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Is artificial intelligence taking our jobs?

A study of customer satisfaction created by customer service in online retail

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Abstract

The world is constantly evolving and rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) have contributed with a lot of changes in the recent years. The purpose of this study is to explore how customers experience different factors created by customer service affects customer satisfaction. This with a focus directed towards chat forums and perceived differences between AI chatbots and human support agents in a context characterized by complex buying processes. A conceptual model, based on previous research was created to understand which factors that affects customer satisfaction. To investigate the purpose of the thesis, three focus groups were then used to collect qualitative data. The analysis of the discussion revealed differences in the experiences of between AI and human support agent. The two most significant findings explained how previous research lacked understanding of how customers perceive time efficiency and the reasoning behind the perception of how AI chatbots lacked emotions and empathy. One conclusion was that both AI chatbots and human support agents can be beneficial, but customers prefer human support agents in complexed buying process due to their ability to be responsive and understanding. Thus, this thesis has contributed to a better understanding of what customers believe affects their customer satisfaction the most.

Keywords:

Customer Satisfaction, Customer Service, Artificial Intelligence, Chatbot, Human Support Agent, Customer Service Life Cycle, SERVQUAL

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1. Introduction

The world is evolving, and it becomes clear when you think about how mobile phones from the 90s with green screens, formed like a brick feels ancient. In a short period of time technology has become an integral part of our lives and scientists are constantly striving to make technology smarter than humans, and they are getting closer and closer. The first building block to what we know today as artificial intelligence (AI) was introduced by Claude Shannon. He developed a remote-controlled mouse that could navigate through a course, and the mouse could remember the path afterwards. It may seem remarkable, but this technique was developed seven decades ago, and AI has come a long way since then (Roser, 2022).

Rapid advances in AI technology within the fields of image-recognition, language understanding and reading comprehension makes it possible to use AI in a wide range of domains (Roser, 2022). Opening your phone with Face ID, a fast google search or getting recommendations on Netflix are things most of us have encountered and all of the things include some sort of artificial intelligence (European parliament, 2020). AI systems have reached a high degree of reliability and accuracy which have led to that we today trust AI to determine whether someone is suitable to receive a loan from the bank or if someone is suitable to get hired for a job. Therefore, it is no surprise that companies now have started to integrate AI systems in form of chatbots in their customer service online. A chatbot is a computer program made to simulate a human by interacting with customers through messaging platforms or websites. The programs used in online retail can assist its user in multiple areas like provide product information, engage in conversations regardless of what time it is, but it can also guide customers through their purchases online (Watts et al., 2022).

AI with its current functionality can replace human employees in many different industries, including the customer service industry. More companies have started to integrate AI chatbots as their solution to customer service issues instead of human employees. Even though research shows that customers usually prefer humans over AI solutions as chatbots lack the human touch (Sidlauskiene et al., 2023). According to Chen et al., (2021) one of the main reasons that companies are starting to integrate chatbots more into online retailing is because they are more efficient. Unlike a human support agent, chatbots can be available 24 hours a day and does not need to take any breaks. According to Paycor (2022) one of the biggest costs for companies operating in the retail industry is labor costs. Therefore, cost becomes a vital part of companies'

decision about which type of customer support to use. Many companies are cost-conscious and therefore tend to choose the solution that is cheapest to integrate. But even though it seems like AI chatbots are cost efficient, can they create the same level of customer satisfaction as human employees, especially when it comes to more complex buying processes. A complexed buying processes is characterized by a high involvement purchase and when the customer is forced to a higher level of cognitive effort (Mützel, 2017).

According to Ruan and Mezei (2022) companies have already taken a stand in the question. In Ruan and Mezei's (2022) study made on the service company T-mall, 98% of all the customers who were assisted on any of the websites that they are active on were assisted by AI chatbots. This proves that some companies are already choosing to use AI chatbots instead of human support agents. The fact that 98 percent of the customers were assisted by AI opens up for concerns around the world. AI chatbots efficiency makes humans afraid of losing their jobs to artificial intelligence robots. This will be further discussed in the problematization as increased unemployment may become a problem all over the world (Rostron, 2024).

1.1 Problematization

Generating high customer satisfaction has always been a main goal for many companies. One decisive factor in achieving that goal is to provide the customer with great support in their buying process. Humans have for a very long time managed the job of increase the customer satisfaction by providing high quality customer service, but in recent years AI chatbots have been integrated in the role and have been replacing humans as support agents in a larger scale. According to Ruan and Mezei (2022) AI chatbots have the ability to provide customers with great service by being capable of giving the customer valuable information throughout their purchases.

Ruan and Mezei (2022) explains that there is a risk of AI taking over more and more jobs that humans are currently doing. But there are people who have a different view on the problem with AI increasing unemployment. NVIDIA's CEO H, Jensen, (personal communication, 19th March 2024) said in an interview "AI is not going to take your job, but the people who uses AI will take your job", and for this reason it is important for both companies and employees to understand how AI can generate customer satisfaction. By understanding why and how AI can create higher customer satisfaction companies can use the information to utilize their resources and improve their customer support in the best way possible.

According to Rostron (2024) AI could take over more than 300 000 000 jobs from human employees in the future, and human support agents in customer service are included. By replacing human support agents with AI chatbots companies are not only at risk for losing customer satisfaction, but they are also opening up for receiving critic from the public saying that they do not care for their human employees. Kelly (2024) also explains that workers who are starting to see AI being implemented at their workplace are experiencing a high level of fear of one day losing their job. The feeling of fear can according to Kelly (2024) lead to increased stress and mental illness at the workplace. Roston (2024) found that many people are against using AI simply because they are taking our jobs. This means that many customers have a bad view of AI chatbots from the begging, resulting in that AI chatbots generates a lower customer satisfaction simply because they are AI.

According to Ruan and Mezei (2022), AI chatbots lack the capability of engaging emotionally with customers in the way that a human can. They continue by describing that even though chatbots have a good data base of information supporting them when explaining a product, emotional interactions cannot be pre-programed in the same way. According to Liljander and Strandvik (1997), the ability to express emotions when engaging with customers have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. This means that the degree of emotions that a chatbot lacks could have a negative effect on customer satisfaction in online retailing. Therefore, it is important to study the effect of emotions and responsiveness that Liljander and Strandvik (1997) explains in their study.

Cengiz (2010) explains the importance of being able to measure and fully understand customer satisfaction. Cengiz (2010) also concluded that it is just as important to measure customer satisfaction created by human support agents as the satisfaction created by AI chatbots. Today, there is a lack of knowledge on how to compare AI chatbots and human support agents, and in order for companies to be able to decide whether to choose human support agents or AI chatbots as customer service support agents it is important for companies to understand the main differences between the two. Therefore, this paper will aim to analyze and compare AI chatbots with human support agents from a customer perspective to further understand the differences and the impact they have on customer satisfaction. In order to investigate the differences between the two and reveal how high capacity they possess, this study will be characterized by complexed buying processes. Complexed buying processes have a higher demand on customer support since the customers need more exigent help (which will be further explained in chapter 2.2.1.). Understanding how AI and human support agents navigate through these complexities

will provide insights regarding their efficiency when supporting customers. According to Mützel (2017), research about how customers react and interact with customer support in complex buying processes is lacking in many areas, which makes further research on the topic of importance.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore how customers experience different factors created by customer service affects customer satisfaction. This with a focus directed towards chat forums and perceived differences between AI chatbots and human support agents in a context characterized by complex buying processes.

1.3 Research question

Which type of support agent, human support agent or AI support agent, can deliver the greatest customer satisfaction according to customers, in complex buying processes?

2. Theoretical background

To understand the difference between humans and AI chatbots in complex buying processes, this chapter will provide an overview of relevant aspects to the subject. Relevant theories and concepts like customer satisfaction and customer service will be explained and the existing research within the field will be presented in a conceptual model in the end of this chapter.

2.1 Customer satisfaction in online retail

Over the last decade, there has been a shift in our buying behaviors. Nowadays, most people prefer to buy products online rather than from a physical store. The change is due to the reason that customers can reduce their short-term decision-making efforts online but also due to the fact that there are a greater range of products available. A greater range of products available leads to increased competition on the market, and it also becomes more difficult to differentiate the core product. Therefore, the importance of a well-functioning customer service system has increased as it is instead the services surrounding a product that can differentiate a company from another (Ali & Top, 2021).

Customer satisfaction is a term frequently used in the field of online retail. However, researchers have still not agreed on one clear and consistent definition, nor what should be seen as factors affecting customer satisfaction. Saadah and Ying (2020) defined customer satisfaction as “the customer’s judgment about the internet retail experience” meanwhile Ali and Top (2021) defined customer satisfaction as a measurement that measures different levels of expectation between a company’s product and the customers expectation. But customer satisfaction is important for companies to create regardless of what definition you use. Companies that operate in the online retail industry is facing one significant problem that do not exist when the customer visits a physical store and that is the physical distance and lack of face-to-face interaction. This problem is often described as para-social distance and is one of the most critical barriers that companies need to overcome (Ali & Top 2021; Ayanso & Lertwachara 2016). By offering a high level of interactivity created by usage of contemporary technologies online retailers will be able to create a rich environment that can enhance the customer service. This will help the customer to make a purchase decision which means that the most important aspect of developing a website is for online retailers to ensure a positive experience by implementing relevant features and functionalities. Ayanso and Lertwachara

(2016) found that by making the experience great, companies will be able to establish a long-term relationship with its customers.

2.1.1 Factors affecting customer satisfaction

Ali and Top (2021) have defined five different customer service qualities that affects customer satisfaction and that is reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibility. These five factors are part of a model called the SERVQUAL model. The name consists of two words, service and quality, and the aim of the model is to assist retail companies when estimating consumer expectations and perceptions of service quality, but also to pinpoint areas that requires attention within companies' customer service. Reliability is the first factor, and it is referring to the ability to perform a promised service dependably and accurately (Parasuraman et al., 1988). This factor is proven to create the feeling of trust and research made by Ali and Top (2021) showed that trust and satisfaction are closely related. Saadah and Ying (2020) agreed with the findings that trust is closely related to customer satisfaction and further explains that it is important for companies to show that they care for their products and employees as well since it can translate to caring for customers as well. The second factor is responsiveness which is the ability to create service with high quality regardless of the customer's interest. Great communication, being fast and providing the customer with right answers increases customer satisfaction and loyalty (Ali & Top, 2021). Baier and Stüber (2010) found a positive correlation between individual recommendations and customer satisfaction in their study which supports responsiveness as a factor affecting customer satisfaction.

Empathy is the third factor in the SERVQUAL model, and it is referring to the service being caring and understanding of the customers problem. Moving on to assurance which is the ability to be inspiring and for the service to be confident in its knowledge. The last factor is tangibility which is referring to quality of physical facilities and equipment for example (Ali & Top, 2021; Parasuraman et al, 1988). Tangibility will however be excluded from this study due to the reason that the focus is on online retail making it impossible for companies to offer tangibility in their online customer service.

Even though the SERVQUAL model covers many of the aspects affecting customer satisfaction there are still other factors to consider. Chen et al. (2021) pointed out that customer satisfaction is created by extrinsic values and intrinsic values. Extrinsic value is created when customer service help the customer save time, and intrinsic value is achieved by evoking feelings like accomplishment, confidence, and enjoyment in the customer. Ba and Johansson (2008) defined

the feelings evoked with intrinsic value as perceived ease of use meaning that it is the feeling of functionality and usability that creates customer satisfaction. Ruan and Mezei (2022) added on to the discussion about functionality by explaining that the ability to describe a product in a way that corresponds to reality also determines the level of created customer satisfaction in the end. Kvale et al. (2020) took the discussion one step further about functionality by adding on yet another aspect of functionality and that is problem-solving motivation. Problem solving motivation can be shown by the amount of information that a company provides its customer with on the website, but it can also be shown when the customer chooses to interact with the company by contacting their customer support system (Ballantine, 2005).

Ruan and Mezei (2022) have explained that there is one more factor that we cannot escape no matter what we do and that is waiting time. This component is part of the customer's experience regardless of whether it takes place online or in stores. Djelassi et al. (2018) declared that waiting time or perceived waiting time affects customer dissatisfaction or satisfaction significantly. This also includes response time towards information requirement, meaning that a customer's perception of time when waiting for response from the support agent also will affect the customer's satisfaction. Ruan and Mezei (2022) continued by suggesting that a customer's tolerance of waiting depends on the motive of the purchase.

2.1.2 Summary of factors affecting customer satisfaction.

Table 1 presents a summary of eight overarching factors that have been previously discussed. All the factors are created in relation between customer service and customers and the factors can also affect customer satisfaction as explained earlier.

Table 1*Factors affecting customer service*

Factors	References
Time efficiency	Chung et al., 2020
	Ruan & Mezei, 2022
	Djelassi et al., 2018
Reliability and trust	Ali & Top, 2021
	Parasuraman et al, 1988
Assurance	Ali & Top, 2021
	Parasuraman et al, 1988
Responsiveness	Ali & Top (2021)
	Chen et al. (2021)
	Baier & Stüber (2010)
Empathy and Emotions	Ali & Top (2021)
	Parasuraman et al, 1988
Functionality	Ruan & Mezei (2022)
	Ballantine, P.W. (2005)
	Ba and Johansson (2008)
	Chen et al. (2021)
Usability	Ali & Top (2021)
	Ba and Johansson (2008)

2.1.3 Outcomes of creating customer satisfaction

By creating customer satisfaction companies enables for building a long-lasting relationship with the customer. This means that if customers are satisfied with the service that they receive, the chance of them coming back for re-purchases in the future increases making profit and financial winnings one positive outcome of focusing on creating customer satisfaction (Ali & Top 2021; Chen et al 2021; Ruan & Mezei 2022; Saadah & Ying 2020). Research have also shown that customer satisfaction results in customers being willing to pay a more premium price given reassurance of great customer service. The creation of customer satisfaction can also lead to positive reviews online (which was highlighted as of importance in the beginning of this chapter) which later on can create a form of beneficial word of mouth. If companies do not manage to create customer satisfaction all of these positive outcomes will be reversed, and the company could face critical problems that in a worst-case scenario can lead to bad reputation and the company being forced to shut down (Saadah & Ying, 2020).

2.2 Customer behavior and decision-making processes online

Online retail has made it possible to access a big range of products from all over the world at any time. This has led to that consumers are often required to choose among several alternatives. According to Dhar and Nowlis (2004), a typical purchase entails making three types of decisions. The first decision a customer has to make is whether or not to buy the product that they have in mind. The decision can be regarding a simple yes or no question, but it can also be more complex than that. The second question occurs when a customer is faced with a great variation of similar products which means that the purchase requires more thought about which features and attributes the customer values or need the most. Lastly, customers must decide on where he/she is going to buy the product. The most common solution to this question is that the customer chooses a company that he/she already has been in contact with. Dhar and Nowlis (2004) further found that the order in which the questions appear may vary depending on the purchase situation.

The answers to the questions above are depending on our buying behavior (Dhar & Nowlis, 2004). Consumer buying behavior is influenced by two factors: individual and environmental factors. The individual factors are things that affect our buying behavior based on who we are, where we come from and what our needs and knowledge are from the beginning. Environmental factors are often things that we cannot influence ourselves. It can be factors culture and ongoing trends, for example (Shanka, 2013). This means that we all have different buying behaviors and

decision-making processes. As mentioned earlier, it is important for companies to understand what their customers' needs in order to provide the best customer service possible whether it is reassurance from a human or systematic information from an AI chatbot (Ali & Top, 2021; Chen et al., 2018). Therefore, it is of relevance for companies to understand how the decision-making process looks like for their general and most common customer to ensure that the right decision about what kind of customer service to use is made.

2.2.1 Complexed buying processes

A complexed buying processes includes the three choices explained earlier but it also involves higher levels of cognitive efforts as well. The level of complexity also increases with a wider range of product alternatives. Furthermore, evaluating and comparing products in complexed buying processes is more difficult due to that the product tend to have more attributes that are described in technical terms. Mützel (2017) used electronics as example of products involved in complexed buying processes and continued by explaining that customers often must rely on experts when making a purchase. The level of complexity has also increased due to rapid advances in technology. Today customers tend to guess future developments of products making it harder to make a decision on when to purchase a product since they fear that their choice will become obsolete in a short period of time (Mützel, 2017).

2.3 Customer Service

According to Ali and Top (2021), one of the most important parts of a successful business is the customer service ability to support, and with different functions ensure that the customer feels satisfied when interacting with a company. The core purpose of customer satisfaction is to build and maintain relationship, trust, and commitment towards the customers. A big part in the customer satisfaction creation process is helping customer with their questions, concerns, and issues. Helping customers with their problems can be done in multiple ways, including answer inquiries, provide product information, or offer guidance on how to use a product (Ali & Top, 2021).

Today, technology plays an important role in customer service. Companies uses various digital tools to enhance the ease of contacting their customer service to please their customers need and increase their customers satisfaction. Artificial intelligence is one of the most relevant factors for the evolution of customer service and will be further discussed in this part of the report. Before any sort of technology entered the picture, customer service was based on human-

to-human interactions. These interactions later changed and with the revolution of internet and new technologies it became a human-to-human interaction online. This type of support is provided by a so-called human support agent. A human support agent is still a human but there is no face-to-face contact involved. The communication between customer and the support is instead done via chat forums on companies' websites (Reis, 2024).

The evolution of customer service does not end with the development of human support agents online. AI chatbots, short for Artificial Intelligence chatbots, are computer programs designed to simulate human conversation through text or speech have entered the field of customer service. AI utilize various technologies, including natural language processing and machine learning algorithms, to understand and respond to user inquiries. According to Alpaydin (2021) machine learning is algorithms designed to replicate human intelligence by assimilating knowledge from the environment that the programs are used in. In the field of online retail, chatbots are constantly learning from their interactions with customers which makes the chatbots better every day. They absorb and learn human behavior simply by interacting with humans. However, according to Ruan and Mezei (2022), AI chatbots are still only able to work as a substitute for human support agents since they still lack the ability to interact with customers the same way that a human support agent can.

Today, chatbots can handle a wide range of tasks like providing information and answering questions to help the customers choose the right product for their needs. In the context of online retail, AI chatbots serve as a virtual assistant, aiding customers throughout their purchase journey. They are integrated into online websites to provide support on product inquiries, delivery status, return policies, and website navigation (Ruan & Mezei, 2022). According to Chen et al. (2021), AI chatbots are mainly used in online retail to replace the role of a human support agents. Therefore, their main goal is to act as one and the reason is because it is believed to enhance customer satisfaction. But AI chatbots are not only used by companies due to their effectivity and ability to satisfy customers. Adamopoulou and Moussiades (2020), mentioned that companies mainly use chatbots to reduce labor costs.

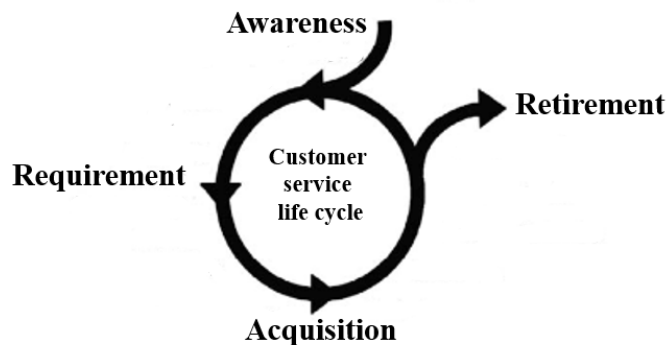
According to Ruan and Mezei (2022) today's chatbots are still lacking in some areas and are for example not capable of handling emotions and fully express themselves as well as human support agents. The lack of not communicating with emotions affects customer satisfaction negatively and this problem will not be solved for a long time due to the difficulties with programming an AI to act with human emotions. Ruan and Mezei (2022) also mentioned

drawbacks with AI chatbots compared to human support agents. AI chatbots lack the ability to describe an augmented product, meanwhile a human support agent can describe and imagine different areas of uses. AI chatbot will be very limited by the information that it is given about how the product is supposed to be used and will not “think outside of the box”.

2.3.1 Customer service life cycle

In order for companies to provide their customers with the best customer service possible it becomes important to understand what the customer actually needs and wants. “*The customer service life cycle*” (CSLC) is a framework that explains different stages that a customer passes through during a purchase, but it also explains what kind of customer services that is needed along the way to ensure a high degree of customer satisfaction (Ayanso & Lertwachara, 2015). Chen et al., (2018) found that CSLC enables for companies to think more creative about how to integrate technologies to their website in order to enhance customer satisfaction. The framework is meant to work as a set of guiding principles for companies trying to implement information technologies in order to enhance their customer service (Ayanso & Lertwachara, 2015). Another important aspect that Chen et al. (2018) pointed out is that the CSLC framework is closely related to other established marketing concepts and models like the buying funnel for example. The buying funnel explains the process that customers follow while making a purchase and since these two models are closely related, they complement each other which makes the CSLC framework easier to understand and make sense of.

The framework consists of four primary stages: requirements, acquisition, ownership, and retirement (Figure 1). However, with newer technology and new features it has been discovered that the framework cannot longer be applied, and retail websites do not longer fit into these categories as physical stores does. Therefore, the framework has been modified into a framework called “*The modified customer service life cycle*” (mCSLC) and it is the modified version that will be used in this studie. The main difference is that the ownership stage has been removed in the mCSLC framework and a stage called awareness have been added instead in order for the framework to work in aspects of both physical stores and in online retail (Ayanso & Lertwachara, 2015).

Figure 1*Customer service life cycle*

Note: This model illustrates the four different stages in the customer service life cycle.

Retrieved from: Ayanso, A., & Lertwachara, K. (2015). Analyzing Customer Service Technologies for Online Retailing: A Customer Service Life Cycle Approach. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 55(4), 73–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2015.11645789>

The first stage that a customer passes through in their journey of a purchase is the awareness stage. This stage is meant to gain the customers attention and raise awareness around the company and their offerings. Website functionalities that companies commonly implement in this stage is daily specials, email circulars, affiliate websites and mobile application advertisements. The second stage in the context of online retail refers to website functionalities that aims to establish a need for a product in the customer’s mind. For support agents, assisting and recommending product attributes that matches the customers’ needs and wants is essential and the most crucial part of this stage (Ayanso & Lertwachara, 2015).

All of the stages are important in the mCSLC framework for companies, but this stage can be seen as the most important one in many scenarios. Online services that help customers place orders, pay and obtain the product is the main areas. To maintain this stage, it is important for companies to develop efficient systems regarding inventory checkups, payment methods and systems for order confirmations for example. The last stage is the last one and the focus is directed towards services after the customer has placed an order. The retirement stage is dependent on website functionalities that help customers dispose, return, cancel or trade the product that they have purchased (Ayanso & Lertwachara, 2015).

2.3.2 Summary of the customer service life cycle

With help of the mCSLC framework, Ayanso and Lertwachara (2015) were able to prove that online sales are positively related to the requirement, acquisition, and retirement stages. The requirement and retirement stages are also positively related to website traffic and the awareness stage makes sure that customers know about the company. Chen et al. (2018) did similar research and investigated if online customer services could improve customer satisfaction. The result showed that customer services help to improve store traffic and revenue performances making the mCSLC framework more credible and understandable. Making sure that all of the stages work efficient is a key element to ensure that a company succeed with its customer service. Website functionalities have also been proven to reduce the para-social distance between companies and their customers which helps companies establish a long-term relationship with the customers (Ayanso & Lertwachara, 2015).

Even though the mCSLC framework is covering many of the important aspects of customer service in online retail there is still parts missing from the framework. Liang and Lai's (2002) study showed that web-design affects the customer purchase decision and customer satisfaction which not included in the framework for example. Due to para-social distance many companies in the online retail industry rely on online features and functionalities to interact with customers (Ali & Top 2021; Ayanso & Lertwachara 2016; Liang & Lai 2002).

2.4 Conceptual framework

To understand the process of creating customer satisfaction a conceptual model was created which can be found in figure 2. The model is based on factors that a company needs to take into consideration from a customer's perspective when choosing their customer service strategy to ensure that a company's customer service creates a high degree of customer satisfaction.

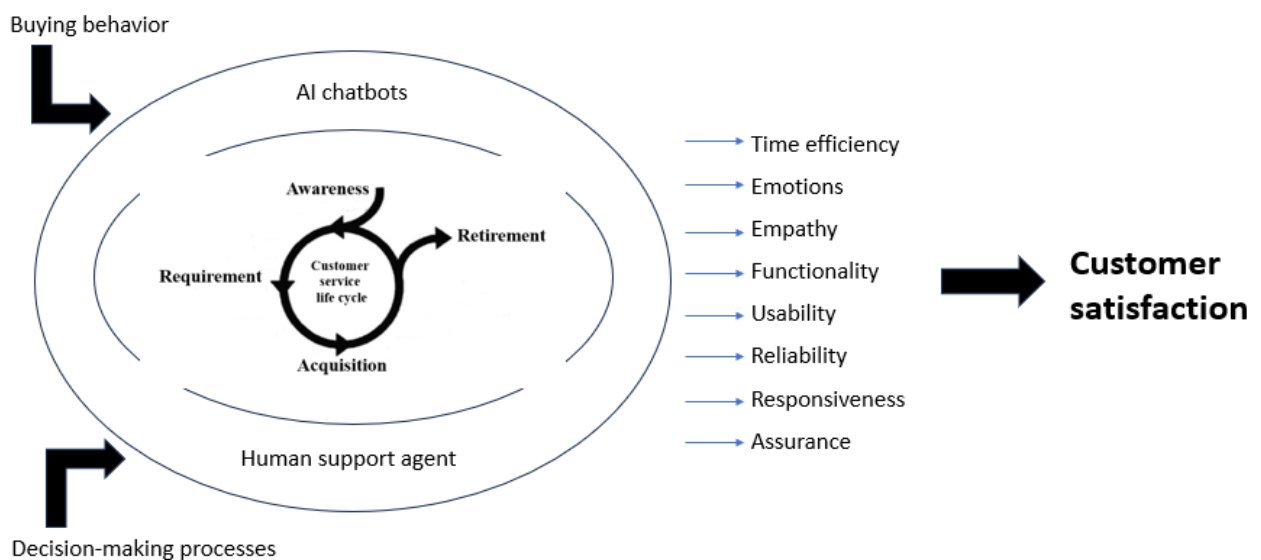
The model consists of four main parts. The first part is connected to the customers' mind and their buying behavior and decision-making processes. This part is beyond the companies' control and is affected solely by how the customer act and behave (Dhar & Nowlis, 2004; Shanka, 2013). Moving on to part two and the circles that consists of things that the company can control and make decisions about. The outer circle regards decisions about what type of support agent to integrate as customer service.

It is not until companies have understood their customer's behavior that they can enter the circle and choose what type of service to offer their customers. This is due to the reason that AI

chatbots and human support agents are superior at different things which this means that a company need to adapt the type of support according to what the customer value the most in order to create satisfaction (Ruan & Mezei, 2021). When a company has decided on a customer service strategy, a plan on how human support agents or AI chatbots can be implemented into the different stages of the customer service life cycle need to be developed. This is part three of the model and it is also of importance to point out that the choice of strategy does not have to be one or the other. The most beneficial solution can be a mix where chatbots handle certain parts of the mCSLC framework and human support agents' other parts. It depends on what the customer needs within the different steps of the mCSLC and what matches their customers behavior and decision-making processes, which also means that the optimal response will differ between industries. But it can also depend on the level of how advanced the buying process is within the industry. It is depending on how well the company handles the implementation of customer service strategies that results in the various factors that ultimately have a direct impact on customers satisfaction. Eight factors were identified to have a direct impact on customer satisfaction and the degree of satisfaction is then dependent on how well a support agent can communicate and achieve the eight different factors.

Figure 2

Conceptual model



Note: conceptual model that explains different factors in the process of creating customer satisfaction in online retail.

3. Method

In this chapter, the thesis's methodology will be presented. Epistemological assumptions, research approach, design, strategy, and choice of theory will all be discussed and presented. The choice of method for data collection and how the data have been analyzed will also be explained and justified. In the end of this chapter, trustworthiness and the ethical aspect of the study will be discussed.

3.1 Research philosophy

Interpretivism is built on subjectivity and the aim with this approach is to understand human behavior through social science methods. This means that words and experiences are highlighted as relevant data rather than quantification that comes with analyzing research with natural science methods (Bryman & Bell, 2017). Since the purpose of this paper is to understand how customers perceive and experience different decisive factors that creates customer satisfaction, interpretivism is the most relevant philosophy. The goal is to understand what the customer needs and prefers when it comes to customer service in complex buying processes, making words and expressions relevant to analyze.

3.2 Research approach

The deductive approach is used when testing a theory or when trying to confirm existing knowledge. This means that the aim is not to contribute with new theory but rather strengthen existing theory by for example applying it in new context. Therefore, a deductive approach can be considered to be a part of this study since the starting point is existing theories and knowledge of how customer satisfaction is created and its relation with customer service (Bryman & Bell, 2017). The aim of this study was not to contribute with new theory but rather to strengthen current knowledge by applying it into a new context. Customer satisfaction connected to customer service is a well observed and researched subject with already established theories, models and frameworks. However, newer technologies such as AI could have changed certain elements which means that new insights could be found to further explain or to strengthen existing knowledge. The current knowledge could also be strengthened by applying it into new context. Therefore, it was decided to apply existing theory into a new context where it had not previously been investigated and in this case, complexed buying processes.

3.3 Research method

When collecting data, it is important to create a basis that provides the opportunity to answer the chosen research question (Lind, 2019). This study is based on an interpretivist philosophy which usually means that a qualitative research approach is best suited. Qualitative research methods aim to describe complex conditions with multiple issues making it a match for the purpose of this study (Denscombe, 2018). Qualitative methods are also usually explained as being used to understand social interactions and social phenomena. This means that the method does not aim to measure how much or how many, but instead the goal is to be able to explore things that cannot be described in numbers (Rennstam & Wästerfors, 2016).

There are several advantages with qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are for example being categorized as flexible and adjustable during the research process (Bryman & Bell, 2017). We consider customer satisfaction to be a complexed phenomenon due to its complexed creation process where many different factors are involved. This made it important for us to have the option to be flexible and change our method if any problems occurred. However, there are also some disadvantages with a qualitative approach, one of them being that it is difficult to achieve validity since the method is based on collecting more in-depth data (Bryman & Bell, 2017).

3.4 Data collection

There are several different methods linked to a qualitative research approach (Lind, 2019). Interviews, observations, and focus groups are all examples of data collection methods in qualitative research, but after analyzing different methods it was concluded that interviews or focus groups were the best suited strategy given the purpose and research question of this study. The main goal is to understand how customers feel and experience different factors created by customer service and how it affects their customer satisfaction. It is therefore important to enable for a discussion with the selected target group. Talking and especially listen to what the customer has to tell about the topic makes it possible for achieving the purpose with this study. After the two different methods were more closely examined, it was concluded that focus groups were most suitable for this study. This due to the reason that focus groups enables for understanding why people are feeling and thinking the way they are (Denscombe, 2018). In focus groups, there is also room for participants to explore and challenge each other's reasons for certain opinions by discussing different issues and topics. This means that opinions can expand or be modified as the participants gain new perspectives when hearing about other

participants experiences (Bryman & Bell, 2017). Both agreements and disagreement are important for the purpose this study, which is another reason to why focus groups are best suited for this study.

Another reason why focus groups are best suited for this study, is because it is qualitative research it is important to reach a high level of transferability. Because of our choice of participants with different demographics and backgrounds the transferability is increased. By including people with different backgrounds, the findings can be transferred to similar scenarios but in different settings. By using purposeful sampling techniques to select participants who have specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research question can provide deeper insights. This targeted approach can help to uncover nuances that may be applicable to similar contexts. (Bryman & Bell, 2017) However, the disadvantage with focus groups is that the moderators have a limited control over the conversation and discussion. Therefore, it is easier for the participant to end up talking about subjects irrelevant for the study, making it harder to analyze the data (Bryman & Bell, 2017). This could however be seen as an advantage in this study since it opens up for nuanced insights which could lead to relevant findings that previous research has not noted.

We chose to create three focus groups with 4-5 people in each group. According to Bryman and Bell (2017) a focus group must consist of at least four participants. Having smaller groups, enables for all of the participants to get their opinion heard and the discussion often tend to go into more depth in smaller groups. It is also easier to lose control of the conversation if the group consist of more than nine people making 4-5 participants reasonable for this study (Denscombe, 2018). The focus groups were carried out during the 5th, 8th, and 10th of May 2024 and all of the participant who had agreed to participate showed up. Dates, times and numbers of participants in each focus group could be found in table 2.

All of the participants had Swedish as their native language and the focus groups were therefore also carried out in Swedish to ensure that the participants could express themselves freely without a language barrier. The discussions were also audio recorded and were later transcribed.

Table 2*Summary of focus group*

GROUP	DATE	TIME	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
1	5/5-24	11.15-12.05	4
2	8/5-24	11.00-11.40	5
3	10/5-24	18.00-18.35	5

3.4.1 Participants selection

Focusing on a sample of the population is a strategic decision that has as its basic principle to produce reasonably accurate findings without having to collect data from the entire population. Furthermore, we have used an exploratory sampling strategy which is characterized by small-scale research projects where there is a greater probability of including interesting, extreme and unusual examples. (Denscombe, 2018). The more detailed technique for our sample is based on a mix of what defines quota- and convenience sampling. We created a requirement profile that included various criteria that we considered important to ensure that the most rewarding data possible was conducted. Selecting people who meet specific criteria is linked to quota sampling. But in order to find these people, we turned to people close to us which belongs to the technique of convenience sampling (Denscombe, 2018).

As mentioned, our selection process began with us deciding on a requirement profile. The first requirement was to ensure that the people who participated had experience regarding customer service in a more complex buying process online. After investigating the topic of complex buying processes, we identified three different industries that we felt classified under the definition and the industries were electronics, furniture's and building materials. We believe that all of these industries can be classified as more complex since there is a higher demand placed on customer service as the customers' questions usually become more complicated which means that the answers must be more developed and often more personalized. Another important aspect that we wanted to achieve was that the participants had experienced the situation close in time to the interview. This was because we wanted the situation to be fresh in their minds. But at the same time, we wanted the participants to have had time to process the situation so that no important details were left out during the discussion. Therefore, it was decided that the incident should have occurred within the past six months. By ensuring that participants were of different genders, ages and that experiences varied across industries and

products we increased the transferability to different settings. A summary of the participants in each focus groups can be found in table 3.

We tried to get each group to contain at least one of each gender and to include different experiences within the group to increase the possibility for nuanced perspectives in each group (Table 3). The last aspect that we wanted to include to achieve a higher level of transferability was age. However, we did not choose to have different generations within the groups as a requirement. This were due to the reason that we wanted the participants in the groups to be somewhat familiar with each other which was complicated to achieve with different ages as a requirement. Denscombe (2018) describes that trust have been discovered to be a factor of success in focus groups due to the reason that it makes the participants more comfortable which in turn makes the participants more likely to speak freely

Table 3

Summary of participants

GROUP	GENDER	AGE	EXPERIENCE	STAGE IN MCSLC	PARTICIPANT
1	Female	47	Electronics		A
	Male	49	Electronics		B
	Male	55	Building materials		C
	Female	47	Furniture		D
2	Female	23	Building materials		E
	Female	22	Electronics/ Building materials		F
	Female	21	Electronics		G
	Male	23	Electronics		H
	Female	21	Electronics		I
3	Male	22	Electronic		J
	Female	22	Electronics		K
	Female	21	Electronic		L
	Male	21	Electronics		M
	Female	23	Electronic		N

3.4.2 Focus group guide

The focus groups were carried out using a semi-structured interview guide as a basis (Appendix 1-2). The guide consists of seventeen main questions which is mainly based on reflection of one's own experiences and feelings about customer service. We started the focus group conversation by asking the first two questions to get all the participants to talk to each other and say at least one thing each. Therefore, these two questions could be seen as meant to work as an ice breaker. After that, we chose to present the two cases for the participants to analyze. The cases were created by typing in frequently asked questions to different companies' customer services within the same industry. The questions were asked to companies' customer service in a chat forum and the main difference is that one was controlled and operated by an AI system in the form of a chatbot and the other one by a human support agent. The purpose of the cases was to create a discussion about what the participants thought about customer service, regardless of whether it is operated by an AI chatbot or a human support agent. This means that the idea was that biased views from previous experiences should not influence the discussion in the beginning of the interview to analyze customers initial thoughts about the help that they could have received in reality.

After the cases, two questions followed where the participants discuss their own experiences related to customer service in complex buying processes. The purpose of this is to awaken thoughts about what it can be like when you receive help and how you experience it. After the experiences have been shared among the participants, the idea is that the experiences will be analyzed based on the eight factors identified that affects customer satisfaction. This part includes one to three questions about each factor and additional following questions if anything is unclear. In the end, three general questions about customer satisfaction were asked to find potential gaps that could not be filled by the question asked specific about the factors. The purpose of the questions is to open up for participants to discuss customer service more freely and what affects the participants' customer satisfaction to ensure that no additional factor or similar has been missed.

3.5 Data analysis

All focus groups were recorded after receiving an approval by the participants. The data was then transcribed without any digital aid. The participants had different dialects which made it difficult for digital programs to pick up what some the participants were saying. Therefore, it was decided to do it by hand and by listening through, writing, pausing, and rewinding the

recordings to ensure that everything was part of the transcription even though it was time-consuming. When we then got familiar with the collected data, we realized that there was a lot of excess data that was irrelevant for our study. According to Bryman and Bell (2017) an overflow of data is a common problem with a qualitative approach and the data was therefore systematically coded to ease analysis. A thematic analysis is one of the most common ways to analyze quantitative data and it is concluded to be the best suited method for this study. The method is based on carefully reading the transcription and then divide the data into different recurring themes. This study is focusing on different factors that affect customer satisfaction, which made the different factors natural subheadings to base the coding on.

When the coding process began, different colors were used to identify the different factors in the discussions. Positive and negative aspects were also identified, positive aspects were highlighted in a lighter shade of the chosen color and negative aspects in a darker shade. We also wanted to divide what was said about AI chatbots and what was said about human support agents, and this was done by giving them labels. Even though the factors were divided into codes from the factors identified in the conceptual model we were open to identify new factors. In the end, no new factors were identified, but instead by analyzing our findings it was determined that certain factors were more suitable to be combined. In the end we ended up with 7 different themes, the factors, two aspects, positive and negative, and lastly two alternatives human support agents and AI chatbots.

3.6 Trustworthiness

According to Bryman and Bell (2017), there are two fundamental criteria's that determine the quality of qualitative research. The two building blocks when creating a study with quality are trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness consists of four sub-criteria; credibility, transferability; dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is achieved by the findings being presented consistent with what respondents have said (Bryman & Bell, 2017; Denscombe, 2018). Much time has been spent analyzing and understanding the empirical data which contributes to the study's credibility. To ensure that the results were interpreted correctly, respondent validation were also used, which also makes the credibility increase.

Transferability is the study's ability to achieve the same results and findings in a different context. This is achieved by clear and detailed descriptions on how the study was conducted (Bryman & Bell, 2017). The context of this study is relatively specific, which means that it may be difficult to transfer the findings to other contexts. However, the study is considered to

be well explained and transparent in the process of choosing method and approach making it possible to be transferable to contexts similar to this study. Dependability refers to the study's accessibility at other times. Other authors need to be able to use the material and knowledge for research in other situations (Bryman & Bell, 2017)). We have kept interview guides, recordings and transcripts available, which increases dependability. Lastly, confirmability is referring to the study being objective and not to involve personal thoughts and viewings (Bryman & Bell, 2017). We have tried to not be biased and only base the findings and the result on the participants thoughts. However, it is difficult not to have a thought about the topic regarding this study, which means that some of our own interpretation may have been biased without us realizing.

3.7 Limitations

There are some limitations with the methods used as mentioned earlier, convenient and quota sampling was used when choosing the participants. Through convenience selection, we only reach out to people in our vicinity, which saves time, but it also creates a limitation on who we can choose from. This can limit the transferability of a study. Different gender is reasonably distributed and different experiences regarding customer service could be presented in each focus group. However, even though the selection covers a large age range (21-55), there is a gap when it comes to participants in their 30s. The results are also limited as the sample only covers a small part of the population, which means that the findings of this study cannot be said to be transferred to the entire population and may not be transferable to every different demographic setting.

There is also another limitation in this study and that is that one stage of the customer service life cycle is excluded. It is the awareness stage, and it is due to the reason that this study focuses on chat forums mainly which is not a common strategy in the first stage which makes it reasonable to exclude.

4. Findings and results

In this chapter, empirical findings from the focus groups will be presented. Since the purpose of this paper is to explore how customers experience different factors created by customer service affects customer satisfaction, it is also these results that will form the basis for future discussion. In previous chapters, eight factors that affect customer satisfaction in customer service were identified and the findings regarding their affect will be presented. Secondly, findings regarding the overall attitude towards human support agents and chatbots in online customer service will be presented.

4.1 Customer service

During the focus groups, two different cases were presented that illustrated how answers can differ between an AI chatbot and a human support agent when asking the exact same question. Initially, the participants did not know which answer belonged to which support type. This opened up for a discussion about what was positive and negative about all the answers without any biased thoughts regarding AI or humans from before. The aim of the cases was to identify the participants initial insights and thoughts about the service that occurs in industries where complexed buying processes can occur. This also makes it possible to determine what benefits there are with AI chatbots and human support agents in practice. When the participants' discussion about the pros and cons of the answers was finished, the participants were asked to guess which answer belonged to an AI chatbot and a human support agent. This made it possible to analyze whether it is easy or difficult to identify differences and link it to a specific type of support in the aspect of a customer.

The findings from the cases are presented in tables 4 and 5 and it shows that the participants were able to identify positive and negative aspects in all the answers regardless of support type. However, more negative aspects were pointed out each time the answer was written by an AI chatbot. Words like unclear, flat and unpersonal kept returning during the interviews as adjectives to explain the answers. This is different from the words used as description for the answers given by human support agents. Instead, the most used adjectives were personal, responsive, and problem-solving motivated. The participants were also asked to try to identify and guess which answer belonged to which type of support agent. Most of the participants did this in case one without difficulty, but case two turned out to be a little more uncertain. Participant A in group one expressed this by saying, *“AI could probably be both answers in*

this case” and participant B continued by saying *“That’s kind of the purpose of it all, you shouldn’t know it’s a robot.”*

Table 4

Case 1 - Key findings

Type of support agent	Illustrative quotes	Perception of support agents
Answer one - human support agent	<i>“It is more detailed and takes into account what you are looking for”</i> - Group 1 participant B	<i>“Answer one is more directed. It is more personal, and I do not think AI can handle that”</i> – Group 1 participant A
Answer two – AI chatbot	<i>“Here it just makes it more unclear because here I get the link to the selection of the website's watches”</i> - Group 2 participant H <i>“So, it's not that you don't trust it, but it just feels very, very flat”</i> . – Group 3 participant J	<i>“Number one is human, and number two is AI”</i> – Group 2 participant E

Table 5*Case 2 – key findings*

Type of support agent	Illustrative quotes	Perception of support agent
Answer one – AI chatbot	<i>“It feels very programmed”- Group 2, participant G</i>	<i>“I think it is difficult to decide. AI could probably be both answers this times” – Group 1, participant A</i> <i>“That's kind of purpose of it all, that you shouldn't know it's a robot.”- Group 1 participant B</i>
Answer two – human support agent	<i>“The second gave the most relevant information for me” – Group 1 participant D</i>	

4.2 Time Efficiency

When discussing how important time efficiency in the groups, all three groups had similar views on human support agents and Ai chatbot agents. They said that the Ai chatbot is good for answering quick and simple question, for example delivery time and stock status, for these purposes the Ai chatbot was better, but when it was more complex question about products the time efficiency of an AI chatbot was worse than a human support agent. The reason for this according to the groups was that the AI chatbot could ask multiple questions and give answers that were not relevant to the questions, which resulted in that they ended up with a human support agent to get their answers, there for all of the participants agreed with Participant M and that human support agent was preferable when they had more complex questions about a product or service. However, an AI chatbot was preferable when they had quick questions about a product or a service.

Table 6*Time efficiency*

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbot	Positive	<p><i>“Then as we said before, if it's a, if it's a simpler issue that a bot can solve, then absolutely.” - Group 3 participant M</i></p> <p><i>“Well, they also remember more I guess” - Group 3 participant K</i></p>
	Negative	<p><i>“No, I don't really think so because I feel like this, usually I get an answer from the chatbot that doesn't help me. And then I still have to spend additional time contacting a human”. - Group 3 participant M</i></p>
Human support agent	Positive	<p><i>“Because if it can't solve the problem, it's just a waste of time, and then it will still take longer than it would have taken if I had talked to a human” - Group 2 participant I</i></p> <p><i>“If you ask a human, you probably get the answer straight away” - Group 2 participant E</i></p>
	Negative	

4.3 Emotions

When asking the groups about emotions their answers and views on emotions in customer support varied depending on the problem that they had. According to Participant J when it is a bigger problem it is good to have someone who understand and shows that they care, and the participant was then referring to a human support agent. But when it was a simpler issue, the emotions were not important according to participant L in group 3. The view of how AI chatbots did not have emotions was a commonly mentioned topic during the discussions, and most of the participants agreed with Participant B’s statement “...clearly an Ai without emotions”. When asking the participants about who shows the most empathy and emotions everyone in group 3 agreed on that it was the human support agent.

Table 7

Emotions

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbots	Positive	<p><i>“Because if it doesn't get solved then empathy won't matter at all”</i> Group 3 Participant J</p> <p><i>“If it's a quick question where I need a quick answer then maybe empathy and feelings are not that important”</i> Group 3 Participant L</p>
	Negative	<p><i>“As we've said before, if it's a bigger problem then it's clear that it's good to have someone who agrees and understands what I feel.”</i> Group 3 Participant J</p> <p><i>“... clearly an Ai without emotions”</i> Group 1 Participant B</p>
Human support agent	Positive	<p><i>“As we've said before, if it's a bigger problem then it's clear that it's good to have someone who agrees and understands what I feel.”</i> Group 3 Participant J</p>
	Negative	-

4.4 Empathy

The focus groups had very similar views when it comes to how the customer supports show empathy (table 8). There were no positive statements about AI and nothing negative said about human support agents. The groups agreed on that AI chatbots fully lack empathy and this was according to Participant J partly because they knew that it was AI and Participant J even mentioned that it would be weird to have a connection with AI. The groups all agreed on that human support agents were preferable when a customer seeks for empathy. Participant L said *“It’s good to have someone who agrees and understands what I feel”*, which everyone in group 3 agreed on.

Table 8

Empathy

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbot	Positive	-
	Negative	<i>“It was as I said before, it's impossible to feel a personal connection when you know it's an AI.”</i> Group 3 participant J
Human support agent	Positive	<i>“Yes. As we've said before, if it's a bigger problem then it's clear that it's good to have someone who agrees and understands what I feel.”</i> Group 3 participant L
		<i>“Regardless, a human still has more understanding”</i> Group 3 participant L
	Negative	-

4.5 Functionality

The view on functionality of the support agents were similar in all three groups (table 9), the AI chatbot was considered to be better for solving easier tasks when the participants only needed quick information about a product. The participants also agreed on that human support agents could give more personalized suggestions and information about product recommendations. According to the participants, AI could only provide general information about the products. Participant K explained that sometimes the answer could be considered irrelevant, and many other participants agreed that they have felt the same way when interacting with an AI. Participant B in group 1 also explained that the answer given by an AI chatbot could completely change if you switch out one word and continued to explain that this is why they are so hard to work with. This led to the participants in group 1 to agree on that the feeling of disliking AI is due to AI being AI.

Table 9

Functionality

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbot	Positive	<p>“...generally, why the product is good, I think.” Group 3 participant I</p> <p>“Well, the chatbot gives good information” Group 3 participant M</p>
	Negative	<p>“They give somewhat irrelevant answers” Group 3 participant K</p> <p>” But the answer can completely change if you switch out one word ” Group 1 Participant B</p>
	Positive	<p>“Because when you want to get something solved it is better to contact a real person instead of going back and forth with different messages” – Group 1 participant B</p>
Human	Negative	-

4.6 Usability

In the discussion about usability, similar answers emerged in all of the groups. The illustrative quotes chosen in table 10 illustrate answers that all of the participants agreed on. However, Group 1 focused more on usage itself which participant A concluded by saying *“Overall, I think it works well”* meanwhile group 2 and 3 ended up in a discussion about the ease of finding the chat forums on different websites. When asked about where to find the chat forums, all the groups agreed on that the most common way to find them is through a pop-up icon. Participant E in group 2 expressed that the chat forums are easy to find with a more positive mindset meanwhile participant G mean that they are almost too easy to find, and that it can create a feeling of annoyance if they pop up to often. Usability is also a factor that stands out as there are no differences between AI chatbots and humans support agents to be named. The findings are therefore only divided into positive and negative attitudes regarding chat forums in an overall perspective.

Table 10

Usability

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
	Positive	<i>“Overall, I think it works well”</i> – Group 1 participant A
		<i>“But they are still quite easy to find”</i> – Group 2 participant E
	Negative	<i>“...they pop up and then I don't want it and then I click it down and then it pops up again and then it goes on like that”</i> - Group 2 participant G

4.7 Reliability

At least one in each group said that reliability is one of the factors that can increase their customer satisfaction the most (table 11). Our findings suggest that the level of reliability regarding AI chatbot is dependent on how complex the problem is. The level of trust increases

as the complexity decreases. Participant D in group 1 explained that we are probably suspicious by nature and that if the answer comes from an AI chatbot the likelihood of wanting to double check is higher. This perception changes completely when looking at what participant G from group 2 says about the response from human support agents. G explains that reliability is taken for granted and G is under the assumption that the answers are real and correct when they are suggested by a human support agent.

Regarding the negative aspects when it comes to reliability, the answers from the participants are similar regardless of the type of service. Both participant J and K from group 3 explained that it is hard to trust the motives behind the service and that is regardless of type of support

Table 11

Reliability

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbot	Positive	<i>"It is absolutely not biased either"</i> Group 3 participant N
	Negative	<i>"I probably want to double-check the information I receive so that it really is correct. We are probably a little suspicious."</i> - Group 1 participant D <i>"You also don't know the purpose, if the bot itself wants to tell you what is best for you or what makes them, for example, make the most money."</i> – Group 3 participant J
Human support agent	Positive	<i>"I have probably never reflected on it like that, but I probably just take it for granted that I get answers that are real and correct."</i> – Group 2 participant G
	Negative	<i>"Humans can twist their answers so that you buy what they want, or what they get like money from"</i> Group 3 participant K

4.8 Responsiveness

The discussions about responsiveness showed that this is a factor that differs in the issue of AI chatbots and human support agents (Table 12). Participant A in group 1 explains that in a discussion with a chatbot, just a few misunderstandings are enough to create a feeling of dislike. Findings also showed that none of the participants believed there were anything positive to say about a chatbots ability to create the feeling of being responsive. The complete opposite occurred when the question was referring to human support agents. Most participants agreed on that chatbots lack the human touch and when explaining more exactly what the human touch is, responsiveness was described.

Table 12

Responsiveness

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbot	Positive	-
	Negative	<i>“It is enough with just a few mistakes in a conversation or if you feel that you are not understood to feel that no, this was not for me” -Group 1 participant A</i>
Human support agent	Positive	<i>“Sometimes you need to go outside of the box and maybe sometimes have an opinion, especially when it comes to slightly more complex goods.” -Group 1 participant B</i> <i>“Responsiveness is important because sometimes you can leave the chat or a conversation and feel what did we say. You may think that you have not really got the answers you wanted, in short that they are service oriented and that they really want to help you which they want in many cases” - Group 1 participant D</i>
	Negative	-

4.9 Assurance

Assurance is the last factor identified and findings when asking about how assurance shows that the participants experience is that AI chatbots and human support agents work differently when providing customers with assurance of a product (Table 13). Participant J in group 3 explains that AI chatbots reassures customers by providing arguments for the product in general. Participant M in the same group than goes on and says that a human support agent can argue for why you should buy this specific product meaning why the product will fit your specific needs. However, no negative aspects were identified when the issue of assurance was raised regarding human support agents. There was also no direct comment about limitations regarding AI chatbots and the subject except for the first part in Participant J's statement about them not being able to communicate a personal assurance.

Table 13

Assurance

Type of support agent	Attitude towards the factors impact	Illustrative quotes
AI chatbot	Positive	<i>"Maybe not personally, but more generally, why the product is good..."</i> - Group 3 participant J
	Negative	-
Human support agent	Positive	<i>"And then a human can go into, like, why you should buy this specifically?"</i> Group 3 Participant M
	Negative	-

5. Analysis and discussion

In this chapter, the empirical findings collected through the focus group will be analyzed and discussed. Interesting findings and insights will be discussed as well as comparing the findings with previous research.

5.1 Analysis of empirical findings

Firstly, the focus groups studied time efficiency and found that using a chatbot had the advantage of being available 24/7 for simple and straightforward questions such as delivery time and stock status. Participants found AI chatbots to be more time efficient compared to human support agents. AI chatbots quickly provided standardized responses to common questions, which aligned with the participant's need for rapid information retrieval in these scenarios. These findings were in accordance with Chen et al. (2021) and Ruan and Mezei (2022) research about time efficiency. However, despite the advantages, participants in the focus groups did not consider time efficiency as only receiving a fast response. The participants felt that in complex buying processes, the chatbot was a waste of time as it often failed to provide the right information, leading them to seek help from human support agents. Therefore, while speed is important, accuracy and relevance were equally crucial for time effectiveness which was according to the focus groups, not something that the chatbots could accomplish as well as a human support agent.

Secondly, after analyzing the responses given in the focus groups it became clear that the human support agent and the AI chatbot had different specialties. The human support agent was according to the participants more suitable when trying to reach time efficiency in complexed buying processes, meanwhile AI chatbots was considered to be fast and communicate useful information in less complexed buying processes. This contributed with valuable insights when comparing our findings to the study Chen et al., (2021) conducted. Chen et al. (2021) argued that AI chatbots were more time efficient regarding waiting time which this study partly agreed with. However, our findings suggested that it is not only about how fast the support can respond but rather how valuable the information given is to the customer and their needs.

Furthermore, the discussions in the groups, showed that emotions communicated by customer support could create customer satisfaction. Participants emphasized the importance of emotions depending on the complexity of the issue. For significant problems, many of the participants agreed on that support agents showing understanding and care were superior, which led to a

preference for human support agents capable of offering genuine empathy and emotional support. However, for simpler questions, efficiency and accuracy were prioritized over emotional connection. Another common theme in the discussions was the perception of AI lacking genuine emotions. Participants often referred to AI as lacking emotional understanding due to its programmed nature. Ruan and Mezei (2022) had the same understanding and explained that due to programming limitations, AI chatbots are currently unable to have real emotions. This perception was expressed by Participant B, whose statement “*clearly an AI without emotions*” resonated with many in the groups. Despite advancements in AI technology, a collective understanding of AI support agents operate on predetermined responses and algorithms remains. This was evident not only from participant’s former experiences but also by analyzing the discussion about to the two cases. When asked to compare empathy and emotional expression between human and AI support agents, the participants agreed that humans possess a higher degree of empathy and emotional depth. This recognition underscored the value placed on human interaction in customer support, particularly when navigating complex and emotionally charged situations. This was further strengthened by participant E who said “*It’s good to have someone who agrees and understands what I feel*”, which E said with human support agent in mind and everyone in group agreed. Future analysis regarding the topic revealed that if the problem was more complexed and emotionally engaging it become important for customer to feel that they were being understood. According to our findings, this was not something that the participants had experienced an AI chatbot being able to do.

Findings from the focus groups also indicated on differences between human support agents and AI chatbots when it comes to functionality. All three groups agreed on AI chatbots ability to quickly handle simple tasks and provide quick responses, were superior to humans. An example often mentioned during the focus groups was that the AI chatbot was good for giving general product information when asked for and this aligned with Ruan and Mezei’s (2022) view of chatbots. However, participants also recognized the limitations of AI when needed to offer personalized recommendations and guidance. This is an area where human support agents were considered superior. According to the participants, AI chatbot cannot function as well when they need to adapt to customer’s different needs. Another problem that was mentioned related to AI’s generalization was that it had a hard time giving the customer arguments on why they should buy or use a specific product.

The participants also expressed a variety of negative emotions associated with interactions with AI support agents. Participant K mentioned examples of receiving irrelevant responses from AI

chatbots, leading to evoke feelings like frustration and less satisfaction. This view was shared by many in the groups, which indicated on a common experience of less satisfaction with the AI's inability to give relevant information and understand what the customer is asking for. Furthermore, Participant B in Group 1 raised an issue regarding the sensitivity of AI adjusting to language nuances. Participant B explained that even a minor change in a sentence could drastically change the response from the AI chatbot, leading to confusion and difficulty in communication. This inconsistency was seen as a significant challenge when using AI support agents.

Usability is an overarching factor, but our findings indicated that it cannot be used when comparing AI and humans since there is no defined difference. The usability of online retail platforms is generally the same regardless type of support agent (Ruan & Mezei, 2022). The chat function is usually an icon on the website regardless of type of support. Therefore, usability could not be compared between human support agents and AI chatbots.

From the focus groups valuable information regarding differences in reliability between human and AI support agents could be found. According to Ali and Top (2021) reliability played an important role in the processes of creating as high of customer satisfaction as possible. The importance of reliability was also described by at least one participant in each focus group. This underscores the significant role that both human and AI agents play when delivering accurate and dependable solutions for customers. Furthermore, the findings from the focus groups indicated that the reliability of AI chatbots is linked to the complexity of the problem that the customer has. Trust in AI tends to increase as problem complexity decreases, suggesting that users are more likely to rely on AI for simpler tasks but may not rely on chatbots when faced with more complex issues. But there were no indication of customers experiencing more or less trust regardless of complexity when humans were discussed. The participants perceived a higher level of trust if the responses were from a human agent, assuming that humans would be reliable and more correct when providing information.

Moreover, there was a high level of mistrust when it came to AI generated responses. Participant D highlighted this, arguing that suspicion towards AI responses lead to that they often had to double check the information given with another source. Which indicated that the customer did not fully trust the information given by AI chatbots. This indication aligned with findings regarding functionality and that AI often gives very general information. However, our findings also showed that some of the participants in Group 3 did not trust any kind of service

provider fully. The effect of profit margins was mentioned due to their former experience as salespersons. They explained that they were afraid that the support would be biased towards the products that made the company the most money. However, they continued to explain that they did not worry as much when interacting with a human support agent.

Ali and Top (2021) and Ruan and Mezies (2022) claimed that AI chatbots lack the ability to communicate the so-called human touch. Ali and Top (2021) explained the human touch as the ability to relate and understand the customer that the support is trying to help by being responsive. The participants from the focus groups expressed their frustration when interacting with a chatbot that is not able to understand their problem by saying that a few mistakes or misunderstandings are enough to create the feeling of dislike and frustration. A word that kept appearing in the discussions were personal. Further discussion about what personal actually is showed that it is a matter of customers' ability to identify answers that were more general which created the feeling of their problems being seen as non-important and that their personal needs were ignored. By analyzing the responses in the focus groups, an interesting pattern was discovered that showed that the participants who had received "bad service" according to their experiences, was created by lack of responsiveness from the support agent. Responsiveness as a decisive factor was also proven by our study to be one of the factors that most participants thought could create the greatest negative impact on their customer satisfaction. This negative impact suggest that need for responsiveness is one of the most significant factor to consider for companies in the choice of customer service type in order to create a high level of customer service.

Assurance was described as the ability to appear confident in one's knowledge in order to ensure the customer that they are making the right choice (Ali & Top, 2021; Parasuraman, 1988). However, our findings indicate that assurance is a part of reliability rather than a factor by itself. This since the participants explained that assurance makes the answer more trustworthy and reliable. The participants also explained that assurance can be communicated in two ways. The support agent can present two different types of arguments to convince the customer that they are making the right choice. Our research also showed that the first type of argument a support agent can use is factual arguments. Factual arguments are focusing on facts regarding the product. Participant J in group 3 explained that AI chatbots often uses factual arguments when explaining why a specific product is superior to another product. Participant M than goes on and further explained that human support agent prefers to explain why a specific product is right for you, which means that they are more likely to use value arguments. Further analysis

of the discussion revealed that humans can communicate both factual and value arguments while AI seems to be incapable of communicating any sort of value argument according to the participants. Ali and Top (2021) and Saadah and Ying (2020) have explained that trust and satisfaction are closely related which also become clear during the discussions regarding assurance within the focus groups. Some of the participants questioned the motive that drives AI chatbots and human support agents. A common perception about the motive behind both AI chatbots and human support agents were financial margins according to our findings. This suspicion increases the importance for support agents to communicate assurance when suggesting a product that they believe will fit the customers need.

6. Summary of thesis and conclusions

In this chapter, a summary of the thesis will be presented as well as conclusions about AI chatbots and human support agents controlling customer service in markets characterized by complexed buying processes. Theoretical and practical contributions will be presented, and we will finally conclude this thesis with a critical review and present suggestions for future research.

6.1 Summary of thesis

This essay aimed to investigate and analyze how different decisive factors impact customer satisfaction in complexed buying processes. Previous research within the field of customer service and customer satisfaction have been illustrated in a conceptual model. The purpose of the model was to explain the journey and factors along the way that affects customer satisfaction. A deductive approach has formed the basis of the model but also when the empirical data was analyzed. To ensure an in-depth understanding regarding reasons behind various factors that, according to customers, affect their satisfaction a qualitative method was used. The data was collected by conducting three focus groups with 4-5 people in each group that had experience of customer service in more complex buying processes online. The aim was to develop an understanding of how customers experience interactions with customer service in complexed buying processes, but also to understand their viewing on AI chatbots and humans to determine if there were a significant difference between the two as support agents. In order to analyze the data, a thematical approach was used when coding as well as when presenting and analyzing the findings. From the results gathered, this study aimed to determine whether AI chatbots or human support agents offer optimal conditions for achieving the highest customer satisfaction possible in complex buying processes online.

Furthermore, the findings indicated on a distinct preference for human support agents, capable of offering genuine empathy and emotional support. This highlighted the differences between human support agents and AI chatbots due to AI being perceived as lacking emotional depth. AI chatbots were instead appreciated for their efficiency when handling routine tasks. On the other hand, human support agents were valued for their ability to address complex queries and understand nuanced customer preferences, and thereby enhancing overall satisfaction. The findings also indicated that reliability was one of the most significant factors affecting customer satisfaction. Despite a general inclination towards trusting human support agents more, suspicions regarding profit motives were commonly expressed regardless of support type.

However, these suspicious motives were stronger directed towards human support agent since they were perceived as more biased.

6.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, eight factors affecting customer satisfaction have been found in total. However, tangibility is excluded in the context of online retail and our findings also suggest that usability cannot be used for a comparative purpose. It can also be concluded that there are advantages and disadvantages regardless of which type of support you choose to integrate as customer support agent. Our findings suggest that AI chatbots are better at handling easier queries, such as those related to delivery time and stock status, by providing quick and standardized responses. This aligns with the findings of Chen et al, (2021) and Ruan and Mezei (2022) presented of chatbots being capable of retrieve information in a rapid time. However, our findings also reveal significant limitations of AI chatbots when handling problems in more complex buying processes. The participants in the focus groups found AI chatbots inaccurate and time consuming, which ended with the participants switching to a company and website with a human support agent.

Participants expressed a clear preference for human support agents in emotionally charged or complex situations. According to our findings, customers value empathy and personalized responses which humans are superior at communicating. This conclusion is in accordance with previous research that examined personal recommendations related to customer satisfaction (Baier & Stüber, 2010). The inability of AI to genuinely understand or express emotions was a recurring theme as well in our study. Chen et al, (2021) explained that AI chatbots lack the human touch which is supported by our findings about what customers think about AI chatbots. This study also suggests that AI chatbots are more reliable for simpler tasks but struggle with the more complex issues, often necessitating verification. Some exceptions were found where customers mistrust towards humans was greater, which was due to that they perceived humans as more biased.

6.3 Theoretical contributions

Previous research has found that AI chatbots and human support agents are great at different things (Ruan & Mezei, 2022; Chen et al., 2021). Researchers have also found that there are several different factors affecting customer satisfaction connected to customer service (Ali & Top, 2021; Parasuraman et al, 1988). But to the best of our knowledge researchers have not

provided a complete analysis of which factors different support agents are superior to each other at in complex buying processes. The conceptual model presented in Figure 1 helps create a clear and foreseeable picture of all factors that currently affects customer satisfaction. This study has also contributed with a better understanding of what AI chatbots contra human support agents are superior at based on the eight factors affecting customer satisfaction. We have examined the experience of customer service from the customer's perspective and thus created a deeper understanding of what customers experience and think about the factors affecting customer satisfaction.

The study has also contributed with elaborating findings regarding what Ruan and Mezei (2022) found in their research about AI reducing waiting time. By getting a deeper understanding of what time efficiency and waiting time is according to customers, our findings show that previous research focuses on reducing waiting time rather than increasing time efficiency. Ruan and Mezei (2022), Chung et al., (2020) and Djelassi et al., (2018) all claimed that waiting time is about the time it takes from that a customer writes a question to a response has been given. However, our findings suggest that customer's perception of time efficiency is more relevant for customer satisfaction, which is referring to the time it takes from contacting the support to when the problem has been solved.

6.4 Practical contributions

This study about AI chatbots and human support agents in customer service offers valuable insights when choosing between the two if a company is operating on a market influenced by complex buying processes. Companies can use this study by analyzing decisive factors regarding service quality, such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and time efficiency to understand what type of inquiries they encounter and what factors are relevant for their company. Companies can then use the insights provided by our findings to optimize their support strategies by leveraging AI for routine tasks and reserving human agents for more complex and emotionally charged interactions in their customer service life cycle.

This study can also contribute to important insights for employees working in customer service. The ongoing trend of AI replacing humans in different areas will likely continue as AI technology continue to advance (Roston, 2024; Kelly, 2024). Therefore, this study can contribute with insights on how employees can try to implement AI as a tool in their work in order to not be completely replaced. If employees try to work with AI instead of against it, companies will be able to take advantage of both human's ability to emotionally interact with

customers and AI's capacity of providing fast information. By also assuring employees that they are superior to AI in some areas the likelihood of decreasing anxiety and stress will increase (Kelly, 2024).

6.5 Critical review and suggestions for future research

This study aimed to explore how customers experience different factors created by customer service and how this affects customer satisfaction. This with a focus directed towards retail chat support and differences between AI chatbots and human support agents in a context characterized by complex buying processes. Due to limited time and resources the data in this study were only conducted in Sweden making the results and findings limited to Swedish customers and customer service. The result could be different if the same study was conducted in Asia for example, where buying behaviors might be different. Our research is also limited to three different industries characterized by complex buying processes: electronics, furniture, and building materials. This makes it interesting and relevant for future research to try and validate our findings or discover new insights that may occur in other industries.

Customer satisfaction is a complex phenomenon affected by various factors and circumstances. Therefore, this study might have other limitations due to its small scale. It would be interesting for future research to conduct a more extensive study with a larger number of participants. This is especially relevant since we have already discovered some new insights. For example, the difference between time efficiency and waiting time would be an intriguing area for future research to investigate in more detail, since our participants perceived the two as the same.

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Appendix 1 – Focus group guide (Swedish)

Öppnings formaliteter

- Förklara syftet med dagens diskussion och be deltagarna att läsa igenom skriva under samtyckesblanketten för att vara en del av fokusgruppen.
- Förklara att intervjun kommer att spelas in (få muntligt samtycke från deltagarna att göra det) och försäkra deltagarna om att data endast kommer att vara tillgängliga för oss och vår handledare samt att det senare kommer att raderas när analysen är klar och arbetet godkänt.
- Informera deltagarna om att allt som sägs kommer att transkriberas och försäkra dem om att det är okej att vara ärlig och säga vad de verkligen tycker och tänker.
- Gå igenom hur intervjun kommer att genomföras och hur den består av två inledande fall som sedan leder till några avslutande frågor om personliga erfarenheter.

Case 1

<p>Fråga: Hej! Jag är intresserad av att köpa en smartklocka men är lite osäker på viken modell som skulle passa mig bäst. Jag vill kunna ha den när jag tränar och den får inte kosta mer än 4000kr. Det är även ett plus om den inte är så svår att använda</p>	
<p>Svar 1</p> <p>Hej! Häng kvar en liten stund så ska jag undersöka saken lite närmare.</p> <p>Denna klockan skulle jag rekommendera. Den funkar att ha när man tränar plus att den har en bra batteritid. Skulle du uppleva att den är svår använd är du välkommen till någon av våra butiker för hjälp.</p> <p>[Länk till specifik smart-klocka]</p>	<p>Svar 2</p> <p>Det finns många olika smartklockor för flera ändamål. Oavsett om du tränar, pratar eller lyssnar på musik Har du allt du behöver på handleden.</p> <p>Vi har smartklockor för träning, vardaglig användning Och även klockor specifikt för barn.</p> <p>[Länk till hemsidans urval av smart-klockor]</p>

Case 2

Fråga: Hej! Vad är lager saldot på denna varan [artikelnumret]	
<p>Svar 1</p> <p>Hej! Mitt namn är XX hur kan jag hjälpa dig idag?</p> <p>Lagersaldot är 25 st. Glöm inte att vi erbjuder Hemleverans om du har långt till närmaste butik</p>	<p>Svar 2</p> <p>Hej! Det finns 36 st i vår lager online plus några exemplar i några av våra fysiska butiker. Vilken butik ligger närmast dig så kan jag kolla om den finns tillgänglig där?</p>

Fråga	Syftet med frågan
Namn och ålder Hur skulle ni förklara en AI chatbot?	Ice breaker, få deltagarna att prata
Kan ni förklara era egna era erfarenheter av kundtjänst online? Varför behövde ni hjälp? Vilken typ av produkt/produkter behövde ni hjälp med när ni tog kontakt med kundtjänst online? Märkte ni om det var en chatbot eller en mänsklig support agent som ni pratade med? Om så, vad fick er att märka de? Var ni nöjda med servicen som ni fick överlag?	Bättre förstå deltagarnas förståelse och erfarenhet och förstå kontexten av deras resa med kundtjänst.
Frågor om faktorerna som påverkar kundnöjdhet enligt den existerande litteraturen. Tid effektivitet: - Hur snabbt svarade kundtjänsten? Och var du nöjd med utfallet av väntetid?	Bättre förstå hur faktorerna påverkar deltagarnas kundnöjdhet

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Känner du att support dygnet runt är viktigt för dig? Varför? <p>Känslor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upplevde du att kundtjänsten kunde förstå och relatera till ditt problem? Vad fick dig att känna så? <p>Empati:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kände du att support agenten kunde förstå och relatera till vad du behövde hjälp med? Hur märkte du detta? <p>Funktion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funkade servicetjänsten som den skulle? Varför/varför inte? (kraschade hemsidan? Uppstod fördröjning? Webbdesign) <p>Användande</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Var plattformen lätt att använda? Vad bidrog till den lätta eller svåra upplevelsen? (funktioner?) <p>Tillförlitlighet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kände du att du kunde lita på informationen som du fick som hjälp? Vad gjorde servicen mer eller mindre tillförlitlig? <p>Lyhördhet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kände du att servicen du fick var personlig och att det togs hänsyn till dina behov? Varför/varför inte? <p>Försäkran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kände du att du fick en försäkran om att lösningen som presenterades av servicen var bäst för dig? Vad fick dig att känna så och hur kommunicerades de? (argument, uttalanden etc.?) 	
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<p>Vilka av dessa faktorer tror du påverkar din kundnöjdhet mest, både i en positiv men också negativ aspekt?</p>	<p>Förstå vilka faktorer som företag behöver jobba mer med</p>
<p>Känner du att en annan typ av kundserviceagent hade kunnat öka din kundnöjdhet i någon form? (fick du hjälp av en mänsklig support agent så är den andra typen av kundserviceagent en AI chatbot och vice versa)</p> <p>Om du på förhand kunde bestämma vilken typ av agent du skulle få hjälp av, hade du då helst valet en AI chatbot eller en mänsklig supportagent? Vad får dig att föredra det ena över det andra?</p>	<p>Förstå kunders attityd och inställning till olika kundservice lösningar</p>

Appendix 2 – Focus group guide (English)

Opening formalities

- Explain the purpose of today’s discussion and ask participants to read through and sign a consent form to be part of the focus group.
- Explain that the interview will be recorded (get oral consent from the participants to do so) and ensure the participants that the data will only be available to us and our supervisor and later deleted when the analysis and the essay is completed.
- Make participants aware of that everything that is said will be anonymized and reassure them that it is okay to be outspoken and say what you really think.
- Go through how the interview be executed and how it is made up of two initial cases that then result in some concluding questions about personal experiences.

Case 1

<p>Question: Hello! I'm interested in buying a smartwatch but I'm a bit unsure which model would suit me best. I want to be able to wear it when I work out and it can't cost more than 4000 SEK. It's also a plus if it's not that difficult to use</p>	
<p>Answer 1</p> <p>Hello! Hang around for a little while and I'll look into it a little further.</p> <p>I would recommend this watch. It works to wear when you work out plus it has a good battery life. Should you experience if it is difficult to use, you are welcome to any of our stores for help.</p> <p>[link to a specific watch]</p>	<p>Answer 2</p> <p>There are many different smartwatches for multiple purposes. Whether you're exercising, talking, or listening to music. You have everything you need on your wrist. We have smartwatches for workouts, everyday use and also watches specifically for children.</p> <p>[link to the website's selection of soon-to-be watches]</p>

Case 2

<p>Question: Hello! What is the stock balance on this item [article number]</p>	
<p>Answer 1</p> <p>Hello! My name is XX how can I help you today?</p> <p>The stock balance is 25 pcs. Don't forget that we offer home delivery if you have a long way to the nearest store</p>	<p>Answer 2</p> <p>Hello!</p> <p>There are 36 items in stock online plus a few available in some of our physical stores. Which store is closest to you? I can check if it's available there.</p>

Question	Purpose of the question
<p>Name and age?</p> <p>What defines an AI chatbot support according to you?</p>	<p>Ice breaker to get people to talk</p>
<p>Can you tell us about your experience with customer service in online retail? Why did you need to use it? What product/products have you bought online while getting help from a support agent?</p> <p>Where you satisfied overall with the service that you received, why or why not?</p>	<p>To better understand their experience and context of their customer service journey.</p>
<p>Questions about factors affecting customer satisfaction according to existing literature.</p> <p>Time efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How quickly did the customer service reply and how did it affect your satisfaction? - Do you feel like support available at any given time is important, and if so, why? <p>Emotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did you feel like the service you receive was caring and that you connected over your problem? And what made you feel that? <p>Empathy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did you feel like the support agent understood what you needed help with? And how did you notice this? <p>Functionality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did the service work as it was supposed to? In what way did it/did not work? (website crashes? Lagging? Web design?) <p>Usability</p>	<p>Better understand the impact of these factors on their customer satisfaction</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was the platform easy to use and understand? What made it easy or hard? (Functionalities?) <p>Reliability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did you feel like you could trust the information you were given? Was there anything that made it more or less trustworthy? <p>Responsiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did you feel like the service was personal given your specific needs? Why or why not? <p>Assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did you feel like you receive assurance from the service that the solution was the best one for you? What made you feel like that and how was it communicated? (arguments, statements etc.?) 	
<p>Which factors do you believe impacts your customer satisfaction the most, in both a positive and negative way?</p>	<p>Understand factors that is notable for companies to work on</p>
<p>Do you feel like the other type of support agent could have increased your satisfaction in any way? (If you receive help from a human support agent the other solution is AI chatbot and vice versa).</p> <p>If you know what type of agent was helping you, do you prefer to be helped by an AI chatbot or a human support agent? Why do you prefer that one?</p>	<p>Understand customers attitude and approach to different customer service solutions.</p>