ad, thought of the need of getting more of the brand's products	Offline						X							
Seeing how lights automatically turn on when arriving home	Offline						X							
Retailer's website	Online						X							
Place at home where smart lighting would be needed	Offline						X	XXX	X					
Other IoT device (smart plug)	Offline, online							X						
Other IoT device (Google Home)	Offline, online		X				X		X					
Something in offline environment (Christmas tree, taking a bath, bedroom+waking up) makes think of the brand's features	Offline								XXX					
Interior décor makes think of smart lighting	Offline									X				
Something makes think of the brand's ability to create atmosphere	Online	X							XXXXX	X				
Word "smart" seen (smart photn) and associated with the brand	Offline											X		

Appendix D

Touchpoint/trigger to think of the brand (Philips Hue)	Experienced by participant/Participant stating this would work but hasn't happened	Came up through photo-taking/interview	Offline/Online	A 14	B 34	C 1	D 1	E 3	F 10	G 5	H 13	I 17	J 10	K 14	L 6	M 5
Darkness, need of light in the darkness	Experienced	Photo	Offline	X								3				
Beautiful nature's light	Experienced	Photo	Offline	2												
Fun lighting of shopping mall wall	Experienced	Photo	Offline	2												
Social media picture of lighting related product (lamp, candelabra)	Experienced	Photo	Online	2	X											
Something in online environment (interior décor photo,) makes think of the brand's features/usecases	Experienced	Photo	Online	X								2	7			
Beautiful color tones of natural light	Experienced	Photo	Online	X												
Modern technology of lighting	Experienced	Photo	Offline	X												
Social media ad from the brand (an ad that's not been seen before)	Experienced	Photo	Online		9									2		
Other brand, shoe brand Minna Parikka, linked to the researched brand as they did a collaboration	Experienced	Photo	Online, Offline	X								X				
Other person has the brand's product	Experienced	Photo	Offline	X				X						X	X	X
Other person telling about the brand or its products	Experienced	Photo	Offline	X				X						X	X	X
Repetition of the brand's social media ad that has been seen already earlier	Experienced	Photo	Online		4											
Organic Facebook post from the brand	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Philips Nordics' Instagram ad on home appliance	Experienced	Photo	Online		5											
Instagram ad says "LED lights" on it	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Friend's Instagram photo of Christmas celebrations and lights	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Retailer's online ad on the researched brand	Experienced	Photo	Online		X									X		
Online retailer's ad on luminaires	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Online retailer's ad on non-smart lights and thought 'can these lights be controlled like Philips Hue'?	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Organic Instagram post from the brand	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Ad on how 96% of customers recommends the Philips home appliance	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Brand's Instagram story	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Brand's app	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Facebook ad from Philips Lighting	Experienced	Photo	Online		X											
Brand's social media ad on influencer's post about the brand	Experienced	Photo	Online		3											
Dimmable lamp at home and its user cases	Experienced	Photo	Offline			X				3	X					
Non-smart light at home	Experienced	Photo	Offline										3			
Problem/need that the brand could solve (light would be needed to be controlled remotely, difficulty in waking up, dark room, dark spot at home, dark yard, safety, dark building facade)	Experienced	Photo	Offline				4				2	X	X			
Compatible product/brand (iPad) to the researched brand and its products	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X							
Brand's product's use	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X							
Dark yard that would need automated light	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X		X					
Different tones of light at home, thought of the adjustable light	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X		X					
Retailer's flyer on deals	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X							
Any technology ad, thought of the need of getting more of the brand's products	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X							
Seeing how lights automatically turn on when arriving home	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X							
Retailer's website	Experienced	Photo	Online						X							
Place at home where smart lighting would be needed	Experienced	Photo	Offline						X	3	X					
Other IoT device (smart plug)	Experienced	Photo	Offline, online							X						
Other IoT device (Google Home)	Experienced	Photo	Offline, online		X				X		X					
Something in offline environment (Christmas tree, taking a bath, waking up) makes think of brand's features	Experienced	Photo	Offline									3				
Interior décor makes think of smart lighting	Experienced	Photo	Offline										X			
Something makes think of the brand's ability to create atmosphere	Experienced	Photo	Online	X							5	X			X	
Word "smart" seen (älypuhelin) and associated with the brand	Experienced	Photo	Offline											X		
In the dark season thinking of a wakeup light lately	Experienced	Interview	Offline	X												

Appendix D continues

Touchpoint/trigger to think of the brand (Philips Hue)	Experienced by participant/Participant stating this would work but hasn't happened	Came up through photo-taking/interview	Offline/Online	A 14	B 34	C 1	D 1	E 3	F 10	G 5	H 13	I 17	J 10	K 14	L 6	M 5
Other person told me about the brand	Experienced	Interview	Offline	X	X							X	X	X	X	X
Video online by the brand (social media ad, organic content)	Would work	Interview	Online	X	X								X	X	X	X
Seeing the brand in use/Testing the brand or its products (for example at other person's home)	Experienced	Interview	Offline	X	X					X	X		X	X	X	X
Testing the brand/its products/seeing in use	Would work	Interview	Offline	X	X							X	X	X	X	X
Telling to other people about the brand	Experienced	Interview	Online	X	X					X		X	X			
"WoM is effective" stated by the participant	Experienced	Interview	Offline				X									
Other person told me about the brand's values (ecology)	Experienced	Interview					X									
Visiting the brand's website	Experienced	Interview	Online				X									
Influencer posts about the brand	Would work	Interview	Online				X	X								
Information about the brand gained through other IoT brand/device (Google Home)	Would work	Interview	Offline, online				X									
Information about the brand gained through other IoT brand/device (Google Home)	Experienced	Interview	Offline								X					
Social media ad with a link/swipe up link to the brand's website	Would work	Interview	Online				X									
An online ad telling that XYZ retail store has the brand there	Would work	Interview	Online, offline				X									
Visiting retailer's website	Would work	Interview	Online				X									
Visiting retailer's website	Experienced	Interview	Online							X						
Purchase event, offline	Experienced	Interview	Offline				X			X			X			
Purchase event, online	Experienced	Interview	Online							X					X	X
Brand's organic social media posts	Experienced	Interview	Online				X						X			
Starting to follow the brand on social media	Experienced	Interview	Online				X						X			
Brand's ads on social media	Experienced	Interview	Online				X						X		X	
Trade show	Experienced	Interview	Offline				X						X	X	X	X
Newsletters from the brand	Experienced	Interview	Online				X									
Seeing the brand at a retailer store	Experienced	Interview	Offline				X					X			X	X
Seeing other brand's Christmas window that includes the brand	Experienced	Interview	Offline				X						X			
Experienced darkness/difficulties created by the darkness made think of the brand	Experienced	Interview	Offline				X									
Brand in use at a store	Would work	Interview	Offline					X								
Other person telling about the brand	Would work	Interview	Offline					X							X	X
Interest in IoT products drives to searching for the brand online	Experienced	Interview	Offline, online							X		X				
Asks for other person about the brand	Experienced	Interview	Offline							X						
Used the brand's app	Experienced	Interview	Online				X			X			X		X	
Looked information about the brand online	Experienced	Interview	Online							X		X	X			
Tried the brand's demo box at a store	Experienced	Interview	Offline							X						
Other person posts about the brand on social media	Experienced	Interview	Online								X		X	X	X	
Other person shows it to me	Would work	Interview	Offline								X					
Seeing it on other person's social media	Would work	Interview	Online								X					
Seeing it at a store	Would work	Interview	Offline								X				X	
Seeing other person interacting with the brand and their reactions	Would work	Interview	Online, offline								X					
Instagram ad from the brand	Would work	Interview	Online										X			
Need of adjustable light	Would work	Interview	Offline, online											X		
Problem/need that the brand could solve	Would work	Interview	Offline, online											X		
Flyer from the brand to home	Experienced	Interview	Offline											X		
Outdoor ads	Would work	Interview	Offline												X	
Expert at a retail store telling about the brand	Would work	Interview	Offline												X	X
Catalogue from the brand	Would work	Interview	Offline												X	
Asking help for someone I know and knows about the brand	Would work	Interview	Offline										X		X	
Saw the products through work	Experienced	Interview	Offline, online												X	
Trade show	Would work	Interview	Offline													X
Through other brand	Would work	Interview	Offline, online													X
Looking at reviews about the brand online	Would work	Interview	Online												X	X