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Industry Brands and Enchantment:
How Disenchantment of the Mental Health App Industry Brand Influences
Companies Within the Industry

A Master's degree project in Marketing & Consumption, Graduate School, 2022

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Acknowledgements

5 years of studies at the University level are coming to an end, and we are proud to have finalised the last project together; our master thesis. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to those who have supported us during this master thesis. Firstly, we would like to thank our supervisor Christian Dam for his excellent guidance when the topic of this thesis was formed. We would also like to thank him for his continuous enthusiasm and wise advice throughout the writing process. Secondly, we would like to thank Micael Gustafsson, CEO of Learning to Sleep, for giving us the opportunity to work together with him, for his expertise and input. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the informants of this study, without their contributions it would not have been possible to finalise this thesis.

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Abstract:

Enchantment is at the heart of most marketing and branding operations, therefore, there is reason to believe it is part of the broader picture of the more unexplored concept of industry brands. To study how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, we employ the rich context of an industry brand that has received mixed reviews in terms of its ability to appeal to consumers, namely mental health apps. We utilise the real life case of the mental health app (MHA) Learning to Sleep (LTS) and uncover elements of disenchantment with the industry brand of mental health apps. This context serves as an epistemological window into how perceptions of the industry brand of MHA shape consumers' desire to use the apps. Despite the importance of branding operations in promoting industries, research on industry brands is still scarce. Adding to literature that exists within the field of industry brands and enchantment we analyse the occurrence of enchantment, or disenchantment, through a discourse analysis of semi-structured interviews. Three main themes of disenchantment emerge 1) Lack of Effectiveness of MHA, 2) Stressors of Technology, and 3) Relations to Mental Health. In turn, we find possibilities of re-enchantment by creating awareness of disenchanting elements within an industry brand. We suggest four subcomponents of industry brands: trustworthiness, self-connection, lifestyle resonance, and myth, highlighting how industry brands can be understood.

Keywords: *Industry Brands, Mental Health Apps, Enchantment, Disenchantment, Consumer Perceptions, Industry Image, Industry Aura, Stigma*

1. Introduction

Today, many companies are offering mental health treatment through smartphone apps, leading to the creation of a new industry, and in turn, an industry brand. Even though there is a global mental health crisis and a growing mental health app (MHA) industry, the uptake and engagement of MHAs among consumers continue to stay low (Torous et al., 2018). Companies within an industry brand can both benefit from and be negatively influenced by the brand image of their respective industry (Bajde, 2019). In light of this, it could be questioned why consumers have not yet

adopted MHAs and if this could be associated with the industry brand.

The present study examines how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, by investigating how perceptions of the industry brand of MHAs shape the desire to use the apps.

Previous research finds that industry brands have been used as cultural nodes permeated with symbolic meanings, aspirations, fears and concerns, which has been most noticeable in controversial industries connected to negative social and environmental

externalities such as the tobacco, oil, and automotive industry (Bajde, 2019). Bajde (2019) describes industry brand constitution as a phenomenon where “economic entities or activities become constituted as culturally shared categories invested with distinct cultural meanings (i.e. as brands)” (p. 499). The research on industry brands is still scarce. However, some advancements have been made in the field of recruitment, where Wallace et al. (2012) found that industry image affected companies' capacity to attract employees. Moreover, Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007) suggest that the popularity of the niche industry of community-supported agriculture stems not only from its ability to address the malpractice of corporate agriculture industries, but from its ability to enchant consumers with inspirational imaginations of positive social development and meaningful personal ties to nature and the local community.

In light of this, most marketing and branding activities are essentially concerned with enchantment and how to enchant consumers (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). The concept of enchantment is about “rendering the ordinary into emotionally charged, exciting, magical, and special” (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019, p. 669). In turn, disenchantment with a brand can occur when there is a loss of the elements positively related to the context (Hartmann and Ostberg, 2013). However, despite branding activities' important role in promoting industries, marketing theory has been slow to address this (Bajde, 2019). This is surprising, since for instance brand images play an important role in the purchasing behaviour of consumers (Aaker, 1991; Fischer, Meffert & Perrey, 2004). We argue as Burmann et al. (2008) that it is reasonable to suggest that industry brand image does not only influence the perceptions of stakeholders, such as investors, but also consumers. The lack of attention to this area of branding has left underlying perspectives regarding how and why industry brands shape company performance relatively unresearched

(see for instance Burmann et al., 2008; Wallace et al., 2012). As Bajde (2019), we want to extend the research of industry brands and shed light on how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies.

To study this, we investigate the industry brand encircling MHAs which has been met with mixed responses in reference to its low uptake among consumers. We also utilise the real life case of the company Learning to Sleep (LTS). The company LTS is the first Swedish digital sleep treatment clinic that has developed a licensed app to provide online treatment for people with sleeping difficulties. As LTS specialises in sleep issues it offers digital appointments with a psychologist using cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) as the mode of treatment (Learning To Sleep, 2022). This context will function as an epistemological window into how perceptions of the industry brand of MHAs shape consumers' desire to use the apps. It is forecasted that the MHA industry is expected to grow (Auxier et al., 2021) because of an unmet need in health care of consumers who seek help to improve mental health, which has required new innovative strategies resulting in internet-based mental health care services (Apolinário-Hagen et al., 2017). MHAs can help users with anxiety, worrying, sleeping problems and stress to name a few (Healthline.com, 2021) and offering mental health care through the internet has been suggested to be a cost-efficient strategy to increase public access to these types of services on a larger scale (Moock, 2014; Musiat & Tarrrier, 2014; Lal & Adair, 2014). It is also argued that smartphones are a good platform for psychological treatment among younger consumers because of the ease of use and high perceived value (Qu, Sas, Roquet & Doherty, 2020). Therefore, this research is of importance since they constitute a group that has dealt with increasing mental health issues in the last decade (American Psychological Association, 2019).

Furthermore, MHAs provide a rich context in which to investigate consumer perceptions of

industry brands. In terms of societal discourses on positive and negative feelings towards smartphone use there is an existing notion of there being an app for almost anything (Lusinski, 2018) and prevalent stigma around mental health (Levin et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2022). Thus, there is reason to believe that there may be underlying elements of disenchantment within the MHA industry brand. Moreover, it is important to study and understand the mechanisms of industry brands and enchantment since consumers seek to consume enchantment in the marketplace as a result of the loss of enchanting elements in rationalised society and daily life (Arnould, Price, & Otnes, 1999; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Kozinets et al., 2004; Ritzer, 2005; Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007).

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to study and develop an understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies. We investigate industry brands through the lens of enchantment and the question: *How do perceptions of the industry brand of MHA shape the desire to use the apps?* By exploring the underlying perceptions of industry brands, this study reveals relevant and important insights into the relatively unexplored concept of industry brands and its influence on companies. In addition, it is also a response to Bajde (2019) who calls for more academic research in the area.

By conducting a discourse analysis of the empirical material collected through 12 semi-structured interviews, this study finds that *industry brand image, rationalisation, aura, stigma, and association* act as tenets of industry brand disenchantment and influence consumers' perception of the MHA industry brand. This study uncovered six disenchanting elements that were categorised into three main themes that stem from the tenets 1) Lack of Effectiveness of MHAs, 2) Stressors of Technology, and 3) Relations to Mental Health. We also observed tendencies of re-enchantment brought on by consumers' faith

in technology and desire to optimise mental health, without experiencing the association to mental health issues, where the enchantment of technology, portrayal of mental health aspects, new technology and mental health advancements are possible routes to re-enchantment. The faith in psychologists was largely accompanied with the reluctance to be associated with mental health but provides tendencies of re-enchantment opportunities. By having an awareness of the disenchanting elements within an industry brand, it creates the possibility to re-enthrall consumers, and in turn, achieve the sought-after concept of enchantment (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). Thus, our findings suggest that companies are influenced by the brand of the industry they operate in and that this is expressed through disenchantment discourses, which in this case revolves around negative perceptions of mental health and technology.

Ultimately, we conclude that disenchantment with the MHA industry brand influences companies operating within that industry by negatively shaping consumers' desires to use products and services offered. Additionally, the findings reveal opportunities and tendencies of re-enchantment through discourses on technology and alleviating the elements related to mental health. More research is needed to develop an understanding of this phenomenon. Through the lens of enchantment, this study also develops an understanding of industry brands further by suggesting four subcomponents of industry brands. These are Trustworthiness, Lifestyle Resonance, Self-Connection and Myths.

The thesis will be read as follows: first, we will give a theoretical background where we clarify important concepts and previous research on industry brands, consumer perception of MHAs and enchantment. Next, the study will provide details on the methodology. This will be followed by an introduction of the empirical data and analysis, moving on to the discussion and

finally the conclusion, theoretical contributions and managerial implications.

2. Theoretical background

To examine how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, we need to review research on what constitutes an industry brand and consumer perceptions of MHAs. We also need to understand how enchantment and disenchantment are created as these constitute the conceptual toolbox that enables us to shine a light on the mechanisms behind brands of industries.

2.1 A review of the concept of industry brands

Industry branding is not a new phenomenon but has become increasingly more relevant. However, to date little research has been conducted to explore and understand brands at the aggregate industry level, as compared to the extensive research on individual corporate brands (Bajde, 2019). The process of industry brand constitution can be defined as where *“economic entities or activities become constituted as culturally shared categories invested with distinct cultural meanings (i.e. as brands)”* Bajde (2019, p. 499). This definition is relevant because individuals do not interpret and position brands in a vacuum (Bajde, 2019), but rather in a cultural context (Schroeder, 2009; 2017). Additionally, stakeholders such as consumers and media shape the way brands are represented in popular culture (Humphreys & Thompson, 2014). Therefore, the industry brand can be perceived as residing in communicative patterns and codes created in certain socio-cultural contexts, rather than lying in the minds of consumers (Shroeder, 2009; 2017).

In consumer society brands are symbols which consumers use to express their identity and lifestyle (Kornberger, 2010) and Arnould and Thompson (2005) argue that the marketplace generates certain types of consumer positions that consumers can choose to inhabit. It has become a source of

symbolic and mythic resources based on which individuals build the narratives of their identities (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). In light of this, brand management has evolved into a management method, where entire companies, places, regions, and universities among others, are regarded as items that can be branded (see, e.g., Montoya & Vandehey, 2005, for a typical example of this genre). In this manner, brand management is considered a vital capability for modern businesses (Bengtsson & Ostberg, 2006). More recently, the concept of industry brand images has surged along with its importance in capital markets (Burmam, Schaefer & Maloney, 2008). Consumers perceive and relate to brands in many ways, employing or refusing brands as relational resources and ideological referents (Fournier, 1998; Holt, 2004), which happens not only at the company level but on more aggregate levels (Dinnie, 2004). In light of this increasing relevance and importance of industry brands, Bajde (2019) calls for more research on the area. For instance, exploring the influence of industry brands on markets and market actors, such as companies (Bajde, 2019), which inspired the focus of this research.

An industry can be defined as a group of companies that from the perspective of individuals consist of suppliers of similar entities, products or services to similar customer groups (Abell, 1980). Whereas other definitions, such as by Cambridge Dictionary (Dictionary.cambridge.org, 2022), only consider companies carrying out identical or similar commercial activities. Thus, the industry definition by Abell (1980), is more relevant to the purpose of this research since it takes the individuals' perception of groups of companies within an industry into account. Delving deeper into the narrower term of industry branding, Bajde (2019) defines it as *“a set of purposeful efforts aimed at establishing certain identifications, representations, and affective entanglements with a chosen (industry) brand in a particular cultural environment”* and underscores that new and growing industries may strive to

promote their potential and legitimise their presence in the market (Bajde, 2019). However, Schroeder (2017) argues that while corporations own the trademark and engage in strategic branding efforts, they never truly own the images consumers have of the brand.

In light of that branding activities and brand image play an important role, not only at the company level but at the industry level (Bajde, 2019), it should be taken into account that that industry brands have been used as cultural nodes permeated with symbolic meanings, aspirations, fears and concerns (Ibid). This has been most noticeable in controversial industries connected to negative social and environmental externalities such as the tobacco, oil and automotive industry. But also in the development of technology, which has contributed to new perceived risks and concerns (Beck 1992; Geiger et al. 2014; Humphreys and Thompson 2014).

2.2 Industry brand image

Brand image concerns the aggregate of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a consumer holds regarding a brand (Kornberger, 2010). According to Burmann et al. (2008), industry image accentuates the degree to which industry classifications are dependent on subjective perception. Moreover, Burmann et al. (2008) suggest that industry brand image is *“a set of associations that is firmly anchored, condensed, and evaluated in the minds of people concerning a group of companies, which, from the point of view of an individual, supplies the same customer groups with the same technologies for the fulfilment of the same customer needs.”* The commonly studied concept of brand image is a fundamental part of marketing and branding for companies on an individual level and an important determinant of buying behaviour of consumers (Aaker, 1991; Fischer, Meffert & Perrey, 2004). It can be understood as the perceptions external target groups hold about brands (Burmann et al., 2008) and these can be branched into

perceptions regarding the functional and symbolic qualities of a brand (Burmann & Meffert, 2005). External factors have been found to influence brand images and cannot be directly influenced by brand management, an example of this is industry image (Blinda, 2003; Dowling, 1993 & 2001). Thus, the context of industry brand image could aid in the exploration of how industry brands influence individual companies.

Despite the fact that qualitative research on industry brands and its influence on companies is still fairly scarce in the marketing field (Bajde, 2019), some advancements have been made concerning the concept of employer branding and industry brand image. For instance, the studies by Burmann et al. (2008) and Wallace et al. (2012) showed that industry image determined the individual corporate brand image. In the case of Burmann et al. (2008), the perception of an industry image held by a person, who knew a lot about one company in an industry, and little about other companies, could be largely driven by the one well-known company (Burmann et al., 2008). Additionally, Wallace et al. (2012) showed that the industry image affected companies' capacity to attract employees. We agree with Burmann et al. (2008, p. 157), that *“it seems reasonable to assume that the industry image does not only have an impact on the perceptions of potential investors but also on other relevant stakeholders of corporate brand management.”*, such as consumers. In their literature review on industry branding, Bajde (2019) emphasises that negative images of product or service categories could also hurt companies' capabilities to appeal to consumers. For instance, industry development can be affected by their relative ability to eliminate negative doppelgänger images of products and services that frighten, repulses or concern consumers, or the general public (See for instance Giesler 2012; Humphreys 2010a, b; Krabbe 2017; Popp 2016). In the case of the tobacco industry, financial analysts did not expect voluntary codes of marketing to influence sales of Philip

Morris and Japan Tobacco, since it was interpreted as a way of simply trying to improve the tobacco industry's image (Palazzo & Richter, 2005). This suggests negative perceptions of the legitimacy of the industry brand of tobacco.

In contrast, research in contexts such as microfinance, fairtrade, and community-supported agriculture, show that market actors can at times profit from the positive image of the industry they are in, or if they find ways to constructively respond to industry image issues (Bajde et al., 2022; VanderHoff Boersma 2009; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007). Having reviewed this, the qualitative perspective still has a gap to fill, since the lack of academic research on industry brands has left underlying perspectives undeveloped regarding how and why industry brands influence individual companies (see for instance Burmann et al., 2008; Wallace et al., 2012).

2.3 Industry aura

The industry aura concept entails “1) *the development of unique qualities or virtues that are considered essential to an industry, and that are 2) perceptual-mnemonic, perceptible as an indexical image or trace of the industry's 'essence' (i.e., of its core values and commitments), and as such provide 3) an expression of the industry's authentic moral character.*” (Bajde, Chelekis & van Dalen, 2022). Therefore, commitment to intrinsic values is vital for brands to convincingly project an aura (Beverland, 2005). This has been seen in research on for instance the craft-brand Hagström, which experienced issues with disenchantment in the eyes of the consumers when authenticity elements disappeared in the industrialised relaunch of the brand (Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013).

In research conducted on brand aura it is shown that a brand's aura can originate from ideals and ambitions embodied in the brand's charismatic creator (Dion and Arnould, 2011)

for example, Elon Musk's brand Tesla. In addition, Brown et al. (2003) discuss aura in terms of brands' heritage as a proof of their enduring qualities and moral character. To summarise, industry aura can be defined as “*a widely accepted sense of unique and authentic virtues that characterise a particular industry*” (Bajde et al., 2022, p.137) and it is underlined that public discourse is a central arena where industry auras are produced. This is interesting concerning the concept of industry brands since they too are dependent perceptions of stakeholders. Regarding this research, the concept of industry aura could be interesting due to the altruistic brand identity of many MHAs, yet they are for-profit enterprises.

2.4 A review of consumer perceptions of MHAs

To study and examine how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, we investigate the up-and-coming industry brand of MHAs, that has been subject to varied opinions in terms of its ability to appeal to consumers. MHAs have been a topic of discussion in recent years and the industry is expected to grow (Auxier et al., 2021). An unmet need in mental health care, has required development of new innovative strategies, resulting in internet-based services (Apolinário-Hagen et al., 2017). MHAs can help users with anxiety, worrying, sleeping problems and stress to name a few (Healthline.com, 2021). Smartphones have been considered a good platform for psychological treatment of younger consumers because of the ease of use and high perceived value (Qu, Sas, Roquet & Doherty, 2020), since young individuals, including young adults, have dealt with increasing mental health issues in the last decade (American Psychological Association, 2019). In light of this, companies currently offer mental health treatment not only digitally but also through apps, which in turn has created a new industry (Auxier et al., 2021). The

industry is an interesting context since the uptake and engagement of MHAs among consumers continue to stay low, despite a global mental health crisis and a growing mental health app industry (Torous et al., 2018). It brings to question why consumers have not yet adopted these apps. Consumers' perception of MHAs could be a possible reason for the low uptake. Our review of research on consumer perceptions of MHAs, including some on online mental health services in general, shows that a majority of the studies conclude that perceptions are negative (Casey, Joy & Clough, 2013; Apolinário-Hagen, Kemper & Stürmer, 2017; Apolinário-Hagen, Vehreschild & Alkoudmani, 2017; Baumel et al., 2020; Garrido et al., 2019; Torous, Nicholas, Larsen, Firth & Christensen, 2018).

Many apps in the MHA industry are designed without therapist-led sessions, meaning that they offer self-help where the user only interacts with digital technology and not actual psychologists (Blackwell, 2021; Auxier et al., 2021). Examples include for instance Headspace and Calm, two of the most popular MHAs (Ibid). This is interesting since researchers have found that some consumers perceive non-therapist-led sessions as less helpful which also reduced the likelihood of using the services (Casey et al., 2013). Additionally, in line with the findings of Baumel et al. (2020) other researchers point out that, concerning, many MHAs do not have evidence-based or peer-reviewed research to support their claims of efficiency (Grist, Porter, & Stallard, 2017). This suggests a varying range of quality in the products and services of MHA companies operating in the industry. In turn, non-evidence-based techniques have been found to be viewed less positively and as having more potential to cause harm (Baumel et al., 2020). Further, it has been found that consumers perceive online mental health services, in general, to be less helpful than traditional face to face treatment, which negatively affects intentions to use such services (Apolinário-Hagen et al.,

2017). This could pose an issue for the industry brand of MHAs, if consumer perceptions of the industry brand image are negative (Bajde, 2019).

However, according to research on the reciprocity of accepting mental healthcare through online means, it has also been found that young people prefer the layer of anonymity that a web-based mental health program provides rather than going to a clinic for face-to-face treatment (Garrido et al., 2019). However, researcher are not yet in agreeance, since another study identified negative views on internet-based therapies in perceived helpfulness, despite respondents agreeing on the potential of online mental health treatment, such as expanded access (Apolinário-Hagen, Vehreschild & Alkoudmani, 2017).

Despite giving some interesting insights, the field has limited research on why these perceptions exist, or how they take shape. Which could potentially explain the differing results of the studies reviewed in this research. However, a few studies shed some light on this. Garrido et al. (2019) suggest that engagement and adherence are low because of negative perceptions of too much educational material, non-appealing app interfaces and technical bugs. While Torous et al. (2018) found perceptions to be negative because consumers perceived apps to be designed without service-users in mind, did not solve the problems users cared most about, respect privacy, or make them seem trustworthy nor helpful in emergencies (Torous et al., 2018). Borghouts et al. (2021) showed that perceived need for treatment, past use of professional services and social influence were positively associated with usage of MHAs, while privacy concerns were negatively associated with the usage of MHAs. In line with this research, it has been found that perceptions, or attitudes, play a key role in online and mobile health service acceptance (Apolinário-Hagen et al., 2019). For instance, college students perceived MHAs on initial judgement as useful and easy to use (Holtz,

McCarroll & Mitchell, 2020; Qu, Sas, Roquet & Doherty, 2020). The findings of the different studies show that not only are users concerned about quality but design, performance and legitimacy of the technology delivering the service, despite being positive about the format through which the services are offered. We agree with Holtz et al. (2020) in that future research must study why there is a dichotomy between rates of depression and anxiety among college students, and their intention to use mental health services.

Another possible explanation for the phenomenon of low uptake of MHAs could be a stigma. Kim et al (2022) recently found that other than technological factors, sociocultural factors significantly influenced the acceptance of MHAs. College students that displayed higher levels of stigma toward mental health care were less likely to have used a face-to-face mental health service and were, therefore, more open to accepting MHAs that focus on private and guided communication (Kim et al., 2022). This is in line with previous research on the negative relationship between stigma and intention to seek professional help (Klein & Cook, 2010; Levin et al., 2018). The study by Kim et al. (2022) also showed that technological factors such as perceived ease of use did not directly affect MHA acceptance, but that they did have a positive relationship with perceived usefulness, which in turn directly impacted the acceptance of MHAs. Thus, MHAs could provide an option to face-to-face counselling and in that way offer less intimidating and intense experiences (Kim et al., 2022). Interestingly, Levin et al. (2018) found that students that had used self-help options for mental health, such as MHAs, reported higher levels of self-stigma than those who had experience with professional treatment in the past. Here, self-stigma for seeking treatment refers to the self-devaluation occurring due to the internalisation of negative attitudes towards a stigmatised group, such as those seeking treatment for mental health (Corrigan, 2004). By utilising the rich context of the MHA industry, this study seeks to develop an

understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies.

2.5 A review on enchantment

The concept of enchantment is about “*rendering the ordinary into emotionally-charged, exciting, magical, and special market resources*” (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019, p. 669), and most marketing and branding activities are essentially concerned with enchantment (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). In a study conducted by Hartmann and Ostberg (2013) it was found that disenchantment occurs when elements that are positively related to a context are lost. The modern industrial society is characterised by having limited surrounding space for elements that render enchantment such as magic, mysticism, and wonder and can be described as an unenchanted world (Ostergaard, 2013).

Moreover, researchers have observed that the background to enchantment and disenchantment can be shaped by rationalisation (Weber, 1978; Ritzer, 1996; Ritzer, 2005). Rationalisation can be understood as an effort to increase efficiency, control and predictability (Ritzer, 1996, 2005), leading to the loss of enchantment, or myth, romance and magic in the relationship individuals have with the world (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). Over time, the focus on rationality in everyday life shifts and decreases the space individuals have for imagination, fantasising, wonder, romance and magic (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). Individuals’ continued search for enchantment leads to an increase in the desire for consumption that vows to recover these lost elements because they are an important part of human life (Arnould, Price, & Otnes, 1999; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Kozinets et al., 2004; Ritzer, 2005; Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007). For instance, Ritzer (1996; 2005) wrote about what they call the McDonaldization of society and how it could create brief moments of enchantment by attempting to satisfy consumer desires for enchantment through consumption cathedrals designed to attract and enchant while at the

same time offer efficiency, control through technology, calculability and predictability. Like the big fast-food chains do. However, these experiences are short-lived and provide commercialised, standardised, and simulated forms of enchantment, which ultimately leads to disenchantment (Ritzer, 2005). Since rationalisation is associated with the loss of mythical, magic, romantic, spontaneous and unpredictable experiences, it has disenchanting effects (Ibid). Enchantment experiences as described by Ritzer (2005) have been studied by several researchers in different consumption contexts. For instance, Belk and Tumbat (2005) demonstrate how fans of Apple's Macintosh computers use religious metaphors to enchant the brand experience, and Thompson (2004) demonstrates the mythical enchantment of the natural health marketplace. In contrast, Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007) offer a different angle on enchantment and suggest that the popularity of the niche industry of community-supported agriculture stems from not only its ability to address the wrongdoings of corporate agriculture industries but from its ability to enchant consumers with inspirational imaginations of positive social development and meaningful personal ties to nature and the local community. In a similar light, Bajde (2019) argues that successful industry branding not only creates legitimacy through acceptance and being proper according to norms and beliefs, but by being desirable and inspirational.

However, to experience enchantment the consumer must first experience disenchantment. Thereafter, the consumer can venture to become re-enchanted, which in turn leads to enchantment (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). In a study conducted by Hartmann and Ostberg (2013) it was found that disenchantment occurs when there is a loss of elements positively related to the context. The discursive elements to contribute to authenticity, "the five enchanting discourses" brought forward by Hartmann and Ostberg (2013) are vocation, devotion, tradition, mystification and association. The

study argues that "[t]he disenchanting effect is manifested in the brand's challenged authenticity" (p. 894), underscoring that when there is a breach in for example authenticity of a brand, disenchantment occurs. In the case of the Hagstrom brand "[d]isenchantment is manifested through the loss of the mythical, romantic, and fantastical elements of the brand" (Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013, p.894), which indicates that these were the enchanting elements in their research. When experiencing them in a negative light or the absence of them it can lead to disenchantment (Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013). Investigating the discursive mechanisms that can lead to the disenchantment of the market, it shows that brands can operate to counteract disenchantment by distinguishing the disenchanting elements (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). When establishing which the disenchanting elements are it is possible to rebrand or reinvent a brand to achieve the opposite – enchantment (Ibid).

Moreover, Belk, Weijo and Kozinets (2021) argue that in the sphere of new technologies, anticipatory consumption has seen a massive increase as consumers seek the next new thing. Belk et al. (2021) reveal, as opposed to calculated rationality, a mix of desires for pleasure, the future, spectacle, and liberation at the heart of technology's constant charm to humans. It is argued that modernity has made technology enchanting for consumers by reimagining it as miraculous and wonderful, substituting it as a new shiny god (Davis, 1998; During, 2002; Nye, 1994; Stivers, 1999). However, as technological enchantment fades, it leaves consumers yearning for more, not always in the form of products, but for more desires (Belk et al., 2003). Regarding apps, enchanting capabilities could begin at the development stage, at the point when developers or the company they represent are driven by entrepreneurial or commercial impulses, curiosity or governmental imperatives to build and market an app (Lupton, 2019). Lupton (2019) argues that the human-app assemblage is very mobile and dynamic and that the

sensory dimensions of smartphones' material aspects are essential for enchantment to occur (Rose, 2014). It is not only about how they look, but how they feel when touched and how they work with bodily senses (Rose, 2014). In line with Belk et al. (2021) concerning the enchanting aspects of new technology, when apps first appeared in the market, their novelty in itself was enchanting (Bardini 2014; Miller 2014; Morris and Elkins 2015). It was their free or low cost, compressed nature, readiness to use and availability that contrasted previous software applications (Lupton, 2019). Touchscreens appeared almost magical in what they could offer consumers (Ibid). The saying, "There is an app for that" functions as a metaphor for how there is an app for almost any need, however, this also made apps mundane (Lupton, 2019). Their disposability and potential to quickly become obsolete and lose popularity earned apps the nickname "charming junkware", also referring to their enchanting aspects at first (Bardini, 2014).

This means that while apps at first may spark interest and excitement, and thus create enchantment, in many cases they rarely get used, and just remain downloaded (Lupton, 2019). Thus, developers have to find ways to make apps new and exciting, introducing enchanting aspects such as the appearance of the apps, how it is marketed and reviews (Lupton, 2014). Many apps use features such as gamification to enchant users and make them use the apps more frequently, turning everyday tasks into games (Lupton, 2019). Further, Lupton (2013), argues that mobile digital devices could be perceived as enchantment technologies when used for health purposes. The function of such technologies could be to correct shortcomings in body functions or appearance, and they allow users to employ data to work on themselves. According to Davis (2012), such technologies take part in a "techno-utopia" where technology is positioned as an indicator of progress, key to the promotion of human happiness, well-being and health.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research approach

To fulfil the purpose of this research, to study and develop an understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, the topic was investigated with a qualitative approach. A qualitative study is appropriate when exploring how or why questions (Patel & Davidson, 2011), and when studying subjective experiences (Flick, 2014), thus it was suitable to investigate the research question "*How does perception of the industry brand of MHAs shape willingness to use the apps?*" with a qualitative approach. Since the research on industry brands is still scarce (Bajde, 2019), our purpose took us on a path where we entered a largely unexplored topic, thus an inductive approach best suited to the purpose of this thesis (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

In modern consumer culture, brands function as meaningful symbols that exist in a co-constituting relationship with other parts of consumer culture (Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013). Thus, brands cannot be studied in a vacuum, but rather, in order to gain a deeper knowledge of how brands are made meaningful in the marketplace and in consumer culture, we need to recognise the different groups that participate in this process (Ibid). Consumers perceive and relate to brands in many ways, employing or refusing brands as relational resources and ideological referents (Fournier, 1998; Holt, 2004), which happens not only at the company level but on more aggregate levels (Dinnie, 2004). Due to that industry brands are constituted as culturally shared categories invested with distinct cultural meanings (Bajde, 2019), industry brands need to be studied in relation to and as part of societal norms and other actors which are part of society. Therefore, to gain a deeper understanding of this topic, discourse analysis and semi-structured interviews were useful for this research. Acquiring rich empirical data on how individuals perceive MHAs were essential for

the discourse analysis to uncover how enchantment discourses shape consumer perceptions of industry brands. Against this background, this research takes a social constructivist perspective, since it aims to understand how individuals, or a group of individuals, interpret and understand social events and settings (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Further, it aids in fulfilling the purpose of this study, as it aims to understand how, what may be seen as objective features, such as industries, organisations and technologies are constituted with subjective meanings of individuals and shared processes like discourses (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

3.2 Research design

The research design of this thesis is guided by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), meaning that the development of the research topic, question and purpose guided how data was to be collected, and in turn the review of literature already existing on the topic. To study and develop an understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, the methods of this study, interviews and discourse analysis, were chosen to gain a deeper understanding of, and reveal discourses on industry brands from a consumer perspective. An interview guide was developed to allow a flow of conversation whilst also getting a full grasp and deep understanding of the informant's perception, as is recommended by (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Interviews were held until saturation was achieved in the empirical material, which resulted in 12 interviews in total.

3.3 Research context

To develop the understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, we employ the rich context of an industry brand that has received mixed reviews in terms of its ability to appeal to consumers, namely MHAs. As part of this context, the inclusion of the real-life case LTS was made to contextualise how the MHA

industry brand could influence individual companies. Learning to Sleep is a licensed app specialising in sleep issues that offers psychologist-led cognitive behaviour therapy digitally (Learning To Sleep, 2022). This context will serve as an epistemological window into how perceptions of the industry brand of MHAs shape consumers' desire to use the apps. The interviews were conducted with young adults, who were both users and non-users of mental health-related apps. To gain insight into the MHA industry from a company operating in the industry, an interview with the CEO of Learning to Sleep was conducted. The purpose of the interview was to gain background information on the diverse nature of MHAs in the industry and how the company perceived the industry from within. We also gathered information about the circumstances of the brand and the industry brand from a managerial perspective. This indicated that insufficient sleep is considered a public health issue (Hafner et al. 2016). With the background information about where the company was lacking in customer attention, we found that LTS had not yet reached young adults with their service, mainly due to that the majority of studies and marketing research had been conducted on middle aged and older adults. However, insufficient sleep has been shown to have detrimental impacts on all age cohorts (Hafner et al. 2016). Researchers suggest that the digital format is an especially suitable platform to reach young adults (Qu et al., 2020), which is of the essence because young adults have dealt with increasing mental health issues in the last decade (American Psychological Association, 2019). This makes young adults an interesting age group to study for this research in relation to the research context.

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

As suggested by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to adapt the questions to how the

conversation flows and tailor every interview to the informant depending on which direction they decide to take. Semi-structured interviews can be described as in-depth interviews which can be used to study both how and why questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Hence, the topics can be covered in a comprehensive and structured manner, while the interview remains reasonably informal (Ibid). Topics regarding mental health can be personal and uncomfortable to talk about, thus, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) recommend that such interviews start with open and indirect questions. Towards the end, it is possible to incorporate some more direct questions (Ibid), although considerate of the informants' personal space. For example, to allow informants to answer questions concerning mental health they were given the option to answer in terms of the "overall perception" (or through the mode of "others" or "friends") to allow them to tell stories that one perhaps does not share openly, instead they were given the option to express themselves through the means of a second or third narrative. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were appropriate for this study.

To ensure that all topics and themes were covered, an interview guide was developed, divided into different sections (See Appendix 1). It was conducive to allowing informants to express themselves freely and minimised the informants having to repeat themselves unnecessarily. This was also the motivation behind the choice of interview language, Swedish. Since Swedish was the native language of the informants, the interviews were conducted in Swedish with the aim to enable them to speak freely without hesitation. The choice of words, cultural saying and other language nuances may have been limited if the interviews were held in English. This was especially important for the discourse analysis. The interview guide functioned as a good guideline for the interview and the order of the questions flowed naturally throughout the interviews. At the end of the interviews in which mental

health, apps in general and MHAs were discussed based on the structure of the interview guide, the informants were shown the app Learning to Sleep. The informants were once again asked to provide their initial feelings and opinions about this app, with previous discussions in mind. The last part functioned as a way to contextualise the actors in the industry, and to see how the informants would feel about using an app like that after the discussion on their perceptions of the MHA industry brand.

Conducting interviews was an appropriate way to collect data, to make the informants feel as comfortable and safe as possible in sharing their true experiences, feelings and perceptions without having to consider what others might think of them. In contrast, this layer of expression could be at risk in for example a focus group (Cruickshank, 2012). In total, 12 interviews were conducted, which lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews yielded rich data and the informants elaborated freely about the topics, which was beneficial to this study because it generated detailed and lengthy answers, which serves as a good base for the discourse analysis.

3.4.2 Sampling

In this study, we chose to conduct purposive sampling which resulted in interviews with young adults. The sample consisted of 12 individuals between the ages of 24 to 34 years. More specifically, the sample consisted of a mix of college students and working individuals, with a higher educational background. This was appropriate for the purpose of this research since it has been suggested that smartphones are a good platform for mental health treatment among younger consumers due to their ease of use and high perceived value (Qu et al., 2020). Furthermore, young adults are a group that has dealt with increasing mental health issues in the last decade (American Psychological Association, 2019) and also because health apps have been reported to target tech-savvy

young adults (Bruce-Lockhart, 2020). Additionally, the CEO of LTS had interest in this consumer group since very little of the marketing research has involved this group. Moreover, according to recent research, the number of people getting less sleep than the recommended amount is increasing, in relation to the 24/7 lifestyle in modern society (Hafner et al. 2016). This includes people of higher education who generally have a high stress lifestyle and may not prioritise sleep (Hafner et al. 2016). Thus, this group of consumers are interesting to investigate in relation to the purpose of this study. Saturation was reached already after nine interviews, however, the additional four interviews were still used to strengthen the results. We concluded that saturation had occurred after continuously coding the transcribed interview material and not finding any new codes and themes, as suggested by Guest et al. (2006).

3.4.3 Secondary data

To develop a deeper understanding of industry brands, extant consumer perceptions of MHAs and enchantment, a systematic literature review was conducted for each of these topics. This was beneficial for the study since, as Bell et al. (2018) argue, a systematic review helps researchers to outline the existing literature on a topic. This was needed to further explore and develop the research phenomenon. The articles included in this study mainly concerned outlining and mapping out the concept of industry brands, an area still scarce in previous research (Bajde, 2019), consumer perceptions of MHAs and enchantment, to answer the research question. Thus, the reviews did not necessarily cover all research on the different subjects but rather focused on what was relevant to fulfil the purpose of this study.

3.5 Data Analysis

To ensure that new themes, that may not have been detected during the interview process, were discovered in the empirical material, it

was firstly coded manually by reading the transcripts several times and identifying themes by putting pieces of text into categories as is suggested by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002). When reaching the stage of analysis, the recommendations of Elliot (1996) were followed, which included the stages of searching for patterns in the empirical material and discussing the functions and effects of these patterns (Ibid). This functioned well and several themes emerged from the empirical material. To study and develop an understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, a discourse analysis was carried out. Discourse analysis puts focus on the cultural meanings associated with people, objects, events and experiences (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Thus, it was appropriate for the purpose of this study in combination with the data collection method, since cultural meanings are mediated through different practices of language and discourse analysis offers a way to study these and their respective consequences and meanings (Ibid).

3.6 Ethical considerations

In order to protect the integrity of the informants of this study, the informants were thoroughly informed about the voluntary nature of the interviews as recommended by Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008), and that they had the right to cancel the interview at any time. Before the interview started, all informants were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses and personal information, which is also recommended by Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008). Taking these precautionary steps was important in order to create a safe space for the informants in which they could speak freely. The interview materials were kept solely for research purposes, anonymous and confidential, to ensure the privacy of the informants. When quotes or references to the answers of the informants were made in the results and analysis the informants were given pseudonyms to protect their integrity and uphold the anonymity. To avoid causing the

informants any distress in talking about MHAs, which could be a potentially sensitive subject depending on personal experiences, the informants were given background information about what the interview would entail before it started. As mentioned in the section on semi-structured interviews, the informants were given the opportunity to speak about their perceptions of MHAs from the perspective of third parties or friends. This was inspired by Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008) who argue that researchers should anticipate the potentially distressing situations and avoid these. Further, due to the potential of the topic of MHAs being distressful, it gave further reason to conduct individual interviews, in comparison to other qualitative methods such as focus groups where individuals might be less inclined to share their true feelings and experiences because it is done in front of others (Cruikshank, 2012).

3.7 Limitations

When critically observing the methodology, the limitations of the interview method were taken into account. For instance, some interviews were conducted online and some offline. Both approaches carry pros and cons. For example, onsite interviews are considered to reveal the consumers' emotions by being able to observe body language and the advantage of nonverbal communication that transpires face to face (Tracy, 2013). These may be considered lost over a video call, however, considering the fact that covid has enabled people to learn and grow comfortable with video calls, it could provide a safe environment for the informant to sit in a comfortable space with the screen as a layer of protection, allowing the informant to give transparent answers.

Another limitation is that the study only includes Caucasian informants with higher educational backgrounds leaving out perceptions of individuals from other backgrounds which would have contributed to the quality of the study. However, due to the scope of the study the researchers chose to

limit the sample to the criteria mentioned in the sampling section above.

To match the methodological approach of this research, we refrained from utilising classic standards of good quality originating from quantitative research. These can include reliability and validity assessments that depend on for instance a large sample and generalisability (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Instead, we opted for considering the four aspects of dependability, transferability, credibility and confirmability (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). We have sought to make the research process logical, traceable, and documented by allowing the purpose to guide methodological decisions and by being transparent and trackable in terms of empirical data collection and analysis. Moreover, it was found that past research on enchantment (See for instance Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013), had used comparable methodologies, and thus felt confident to undertake discourse analysis and interviews for this study. To reduce the possibility of analytical interpretations being based on personal bias, a strong effort was made to find legitimate logic for the interpretations in the data. In addition, the transcripts and codes were reviewed several times.

4. Results & Analysis

In this section, an overview of the analysis will first be presented followed by the analysis of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies.

4.1 The MHA Industry Brand

Through the lens of enchantment theory, we use the industry brand of MHAs to investigate how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies. Firstly, we demonstrate how this analysis considers the brand of an industry and not just of individual industry actors. Consider the following statements by informants Klara, Jacob and Christina when they speak about their perception of apps in general and MHAs:

“It's easier to say that you go to yoga or something like that, than to talk to a psychologist. It carries a heavier weight perhaps.” - Klara

In this statement, *Klara* shares that dealing with mental health by doing things that are more socially accepted or not related to mental health issues, like yoga, is easier to share with others. This implies that when sharing something about themselves with others it is more desirable to suggest that one has a certain lifestyle and identity than others. The statement by *Klara* demonstrates how many informants negotiated MHAs in relation to personal identity, how it was involved in decision making and what was considered a good lifestyle. *Kornberger* (2010) argues that lifestyles are grammar or patterns that consumers use to express their identities and make sense of the world, and brands can be used to express these aspirations and identities. Thus it could be argued that the informants did not perceive it to be appealing to be associated with using MHAs, since it comes with negative preconceptions about users of such services which did not resonate with how the informants perceived themselves.

The informants also talked about how their concerns about MHAs as a group, influenced their desire to use MHAs. Consider the following statements from *Jacob* and *Christina*:

“... which I thought felt very strange, it did not feel at all like it was a good solution, because somehow it becomes like a contradiction to my experience, which is that sleep and or good sleep and cell phones late at night, does not add up so to speak. Therefore, I have not really explored this area so much I would say.” - Jacob

*“So then maybe it's also harder to determine if the tips [on MHAs] you get are legitimate. Because I think it's also a fairly free market, some apps are probably very well-developed and developed with good knowledge, while others may not be.”
- Christina*

In these statements, *Jacob* and *Christina* share concern about MHAs as a group and whether the services make sense to them as consumers in terms of the apps ability to deliver good results, and carry legitimacy. They also express concerns regarding the devices through which the services are delivered. Since brand image concerns the aggregate of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a consumer holds regarding a brand (*Kornberger*, 2010). These perceptions could present an issue for the brand image of the MHA industry. *Jacob* and *Christina* speak about the MHAs in terms of grouping sellers in the industry together, suggesting their beliefs, ideas and impressions concern the entire industry rather than individual actors. Suggesting that this is an issue for not only brands at the individual level, but on the more aggregate industry brand level.

4.2 A Summary of Disenchantment with the MHA Industry Brand

To provide an overview of this chapter, we present a summary (Figure 1). This summary illustrates how the influences industry brands

are subject to, which we refer to as tenets of disenchantment, shape discourses of disenchantment with the industry brand of MHAs. In the analysis we explore how these discourses shape the desire to use MHAs of individual companies and discover tendencies of re-enchantment in the process. The tenets of disenchantment were discovered in the informants reasoning and discourses around the concept of apps and include *industry brand image, rationalisation, aura, stigma, and association*. Moreover, the disenchanting elements brought on by the tenets of industry brand disenchantment, are divided into three categories in the analysis: 1) Lack of Effectiveness of MHAs, 2) Stressors of Technology, and 3) Relations to Mental Health. Within these categories the following disenchanting elements were found: *Effectiveness, Stress, Data Tracking, the Smartphone, Psychologists and Mental Health Care*. The empirical material showed that apps in general had disenchanting elements to them, and the concept of mental

health also carried underlying symbolic meanings and disenchantment to the informants, which together negatively influence perception of the MHA industry brand. The following sections will explore this analysis of the disenchanting elements and shed light on how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies.

Through the lens of enchantment, the analysis showed that it was a disenchantment from previous experiences of using brands within the MHA industry brand and other general societal preconceptions. These showed disenchantment with the MHA industry brand in particular, which implies that enchantment and disenchantment discourses may exist within other industry brands, particularly industry brands that are influenced by stigma, associations and industry brand image. These emerged through discussions surrounding the disenchantment discourses of 1) Lack of effectiveness 2) Stressors of technology 3) Relations to mental health.

DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE MHA INDUSTRY BRAND

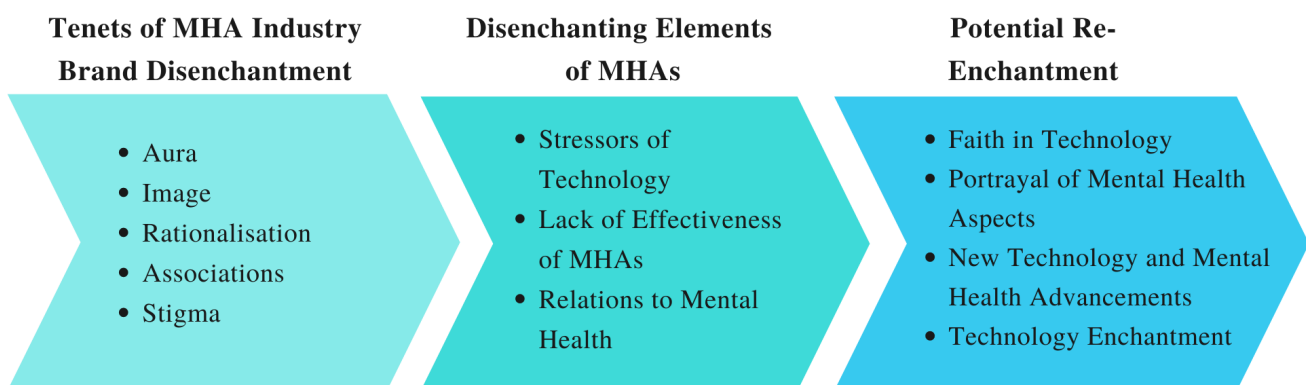


Figure 1. A summary of the disenchantment with the MHA industry brand with a display of the different tenets and disenchantment elements to take into account, which present re-enchantment possibilities.

4.3 Disenchanted Elements

4.3.1 Lack of Effectiveness of MHAs

Effectiveness

The *effectiveness* of a product or service was shown to be a determining aspect of whether a consumer experiences disenchantment and re-enchantment. Part of the re-enchantment process is dependent on the craft and skill presented by a brand (Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013). In turn, this view of one encounter with a brand could, and very likely will, permeate a consumer's view of the entire industry brand. The majority of the participants expressed negative experiences with one app, leading to disbelief in apps' ability to perform for that purpose.

"I tried an app that recorded when you sleep, and I mean it was good but I became tired of it after a while because it needed to be placed in my bed to work and the notifications became tedious." - Karl

The results show that disenchantment could happen after as few as one disenchanting encounter. Later on informants disclosed views and emotions regarding how the negative perception of being associated with mental health may have added to the distance created in for example the quote, after having had just one negative encounter, which can be connected to that brand image is anchored in the beliefs and impressions a consumer has (Burmam et al., 2008, Kornberger, 2010). Therefore, the perception of effectiveness of mental health care impacts the view of the MHA industry brand, seeing as this also added to the disbelief in sleep apps, and MHAs all together. Among the informants this distrust and disappointment was embodied in their answers regarding that public health care did not meet their expectations and private health care was considered too expensive. In addition, the knowledge that informants had acquired from friends' and families' experiences was overall quite negative concerning the effectiveness of

the services. Thus, it became evident that the distrust in the quality of effectiveness had permeated several layers of judgement of other apps in the sleep category and MHAs.

Through the discourse analysis conducted on the informants' answers, we uncovered that the perception of mental health was shown to influence the perception of MHAs, and in turn the MHA industry brand. These sort of connections between brands, and the overall perception i.e., the industry brand, were made repeatedly by all informants. There is a torn image of the benefits of MHAs, including the apps for sleep. Informants spoke about how this perception had been transferred to their overall perception of MHAs, i.e., the mental health app industry brand in terms of their perception and desire to use other MHAs. The informants even had negative associations with MHAs, and in turn a disenchanted perception of the idea of the MHA industry brand, without necessarily having tried any apps in this area. Hence the preconceived judgement and negative associations were already in place (Bajde, 2019).

"Well, I have never used [MHAs], but you have heard of people that have. Then you have been a bit more sceptical to it.... But if it would work, or how it works. It feels a little too technical, but it would surely be good if it did work" - Klara

The apps in the well-being category without professional assistance were considered as being solely for profit or not legitimate and had also transferred a layer of distrust. Moreover, it ties into the mental health app industry brand being associated with the tendencies mentioned above. In addition, indicators of an overall disenchantment with mental healthcare apps are that there is a belief it may help better with mental health care treatment face to face.

The duality of the informants' views, beliefs and associations indicate a clear ambivalence with the mental health app industry brand. This has been observed in other notoriously

related contexts where disenchantment is prevalent and has an influence on marketing, however, it is not impossible to work around to create re-enchantment (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). Although, at times disenchanting elements can be a difficult problem to solve for companies within an industry brand that is riddled with negative associations from many angles, there is promise within disenchanting elements to create re-enchantment (Ibid).

4.3.2 Stressors of Technology

Notifications

Another disenchanting element of digital technology is *stressors*. At the same time that digital technology simplifies our lives, makes everything interconnected and ultimately has become a part of our lives, it also brings negative disenchanting elements. Although the informants showed some positive associations towards apps and technology, it was the disenchantment discourses that were protruding first and foremost in regard to technical features and apps. Some turned off notifications and some even expressed having deleted the app. As a result, this made them hesitant to download another app if it would have similar notification patterns, showing signs of disenchantment from stressors that apps have. It becomes contradictory in the context of mental health or wellbeing apps where the purpose is to achieve the opposite of stressing the user. In turn, this expressed disenchantment shaped the informants' perception of the mental health app industry brand, since it was their persistent view.

“The app that I spoke about for mental health was very... when I did not go in and add inquiries regularly it would also remind you regularly that you had not been in the app for a while and, well, I did not want that so I removed the notifications.” - Peter

In the light of this, when negative associations are made constantly with the same brand or product (Bajde, 2019), as with apps in the mental health category and apps in general, it shows signs of being transferred to the industry brand within which these exist. Once

exposure becomes too frequent or unpleasant due to an array of reasons, it begins to irritate and rather than having a positive impact, it can have the opposite effect.

Data Tracking

All informants talked about feeling the need to be vigilant to data tracking on apps. A clear theme that emerged from the empirical material was when informants talked about the importance of transparency regarding apps that are collecting data, and measures to protect themselves from this in a symbolic manner. When discussing Data Tracking the informants expressed their awareness of apps' data tracking activities that were perceived to be privacy invasive. Yet it was something that consumers had to accept despite their negative feelings about this. Here, one informant speaks about how apps make consumers use apps more frequently through the use of their personal data:

“Almost all apps... Are designed to keep you scrolling and just keep you on the apps and I mean if their whole purpose is to make you addicted to the scrolling, that's going to be degenerative to your mental health and so they can't really be fully transparent.”

- Christian

By speaking about “all apps”, the informant shows their distrust in the app industry and their ability, even intentions to protect users' data. The informant had previously spoken about having used MHAs in the past, towards which they wanted to convey that they were positive about the digital service yet had some reservations regarding apps. In the quote, the informant speaks about data tracking as something all apps do, and as something that all consumers are victims of, but also to convey that the informant is aware and not oblivious. Most informants were vocal about being conscious of their personal data, but also disclosed helplessness, which left them feeling negative about apps. Similarly, Torous et al. (2018) and Borghouts et al. (2021) found that consumers perceived apps to not respect their privacy, and thus were not seen

as trustworthy, much like the tendencies found in the discourses of the informants in this study. This perception of apps could also be connected to the industry aura of the MHA industry, which among other things acts as an expression of an industry's moral character (Bajde et al., 2022). Consider the following statement:

“I think it is very important with personal integrity especially when it comes to health as well, you do not want that information to disappear somewhere that you can not track”
- Peter

The issue of data tracking and the trustworthiness of apps disturbed the informants' romantic notion about the app industry's ability to solve everyday issues, create smooth experiences and be a digital solution to most issues in a safe and morally conscious manner. Resulting in annoyance and frustration regarding the data tracking situation. This is in line with Lupton (2019) who argues that apps may become disenchanting when their limitations become too intrusive or when they are perceived to be irritating or frustrating. The negative perception could also be connected to the brand image of the app industry and could pose a problem for companies operating in the MHA industry since, due to the sensitivity of the topic of mental health and mental health data, data tracking complicates the industry's endeavour to establish themselves as legitimate and trustworthy with users' best interest at heart. A common activity for growing industries according to Bajde (2019) in their research on industry brands. It could be argued that due to the loss of positive, romantic and magical elements (Hartmann and Ostberg, 2013) of digital technology, because of the cold shower that is data tracking and privacy issues on apps, disenchantment with the industry brand of MHAs occurs.

However, while experiencing disenchantment with both MHAs and apps in general due to the data tracking issue, ultimately this was not

enough to hinder the desire to use apps or MHAs if perceived to be needed, since informants found it natural to use apps as one of the first steps to solve problems in their lives. This became especially clear when, towards the end of the interview and after discussing disenchanting elements, the informants were shown an example of a mental health app, in this case Learning to Sleep. In the following quote an informant talks about this:

“No but based on what I see, what I can see when I am in here scrolling, then I feel that it is not something that is like, god I should not be using this app, but if I had a problem, then I would have been very open to using this app and test it at least.” - Christina

This quote showcases how almost all informants reasoned about how they would feel about trying a new mental health app. They were generally open to this thought, despite their previous negative perceptions about the app industry in general and the mental health app industry. Tendencies of re-enchantment arose around the concept of new apps, or new technology. Using apps had become ingrained in the informants' lives and turning to digital solutions to solve their problems was natural to them. Whether it concerns using search engines, social media or other apps. The informants' faith in technology as a problem solver in their lives in this particular case overwrote the disenchanting elements concerning data tracking. In a similar light, Lupton (2013) found that mobile digital devices could be perceived as enchantment technologies when used for health purposes, and Davis (2012) adds that these technologies take part in “techno-utopia” where technology is positioned as an indicator of progress and a key to the promotion of human happiness, well-being and health. Additionally, the informant's openness to try new apps could be explained by what Belk et al. (2021) discuss concerning enchantment and technology, where they argue that in the sphere of new technologies, anticipatory consumption has

seen a massive increase as consumers seek for the next new thing. However, further research is needed to investigate the extent to which digital technology plays a role in the re-enchantment process of apps.

The Smartphone

Almost all informants expressed paradoxical feelings about using a smartphone, and through it, apps, as a tool to relax, improve sleep or as help to fall asleep faster. A clear theme that emerged from the empirical material was when informants talked about how the nature of smartphones and the apps they contain may be distracting and disturbing, thus counteracting the purpose of using apps for mental health such as to assist with meditation or sleep. These thoughts produced a paradox for the informants, who previously expressed positive feelings about MHAs as a tool in general due to them making mental health care more accessible. The positive perceptions are in line with previous research on consumer perceptions on MHAs (Apolinário-Hagen et al., 2017; Qu et al., 2020). The informants repeatedly conveyed that they were positive about digital technology, despite discussing its many negative aspects of it, suggesting that it was important to be a person who values technology. Some informants also spoke about becoming curious and excited about apps, in this case, MHAs, but that the feeling does not last, and once downloaded they remain sparsely or never used:

“I think the concept is really good, that there are apps that can easily help to improve your health, like meditation apps that I have downloaded, so I think it is a great idea. But then I download the app and never really start using it. I guess it is the human factor of thinking you are going to do something but then it does not happen, you do other things or forget the apps are there.” - Christina

Here the informant speaks about apps first being objects of curiosity and excitement and then losing these elements quickly. One could

argue that this is in line with what Ritzer (2005) refers to as the McDonaldization of society, which creates short term enchantment with its efficiency and speed, but inevitably leads to disenchantment, when the apps are no longer exciting and new. In everyday life, a prominent focus on rationality and efficiency displaces and reduces the room for imagination, fantasising, romance and magic over time (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019), much like in the case of *Christina*, who expresses their curiosity about new apps and anticipation about what they can do for the user but then lose these feelings as the apps are easily forgotten and deprioritised. This is also in line with Bardini’s (2014) nickname for apps, “charming junkware”, referring to apps’ ability to enchant at first, but then quickly become obsolete and disposable. The comment by Christina also depicts how apps have become mundane in daily life, which in combination with the discussion above, shows how the rationalisation of apps is acting as a tenant to the disenchantment of the same. Here, one informant speaks about how apps designed to help users sleep may due to their nature, be an issue instead of a solution:

“... Phones, of course, can be a disturbance. It could be in terms of sounds, even if you could turn them off. But mostly because of the light from the phones, it disturbs your tiredness, which affects humans, that's something I have read. So looking at your phone when you are going to bed is not something one perceives as good.” - Jacob

When discussing smartphone use the informants disclosed as a way of negotiating the paradox of negative aspects of smartphone use, with the positive. It was important for the informants to convey their awareness and negative perceptions of the large role smartphones play in their lives, but also to still signal that they were positive about technology and the benefits it brings. The paradoxical feelings toward apps demonstrate, in line with Lupton (2019), that the human-app assemblage is very mobile and dynamic. Several informants also made the

point of conveying that they felt negative about how smartphones had become a big part of their lives, which created disenchantment with apps by disturbing romantic ideas about technology. In a similar light, Lupton (2019) argues that disenchantment can occur if people feel forced to continue using them. In this case, consumers looked to other solutions separate from technology to fulfil their desires of finding calm, anxiety-free, and peaceful sleeping tools, but they would still be open to trying a new app in the future. For instance, they were positive after seeing the app Learning to Sleep in person and when looking at its features. This was interesting since the interview had brought up many conflicting and negative feelings towards apps in general and MHAs. Again showing the paradox of feelings towards apps yet faith in future technology and the new. This is in line with Belk et al., (2021) and Belk et al. (2003) who argue that as the temporary enchantment created by the romantic notion of technological utopia fades, it creates a sense of disenchantment, and leaves consumers wanting more to desire.

Negative perceptions or disenchantment with smartphone and app usage, in general, could influence the industry image of MHAs, since brand image is essentially concerned with perceptions groups hold about brands (Burmam et al., 2008). It could be argued that the industry brand of MHAs could be influenced by negative doppelganger images of smartphones and the role they play in consumers' lives, which may be presented in sensationalised media reports for instance (Giesler, 2012). These can frighten or concern consumers (Giesler, 2012), which could explain the sense of worry present in the statement by Jacob. Thus, the paradox of mental health care offered through smartphones may negatively influence the industry brand of MHAs since many informants expressed concerns about how the negative but natural aspects of smartphones and apps may create a conflict with their perception of how mental health care should

be offered. Or that smartphones may cause the issues that the MHAs are supposed to treat.

4.3.3 Relations to Mental Health

Psychologists

When informants were asked to explain their views on psychologists and reflect on the word "psychologist", their conflicting views became evident. All participants considered it good to speak to a psychologist and the majority said that everyone should speak to a psychologist at some point. This positive view showed some level of enchantment with the idea of mental health becoming more accepted and readily available. For example, through apps to improve oneself.

"I think it is good that you can speak to psychologists online. It is making it more easily accessible" - Peter

This positive outlook was touched upon often by informants, implying that enchantment was present with a concept that has previously been less accepted and even ostracised (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). In addition, the modernisation of mental health through the means of apps adds to the admiration of mental health that previously has been quite frowned upon. The marriage between new technology and the increasing acceptance of mental health could plausibly be a combination to combat the disenchantment of the stigma surrounding mental health treatments and the heavy burden apparently carried in the word psychologists, expressed by most informants.

This was observed when informants reflected upon their perception of the word "psychologist" and whether they would use the LTS app showcased to them. From the discourse analysis of the informants' body language and tone when they expressed not having any desire to use the app themselves, it contributed to these associations with the societal trademark of psychologists that were not as positive as their answers had previously conveyed. This suggests an overall view of

psychologists within the mental health industry brand carried on to apps, not only in clinical form (Klein & Cook, 2010; Levin et al., 2018). The informants displayed conflicting views regarding the desire to use the LTS app, despite having expressed a positive outlook on the raised mental health awareness and the desire to improve or optimise sleep. It became prevalent when asked about personally using LTS for sleep improvement that the term “psychologist” was discouraging. When they saw the display of utilising psychologists as its form of licensed personnel a disconnect appeared to happen, even though the psychologists at LTS provide no treatment of psychological issues, only CBT purely for routines and behavioural patterns for sleep improvement. There appeared to be a reluctance to be associated with something related to mental health issues, in this case psychologists, and thus not using services, in line with previous research (Klein & Cook, 2010; Levin et al., 2018, Kim et al., 2022). This implied a disenchantment with the entire concept of psychologists existing from views of the industry brand at large, from the negative assumptions carried with the concept (Hartmann & Brunk, 2019).

There was also a layer of criticism towards it being moved to a digital platform since it would remove the “human elements” from the craft. Body language and the human connection to the psychologist were considered important. Consider the following statement by Klara when she speaks about sharing personal information with a psychologist through an app:

“When you are talking about such topics that you are talking about. It's a little more deep, maybe? And then maybe you want a little more connection and I think you get more of that in reality.” - Klara

Here Klara expresses that she thinks a special connection between the person seeking help and the psychologist is lost when having therapy sessions through an app. Drawing on theory about how craft production is an

essential part of branding Hartmann and Ostberg (2013) it underscores how it is carried over to the industry brand, since most informants gave this claim although they also disclosed never having tried the digital app format. This emphasises that the views are assumptive and supported by research on how the industrial society leaves little room for elements rendering enchantment (Ostergaard, 2013), it can be suggested that these negative associations are part of the MHA industry brand. Furthermore, the stigma surrounding mental health (Kim et al, 2022) is leaving a mark on the mental health app brand industry still.

Mental Health Care

Stigma concerns the complex feelings toward mental health care, held by the informants. The theme was found in the way the informants spoke about how they felt about words such as mental health and psychologists, language often used in the marketing and the interface of MHAs. While on the one hand being open and positive to other people seeing a psychologist, it became clear that when asked how the informants associated the word psychologist and how they felt about using one, the answers were negative. The results regarding their use cases are in line with previous research by Kim et al. (2022). Some informants expressed it could still be considered taboo, and that they associated the word psychologist with having big problems that could not be solved by themselves. These responses also conveyed a sense of shame in not being able to solve things on their own but instead needing professional help. It was expressed that this did not make the informants feel good about themselves. Consider the following statement were one informant expresses the stigma of talking to a psychologist:

“Yes, but maybe it is because it is a bit shameful to seek help. And we have this like cultural thing, maybe mainly in our culture, that we are supposed to be independent and have control. And seeking help in a society where you are expected to be independent and

seek control or have control is... Maybe not desirable” - Jenny

All participants expressed concerns regarding stigmatisation around mental health, even in regard to MHAs despite being associated with less severe needs. The statement by Jenny showcases how the informants think that individuals seeking help for mental health issues may be perceived negatively. This perception could be explained by the concept of self-stigma, where seeking treatment refers to the self-devaluation occurring due to the internalisation of negative attitudes towards a stigmatised group, such as those seeking treatment for mental health (Corrigan, 2004). Many participants expressed that they would be open to letting others know they were using a MHAs, but only close friends whom they trusted. Consider the following statement:

“I think for my closest friends, I probably would have done it. I think so. It may be a bit about, as I mentioned earlier, society and the type of culture we live in. But also because it is perhaps the Swedish culture that is about being a little more individualistic, a little more on our own, so you may be stuck in that I guess. It lies deep within oneself.” - Hampus

This shows that the informants are careful with whom they share this information to avoid judgement from others in society. The statement from *Hampus* also shows that seeking help and being vulnerable is perceived to not be part of the Swedish identity, where individuals should make it on their own. Thus, despite expressing that they are open to the thought of using MHAs, the concept of mental health is still riddled with stigma present in society. One could argue that these experiences could create disenchantment, since according to Lupton (2019), apps may lose their enchantment when other people disapprove of using them. The discourses on stigma around mental health care found in the empirical material was a strong feeling. Interestingly, the allure of and desire to consume new technology was

not enough to show potential for re-enchantment. Rather, it influenced the informants’ desire to use MHAs negatively. The stigma of mental health could therefore be a source of disenchantment regarding MHAs in general and could also influence the industry brand of MHAs negatively. Researchers have previously argued that smartphone apps could be a good platform to reach younger people with mental health services due to their perceived ease of use and high value (Qu, Sas, Roquet & Doherty, 2020). However, the analysis shows that despite that the informants agree with this argument, how they speak about the stigma of mental health, is stronger than the perceived benefits and in turn creates disenchantment with MHAs overall. Thus, part of the reason why the uptake of MHAs remains low, despite a growing mental health app industry and increasing mental health issues globally (Torous et al., 2018), could be due to the disenchanting influence of stigma.

However, results also showed, in line with Kim et al. (2022) that despite the stigma toward mental health in general and mental health treatment, the informants were more open to accepting MHAs due to their discreet and private nature. This was interesting because almost all the informants were positive about MHAs for others than themselves because of these reasons. Which showed an attempt at distancing themselves from the concept of needing help or that the image of a person using a MHA does not resonate with how the informants see themselves, their identity and how they live their lives. This could be crucial for the industry brand of MHAs since in consumer society brands are symbols which consumers use to express their identity and lifestyle (Kornberger, 2010).

4.4 Re-enchantment possibilities

In light of the disenchantment of MHAs, it also presents possibilities for re-enchantment. Through the discourse analysis of the informants answers it was found that they had

a continuous re-negotiation with themselves and their faith in technology to solve issues in their lives, providing knowledge of possible re-enchantment opportunities through new technology. This is in line with previous research by Hartmann and Ostberg (2013) investigating enchantment of an individual craft brand over time, where rationalisation also had disenchanting effects, manifested in challenged authenticity. Re-enchantment of the brand was eventually negotiated through several discourses concerning the romantic notion of the craft producer, which had been hurt by the rationalisation of the brand. Despite looking at very different types of products, the loss of a human and personal touch in both cases leads to disenchantment with the brand. This is interesting since it suggests that even brands of entire industries can be subject to this phenomenon and that individual companies operating in industries with challenging brands should consider both the potentially disenchanting elements of their industry but also the possibilities of re-enchanting consumers with their products and services. The research by Belk et al. (2021) shows promise in inspiring academic research on enchantment and technology.

More research is needed to develop an understanding of this, and the role technology plays.

5. Discussion

5.1 Theoretical Contributions

Through the lens of enchantment, the findings of this study contribute to the scarce but rising research area of industry brands and develop an understanding of industry brands by showing how consumer perceptions of industry brands, through enchantment discourses, influence companies. In answering the question *How do perceptions of the industry brand of MHA shape the desire to use the apps?*, we suggest that industry brands are subject to several subcomponents shaping the perception of services, before or after the consumers have experienced or used the services themselves. The subcomponents of industry brands include *trustworthiness, self-connection, lifestyle resonance, and myth*.

SUBCOMPONENTS OF INDUSTRY BRANDS

THROUGH THE LENS OF ENCHANTMENT AND DISENCHANTMENT DISCOURSES



Figure 2. A depiction of the subcomponents of industry brands observed through disenchantment discourses, and the influence between industry brands and individual brands.

5.1.1 Trustworthiness

Through the lens of enchantment, we suggest trustworthiness to be a subcomponent of industry brands. Through the analysis, it was found that *Data Tracking* and *Effectiveness* were disenchanting elements, specific to the MHA industry brand, which influenced consumer desire to use MHAs. However, we argue that this could be a question of whether consumers perceive that industry brands can be trusted and the fit between an industry brand's claims of trustworthiness and consumer perceptions. Thus, it concerns the Trustworthiness of industry brands. Researchers have previously recognised trustworthiness and legitimacy, as important to growing industry brands (Bajde, 2019), and have emphasised the importance for industries to build trust to establish legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders (Humphreys and Thompson 2014; Popp 2016). However, in this research, the notion is developed further by suggesting that trustworthiness is a subcomponent of industry brands because consumers use it to make sense of sellers in the industry, which is one of the most important roles of brands (Kotler, 1997). Trustworthiness has been found to affect consumers' choices and brand consideration on the individual brand level (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Through the lens of enchantment, this study shows that Trustworthiness can have an influence on the more aggregate industry brand level as well.

5.1.2 Self-connection

The way consumers reflect on brands has a connection to themselves. Similarly, this connection is transferred to the bigger picture of industry brands since an experience with even as little as one brand has the potential to be translated into the view of the industry brand. Brands become a reflection of lifestyle consumption and consumer's personalities (Kornberger, 2010). Furthermore, the self-connection between the self and an industry brand is part of what creates enchantment or disenchantment. If a person does not want to be related to the negative

aspects of an industry brand, it is unlikely that they have the desire to consume the brands related to it.

The findings also shed light on what aspects of the MHA industry brand are important, to understand how consumers make sense of industry brands. These include elements of industry aura and industry image that constitute how people resonate regarding an industry brand through self-connection. Moreover, this self-connection has been shown to be created through a sociocultural context, where in the case of MHAs is significantly influenced by stigma and preconceived notions.

Previous studies have investigated apps' ability to aid in overcoming the stigma surrounding mental health (Kim et al., 2022; Levin et al., 2018), important to alleviate the inevitable self-connection that occurs to industry brands. These studies investigated the acceptance of MHAs and found that apps may offer less intimidating and intense experiences, than face to face services. However, this appears to be complex as in order to stress legitimacy, crucial to the trust in a service, highlighting that it utilises proven methods and professionals (e.g., CBT and psychologists), also stress these negative associations with the industry brand that the consumers connect with themselves. As Kim et al. (2022) we recognise the role of user perceptions of the technology carrying the app, i.e., the smartphone. Additionally, we also agree with Kim et al. (2022) that perceptions of MHAs are not only based on perception of technology, but on consumers' understanding of mental health and mental health care, which carries stigma. However, while previous research (Kim et al., 2022; Levin et al., 2018), found acceptance of apps, our results show that the stigma of mental health was strong enough to create disenchantment with the industry brand of MHAs and negatively shape consumers desire to use the apps, despite their positive feelings towards the digital format and apps in general. In this particular case, tendencies of re-enchantment mediated through discourses

on technology were not found, indicating the strong influence stigma has in this case. This could be part of the explanation for the discrepancy between low MHA uptake and an increase in mental health issues globally (Torous et al., 2018). Despite these interesting results, more research is needed to further develop the knowledge and understanding of how industry brands shape company performance. Additionally, more research on stigma and enchantment in the industry brand context will provide useful and interesting insights to this discussion.

Where this becomes problematic is when brands that are not directly part of the industry brand image that consumers have adopted, will almost automatically be placed in the shadow indicated by this study. Looking even further, brands that are misplaced into an industry brand image whilst not having strong relations to the industry brand, for instance, a brand that provides a service that is not within mental health, but utilises professionals related to that industry brand and therefore becomes subject to the same disenchantment that mental health carries, although it entails nothing of the sort. Likely the consumer who is afraid to be associated with the stigma of for example mental health will avoid this brand due to having the perceived notion of the industry brand. Despite there being a more positive outlook on mental health today, the deep-rooted stigma still persists. It might take time until it completely dissolves, making branding within disenchanted industry brands especially difficult since the consumer will inevitably relate it to their perception of the self.

5.1.3 Lifestyle Resonance

Moreover, through the lens of enchantment, we suggest Lifestyle Resonance to be a subcomponent of industry brands. Through the analysis, it was found that stress from *The Smartphone* and *Notifications* were disenchanting elements specific to the MHA industry brand, which influence consumer desire to use the services of individual firms. However, this study argues that this is a

question of an industry brand's ability to appeal to consumers through societal ideals of lifestyles. Thus, it may be concerned with Lifestyle Resonance, meaning how consumers want to live their lives and what is perceived to be ideal ways to live (Fournier, Solomon & Englis, 2008). Researchers have previously recognised that brands with meanings that assist consumers in resolving identity challenges and concerns are more powerful than those that fail to meet ideal identity goals (Fournier et al., 2008). It has also been recognised that industries can gain popularity by operating under societal ideals, such as positive social change and meaningful connections to nature and local community, like in the case of the niche industry of community-supported agriculture which endorses a certain idealised lifestyle (Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007). Meaning that there could be a resonance between industry brand meanings and consumer ideals of how life should be lived. Suggesting a resonance between industry brand and consumers lifestyles. However, in this study, the notion is developed further by arguing that Lifestyle Resonance is a subcomponent of industry brands, since brands become reflections of consumers' personalities that make up our lifestyles (Kornberger, 2010). Thus, through the lens of enchantment, by considering Lifestyle Resonance as a subcomponent of industry brands this study sheds light on how consumers consider how well an industry brand fits with societal lifestyle ideals.

5.1.4 Myth

Through the lens of enchantment, this study suggests Myths to be a subcomponent of industry brands. The empirical material underscored the informants' hesitance to download MHAs due to disenchantment from previous experiences, which affected how they perceived apps on a more aggregate level and as brands and shaped disenchantment with the industry brand. Despite the fact that all brands within the MHA industry brand do not individually correspond to the negative associations that exist within the industry

brand image, brands can still become subject to the negative perception it carries. This assumptive nature is a concept present in myth and is also transferred to consumers' decisions as they are made based on the narratives of personal identities (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Although myth generally is a driver of enchantment, it can also lead to loss of enchantment when it becomes obsolete (Hartmann & Ostberg, 2013, Hartmann & Brunk, 2019). However, in this case when the myth regarding the industry brand is negatively derived from societal assumptions, it appears to have the opposite effect. As seen with the reluctance to download apps under the MHA umbrella, the MHA industry brand is subject to disenchantment to some extent rooted in myth which is passed on to MHA brands. In turn, if the myths present in an industry brand carry negative associations, it can make the consumers hesitant or even unwilling to use a product or service from an individual brand within the industry brand.

Similarly, it can be argued that a positive myth within an industry brand would translate into the consumers perception of an individual brand, which is presumed to then carry these enchantment elements. Furthermore, as this form of preconception can plausibly be derived from myth, brands within a disenchanted industry brand, as investigated in this study, inherently carry the disenchantment elements of the industry brand in consumers' minds. Although an individual brand may be the opposite of the negative myths in the industry brand, and would hold up to the expectations that the consumer has if they only went as far as to try it, consumers will not get the chance to experience it as the consumption is carried out according to how they want to be perceived and that they do not want to be associated with the myths established in society surrounding mental health, in turn, MHAs.

However, since disenchantment presents the opportunity for re-enchantment, it may be possible to change this narrative of the myth or by abstaining from elements associated

with the myth. This presents a possibility for brands within disenchanted industry brands to re-enchant, despite the overshadowing presence of an image, stigma or associations that can constitute a myth. With the awareness of the myth that clouds the consumers' perceptions, of in this instance all MHAs, it presents a marketing opportunity that would allow consumers to benefit from these apps. As LTS, which has the composition and nature of a sleep optimising app and may be just what the consumer is looking for, it is instead related to the myth and associations of MHAs, for example psychological therapy. An automatic filter may be implemented when the consumer is met by advertising of a perceived industry brand, and influences the impressions of the individual brand, since it is already established by the perception of the industry brand. These results could be important for individual companies to take into consideration when performing marketing activities.

5.2 Managerial Implications

This study contributes with several important implications considering industry brands, which could be useful for marketing managers. For the app industry in general, it could be important to consider that, in light of that disenchantment is required to experience re-enchantment with a brand, this presents a business opportunity for brands that are already in or aspire to venture into an industry whose brand is subject to disenchantment. Disenchanted industry brands are not inherently negative investment opportunities, since there is a possibility for re-enchantment of consumers. The informants showed emotions of promise towards the technological response to mental health care, with some disenchanting elements still in mind. The desire to solve problems with apps was prevalent in the informants' answers, even though their perceptions revealed the influence of stigma, not wanting to be associated with anything revolving around mental health and that digital mental health is not as effective or rewarding as traditional

therapy. Therefore, when done efficiently and with the knowledge of disenchanting elements in mind, it can be utilised by companies to their advantage.

Moreover, the real-life case app, Learning to Sleep, is associated with the MHA industry brand due to the presentation of the app. In particular the use and presentation of offering treatment from psychologists in their services. However, the app does not inherently involve any type of therapy, counselling or mental health disorder relations. Thus, it becomes increasingly important for marketing managers of individual company brands to be aware of which industry brand they are part of in the minds of consumers. Our findings show that individual brands end up being associated with the industry brand according to the industry brand image and associations that exist. This was particularly clear in the case of using the word “psychologist” in the marketing and app interface. Meaning that the keywords used in these instances, helped consumers to make sense of the type of industry a company belonged to, which may not always resonate with companies’ intentions.

Hence, marketing managers in other industries could benefit from the discussion by recognising the subcomponents of industry brands presented in this study. This study shows that brands of industries are important for individual companies since consumers consider their Trustworthiness, Lifestyle Resonance, Self-Connection and Myths. In turn, these influence how individual companies are perceived and desire to use their products and services. The findings of the study, therefore, highlight the importance of the positioning of individual brands within an industry, and as discussed above the importance of language in that process. Due to the industry brand to which a company is perceived to belong to in the eyes of consumers, marketing managers need to carefully consider the potential influence their positioning may have on the company.

5.3 Limitations

While this study has shed light on interesting findings regarding how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies, there are some limitations to discuss.

First, we want to acknowledge the limitations of the study addressed in the methodology section. For instance, not conducting interviews in person, but through video calls. However, the interview guide was successful in contributing to interesting discussions in the interviews which were found to be rich in disenchantment discourses, which aided in the process identifying the subcomponents of industry brands. Moreover, creating an understanding of desire or reluctance to use apps scratches on the surface of what the informants actually do. However, in a broader context the expressed views portray a share of the overall view of an industry brand, in this case the clear stigma and negative associations that exist within the MHA industry brand which are social discourses that are unconsciously engrained in consumers' thinking. These are strong patterns that indicate a clear inclination towards not desiring to use apps, to not be associated with the stigma.

It would be interesting to investigate further to fully grasp where the shoe does not fit. Moreover, having reflected upon the relative newness of the industry brand of MHAs it is possible that the consequences this may bring on the informants’ perceptions, in terms of familiarity and awareness. It would also make the study more transferable to recreate the study with the inclusion of other ethnicities, occupational backgrounds, and origins.

We apply a layer of critical thinking to the suggestions for re-enchantment, since the context and topic investigated was not to map re-enchantment strategies, rather how perceptions of industry brands, investigated through the lens of enchantment influence companies. However, to know what creates

re-enchantment is important to distinguish the disenchanting elements of a brand or in our case an industry brand. By resolving and turning the disenchanting elements into enchanting elements by strategic and innovative marketing in relation to the known causes to the industry brand, is ultimately what could create re-enchantment within the consumer, resulting in the sought-after enchantment. Thus, rendering it an interesting perspective for this study.

5.4 Directions for Future Research

This study has contributed to the scarce research on industry brands. By investigating industry brands through the lens of enchantment, interesting phenomena have been identified which could be interesting to investigate further. For instance, more research is needed to develop an understanding of the tenets to industry brand disenchantment, and whether some could be generalised across or found in other industries than the MHA industry. Additionally, this research only touched upon the possibility for re-enchantment with industry brands. Further research could investigate the process of re-enchantment to reveal more about how consumers relate to brands on an aggregate industry level. Moreover, the subcomponents of industry brands open up to more investigations regarding how industry brands can be understood and the processes they are subject to, more research is needed to understand and explore this phenomenon.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate further to fully grasp where the shoe does not fit. In addition, as mentioned in the limitations it could be interesting to investigate the perception of MHAs in other countries, of other ethnicities and occupational background, as the study focuses on a small segment of the market. In turn, it would provide a broader understanding and increased transferability of a similar study in a research context.

6. Conclusion

Through the lens of enchantment theory, this study explored how perceptions of the industry brand of MHAs shape desire to use the apps, to develop an understanding of how enchantment discourses of industry brands influence companies. The findings of this study contribute to the scarce but rising research area of industry brands. We answer the research question, by showing that the industry brand of MHAs carries disenchanting elements, mediated by discourses on tenets of MHA industry brand disenchantment, and how this negatively shapes consumers desire to use the apps.

First, through the discourse analysis, five tenets of MHA industry brand disenchantment were identified, including rationalisation, industry image, industry aura, stigma and associations. In addition, the pattern of how the encounter with one brand permeates the overall perception of brands within the same category, i.e. the perception of an industry brand. Second, three disenchanting element categories of the industry brand of MHAs were identified, which were mediated through the tenets: 1) Lack of Effectiveness of MHAs, 2) Stressors of Technology, and 3) Relations to Mental Health. This presents a possible route to re-enchantment where the enchantment of technology, portrayal of mental health aspects, new technology and mental health advancements portray positive influences on the consumers perception.

Lastly, investigating industry brands through the lens of enchantment has assisted in revealing new insights about industry brands and what they consist of. From the process that consumers undertake when trying to negotiate and make sense of an industry brand, we deduced four subcomponents to depict what constitutes an industry brand: Trustworthiness, Self-connection, Lifestyle Resonance, and Myth. These subcomponents are taken into account when consumers attempt to make sense of industry brands and

can influence individual companies operating in the industries depending on how well the components resonate with consumers.

Furthermore, the findings reveal opportunities and tendencies to re-enchantment through consumers' faith in technology and their search for the next new technology that claims to have the ability to improve their lives. However, more research is needed to develop an understanding of this phenomenon. Thus, the findings contribute to enchantment theory in relation to industry brands by demonstrating that the perceptions of brands of entire industries can be negotiated through discourses of disenchantment. In turn, these shape the desire to use MHAs negatively, by making the apps unappealing, some of which show tendencies to be overwritten by re-enchantment mediated through discourses on technology.

Industry brands are complex in nature, which is illuminated by the interconnectedness of the tenets. It becomes problematic when a brand does not resonate with disenchanting elements of the industry brand. But, with this knowledge brands can position and brand themselves to turn the disenchantment into re-enchantment.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide

Using apps

Have you ever used an app with the intention to improve your health?

As we are studying an app that intends to help people improve their sleep, we would like to ask you about your perception of an app related to sleep.

1. Which area of expertise would you relate to sleep? Why is that?
→ Would you relate it to healthcare, mindfulness, mental health, or something else?
2. If you would like to improve your sleep or help someone you know, how would you like to receive help and where would you turn to?

Perception of apps

What do you think of using apps to solve problems?

1. What do you think of using apps for wellbeing?

In what category would you place an app that is made to improve sleep?

→ general health care, mindfulness, mental health, wellbeing or other?

2. Have you or anyone you know ever downloaded or used apps for wellbeing, mental health, such as mindfulness or similar?
3. Which ones, why do you think you/they chose a digital option?

What experience have you had or heard other people have?

4. Have you or someone you know been disappointed/had a good experience with these apps?

5. Has this affected your perception of other apps?
6. How does this make you feel about these apps?
7. Are there any traits of an app in this context that would make you reluctant/unwilling to use it?
8. What are the criteria for you to trust an app? Are there any overall feelings about these apps?
9. What is legitimacy to you and how would this need to be presented?

Perceptions of mental health

Sleeping problems can be related to stress and mental health, what is your perspective of mental health in society in general?

1. What perspective have you gotten of mental healthcare from your own experiences or friends?
2. What is your perception of mental health care i.e. treatments etc?
3. Can you compare your perception of mental health care in person vs online?

Perception of online mental healthcare - further questioning apps

Looking at the broader picture, what do you think about online mental healthcare?

1.1. What constitutes online mental health care to you?

1. Which products and services do you relate to this?
2. What is the perspective you have gotten from media and commercials?
3. Have you thought of using an app or online service for mental healthcare or recommending it to a friend?
4. Why would you not choose to use this sort of app?

5. Would you tell others if you used this sort of app?
6. What do you think other people would think about you if you said you used this sort of app?
7. What is the general opinion in society about healthcare apps from your perception?

Perceptions of a sleeping treatment service/Showing them the Learning to Sleep app and the website

What type of service would you say this app provides/which category/area would you say this app belongs to/in? Thoughts? Impressions?

1. Would you use or recommend this app to someone?
2. Why would you choose to/not to use this app?
3. Is there something that would make you unwilling to use this app?
4. Given our earlier discussion, do you pick up on any differences between these online wellbeing apps you have talked about and learning to sleep? Why or why not?