



## **The Price We Pay**

The Autonomy of Store Managers in Making Price Decisions  
The Case of Grocery Retailing

av

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### **Akademisk avhandling**

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## Abstract

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In this dissertation, the store manager's autonomy in making price decisions is explored to further our understanding of this actor. As a result, the store manager's embeddedness in the manufacturer-retailer-consumer triad provides a more holistic view of the price decisions made in grocery retailing. In both the scientific literature and the grey literature, discussions of whom it is who actually makes the price decisions within grocery retailing are diverse and point to all three actors in the triad, including the store manager.

Through a theoretical departure in which price decisions and autonomy is discussed, it is possible to explore the store manager's ability to make price decisions in relation to the manufacturer-retailer-consumer triad. As an embedded actor in the triad, the store managers can, theoretically and speculatively, face restrictions in relation to all actors.

The context in which this dissertation is placed is that of the grocery retail branch in Sweden, where the three largest retail organisations have participated in the dissertation. This dissertation consists of the cover paper and five appended papers, where autonomy is discussed from a qualitative perspective within the frame of a mixed method approach. By looking at price decisions from the store manager's perspective, and his/her freedom in making price decisions, the dissertation contributes to the area of micro-foundations of pricing.

It is concluded that while store managers might not be formally autonomous in making price decisions, and that connected restrictions, due to the relationship and position of the actors in the original triad are in place, the store managers have enough freedom in relation to the store to implicitly and operationally influence price decisions. As a result, it is concluded that the possibility to resist decisions by acting as if they are autonomous, store managers become important actors to be taken into account when price decisions are made and evaluated.

*Keywords:* price decisions, relationships, triad, strategy, tactic, connected autonomy, connected restrictions

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