Dissertations from the Executive Doctorate in Business Administration Program

Crummer Graduate School of Business

2020

Susceptibility to Interpersonal Military Influence And Its Relationship With Heavyweight Motorcycles In The U.S.: A Generational Study

Robert J. Kelly

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO INTERPERSONAL MILITARY INFLUENCE AND ITS

RELATIONSHIP WITH HEAVYWEIGHT MOTORCYCLES

IN THE U.S.: A GENERATIONAL STUDY

By

Robert J. Kelly

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Executive Doctor of Business Administration

in the

Crummer Graduate School of Business, Rollins College

2020

Signature Page

Dissertation Defense: xxxxxxxx2020

DBA Candidate: Robert J. Kelly

The content and format of the dissertation are appropriate and acceptable for the

awarding of the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

Committee Chair

Tracey Kizer, Ph.D.: _____

Committee Second

Kimberly Jentsch, Ph.D.: _____

Acknowledgements

To my wife, Lynda, who gave me immeasurable support during this journey.

To my parents, Robert and Mary Kelly, who inspired me towards a lifetime of learning.

To my three children who continue to inspire me with excellence in their own academic pursuits.

To my faculty chair, Dr. Tracey Kizer; second, Dr. Kim Jentsch; reader, Dr. Jim Johnson;

technical advisor Dr. Shalini Gopalkrishnan; and the 2017-2020 Crummer Rollins faculty.

And to all those who have served or who are currently serving in the U.S. Military.

Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine existing and potential motorcycle owners'
susceptibility to military interpersonal influence as it relates to brand identification, brand loyalty
and purchase intention for cruiser and touring motorcycles, otherwise known as heavyweight
motorcycles. The study also explores the generational influences on these relationships with
regards to Generation Y and Baby Boomers. It contributes to existing literature by applying the
susceptibility to interpersonal influence scale originally developed by Bearden, et al. (1989) to
military influence. The research extends brand relationship literature (Fournier, 1998; Lam, et al.,
2012; Kuenzel & Haliday, 2010) to heavyweight motorcycles. The methodology employed PLS-
SEM analysis of data obtained from 226 online respondents who participated in a survey
utilizing adapted existing scales. The study finds that susceptibility to military interpersonal
influence positively relates to brand identification with heavyweight motorcycles and that it is
also positively related to brand loyalty and purchase intention as mediated by brand
identification. Generation strengthens the relationship between military influence and purchase
intention as mediated by brand identification and is stronger for Baby Boomers than Generation
Y. Direct effects of military influence to purchase intention and brand loyalty were negative,
indicating that mediation was partial and competitive. The competitive mediation points to a
missing mediator in the conceptual model that should be a focus of future research. The findings
confirm that the military serves as an information or normative influence for motorcycle
consumers, but only when this influence interacts with the brand's identity.

Keywords: generation; motorcycles, brand identification; brand loyalty, purchase
intention; consumer brand relationships; marketing; partial least squares equation modeling;
susceptibility to interpersonal influence, military, Baby Boomers, Generation Y.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Motorcycles in American History

Motorcycles have been part of the American landscape since the late 19th century. The two remaining major American motorcycle brands still in existence today had their start in the beginning years of the 20th century. Hendee Manufacturing Company's Indian Motorcycle production started in 1901, and Harley-Davidson Motorcycles began in 1903 (Library of Congress, 2020). Unlike the Harley Davidson brand, the company producing the Indian brand had changed names and owners over the years—from the Hendee Manufacturing Company to Indian Motorcycles to the Indian Motorcycle Company of America, which finally declared bankruptcy in 2003. The brand was revived by investors in 2008 and later sold to the current owner, Polaris, in 2011 (Indian Motorcycles, 2020b). The United States began using Harley Davidson motorcycles as military vehicles in wartime against Pancho Villa in 1916 and later greatly expanded their usage in the World Wars, with continued use through the war on terror today (Cortez, 2015).

Cortez (2015) offers a possible explanation for how the military's use of motorcycles influenced the birth of the motorcycle culture in the United States. During World War II, BMW of Germany had produced a more advanced motorcycle. These "enemy" motorcycles were reengineered to improve the design of U.S.-manufactured motorcycles. After the war, the glut of

military motorcycles produced a large inventory of surplus military vehicles that could be sold to civilian consumers (Cortez, 2015).

Military as a Part of Marketing Strategy

Harley-Davidson continues to recognize its heritage by incorporating the military into its marketing efforts. Harley-Davison publishes a website to market clothes with military themes to "honor the brave members and veterans of the armed forces" (Harley-Davidson Military Sales, 2020). Images of military personnel in uniform and veterans are easily accessed online as well (Harley-Davidson Military Sales, 2020). The marketing efforts and military buying programs are visible to anyone interested in motorcycles, and it is likely that the military association may influence patriotic non-military individuals as well as members of the military and veterans. The military is readily, although not exclusively, associated with patriotic characteristics, such as freedom and strength.

The other major U.S. heavyweight motorcycle brand, Indian, publishes a website dedicated to "honoring heroes" (Indian Motorcycles, 2020a). The website provides information on Indian products as well as an Indian-supported non-profit organization used to benefit military and first responders. While it is entirely likely the efforts by Indian and the buying program through Harley-Davidson are altruistic in nature, it is also possible that they are intended to foster patriotically linked brand identification.

One of the most popular non-U.S. country of origin motorcycle manufacturers is Honda (Statista, 2018). The founder of Honda was born around the same time Indian and Harley-Davidson were getting their start in the motorcycle business. Although Honda did not manufacture its first motorcycle until 1949, by 1968, they had produced ten million. In a shift from its focus on racing and sport bikes, in 1975 the company rolled out a potential competitor to

Indian and Harley-Davidson in the U.S. with its now famous touring motorcycle, the Gold Wing. In 1981, U.S. production of the Goldwing began in Ohio (Honda, 2020). There is evidence that manufacturers with a country of origin outside the U.S. also understand the appeal to the military, whether for altruistic or financial reasons. While Honda's military appreciation offers seem to be limited to their automobiles (Honda Financial, 2020), other non-U.S. manufacturers such as BMW and Kawasaki both offer military discounts to active duty members of the U.S. Military (Military Discounts, 2020)

Decline in Motorcycle Purchases

Despite Harley-Davidson and Indian's historic roots, and the presence of several large non-U.S. motorcycle manufacturers, America's fascination with the motorcycle seems to be declining. Americans purchased 472,000 motorcycles in 2017, a 10-year decrease of one million motorcycles (Wagner, 2019). While single-year sales for "dual sport" and off-highway motorcycles rose in 2017, sales of on-highway motorcycles decreased by 6.2% that same year (Statista, 2020a). This decrease is an indicator of the U.S. motorcycling industry's problem. The Motorcycle Industry Council (Ultimate Motorcycling, 2019) says overall purchases have increased from 2014 to 2018, with an increase in female ridership, but they acknowledge a problem with aging ridership and do not specify increases by motorcycle type. The U.S. Census Bureau lists data that shows the Baby Boomer generation, born between 1946 and 1965 (Makert, 2004), has been declining in numbers since 1999. Trends indicate that this cohort's population will continue to fall from over 70 million people currently to about 60 million by 2030 (United States Census Bureau, 2019a). The shrinking number of Baby Boomers represents a decrease in ridership that creates a gap necessitating that younger generations take the Baby Boomer's place as riders for the industry to thrive (Huber, 2018).

As further evidence of a motorcycle industry problem, on January 9, 2017, Polaris Industries announced that it was shutting down the Victory Motorcycle production line. Before the announced change, the company produced the Victory Motorcycle and the iconic Indian Motorcycle. Polaris indicated that the decision to end the Victory brand was in response to the competitive forces driving the motorcycle industry. The announcement reaffirmed Polaris's commitment to producing Indian Motorcycles in a one-brand strategy focused on the historic brand name (Polaris, 2017). The decision had special and personal impact to the author of this dissertation, who had purchased a new Victory motorcycle just three weeks prior to the announcement and who saw that purchase significantly devalued.

Generational Influences

Anecdotal evidence suggests that generational influence is one of the greatest factors leading to a decline in sales for motorcycles. In fact, Marino-Nachison (2018) published an article in Barron's Online that explored the possible reasons Generation Y may not be purchasing motorcycles. He offers several possible explanations for the generational difference in motorcycle buying – with Generation Y experiencing more student debt, later entry into life events such as marriage, a preference for experiential purchasing over product purchasing, and an overall lack of interest in entry-level motorcycles such as dirt bikes (Marino-Nachison, 2018). The explanations point to a problem dealing with how younger consumers consume and identify with products and brands, where the decline in total ridership could be a result of a decline in Generation Y ridership. The author suggests remedies such as creative financing or leases, sharing economy options, or even financial support for entry-level options into motorcycle riding (Marino-Nachison, 2018).

Recognizing the challenges to the motorcycle industry, the Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC) issued a press release in 2019 discussing a strategy for growing the number of motorcycle riders in the U.S. Their guidance was based on research findings demonstrating that individuals ride motorcycles as they seek out a culture that the MIC vice chair defined as one of "personal sovereignty" based on a "culture code" of "independence, power, mastery of both self and domain and being at least a little bit bad-ass about it" (Roadracing World, 2019). The MIC, which is clearly optimistic in their assessment, believes that manufacturers can reach more potential customers through better strategic planning. The MIC statistics support population maturation trends in motorcycle ownership, in which the median age of riders changed from 45 in 2012 to 50 in 2018. Other notable demographic trends indicated an increase in married riders from 63 to 68 percent, an increase in college graduate riders from 17 to 24 percent, and a decrease in household income for riders from $64,100 to $62,500 (Roadracing World, 2019). These statistics may bolster the idea of changing lifestyle milestones in younger generations as noted by Marino-Nachison (2018). They also indicate that generational buying differences could be lowering the desire to purchase motorcycles.

Motorcycle Trends in North America

With an understanding that Harley-Davidson, due to its large market share, may influence the larger population of heavyweight motorcycle sales in the U.S., it is important to look at Harley-Davidson trends in particular. Murphy (2019) discussed some of the challenges facing Harley- Davidson, which had experienced a 6% decrease in 2019 in sales when compared to the same quarter in the previous year. Armstrong (2019) discussed performance issues for Harley-Davidson, which included a 10.2% decrease in revenue, 26.8% decrease in net income, and

22.3% decrease in earnings per share when comparing the first quarter of 2018 to the first quarter of 2019.

As further evidence that generational buying influences were related to Harley-Davidson's and the motorcycle industry's problems, Huber (2018) cited a Bernstein research report that indicated Generation Y (born between 1986 and 2005) consumers were less enthusiastic about motorcycle purchasing than the previous generation.. The report goes on to indicate that lack of disposable income could be influencing the decrease in generational purchase behavior and also cites different life cycle events occurring later for Generation Y members, causing less of an urge to escape daily routines (as cited in Huber, 2018). As Harley-Davidson has the majority of U.S. motorcycle market share (Hanbury, 2017), the decrease in sales correlates with the decreases in the overall motorcycle market. The UBS company conducted a survey and found that Generation Y consumers consider purchasing a motorcycle for convenience and utility while older riders make purchases for recreational or image reasons (Ferris, 2019). This finding points to utilitarian purchasing reasons motivating Generation Y riders and hedonistic ones influencing Baby Boomer Generation riders (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). The UBS survey published an interesting secondary motivation for the younger generation's, mostly from the early Generation Y cohort (born 1986-2005), purchase intentions, highlighting a product that "goes with their self-image" (Ferris, 2019; Makert, 2004). It is perhaps in this secondary motivation where Harley-Davidson and other heavyweight motorcycle manufacturers may find hope, with the correct identity-related branding efforts, to increase business performance by understanding consumer motivations and generations.

While Harley-Davidson has been found to foster the greatest brand loyalty (Statista, 2018), other non-US brands such as BMW are growing their loyal customer base as well. Honda

and Kawasaki have shown the potential to win new brand-loyal customers due to appeals to economic and generational influences. Harley-Davidson tops the list of the most recognizable motorcycle brands, but it is interesting to note that number two on the list is Honda. After HD, the only US brands to appear in the top ten list are in the last two spots, with Indian in ninth and Polaris in tenth. Given the popularity of brands manufactured across various country of origins, this study will not be limited to only U.S. brands. As an important note, awareness of a brand lags ownership by a significant amount. For the top recognizable brands, all contain a category of owners willing to change to a different brand; however, Harley-Davidson shows the least propensity for brand switching among its customers (Statista, 2018).

Motorcycles Defined

Hanbury's (2017) differentiation of a motorcycle by size raises the question of what defines or accurately describes a motorcycle. In order to explore the decrease in motorcycle ridership, motorcycles and their classifications must first be understood. Different countries and U.S. states set various definitions for motorcycles, by way of example, one definition found in Florida state statutes indicates that a motorcycle is: "any motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground" (Kaire, 2016). Of note, Harley-Davidson measures market share for motorcycles over 600cc engines; while Polaris measures 900cc engine and larger for their share of the market (Duprey, 2017), indicating engine size helps to differentiate classification of motorcycles.

Pugliese and Cagan (2002) examine Harley-Davidson brand motorcycles from the perspective of "shape grammar," or a rules-based process to create a desired shape (p. 139). Pugliese and Cagan (2002) discuss Harley-Davison motorcycle's design brand characteristics that represent the brand's "freedom, power, and brotherhood" (p. 141). It is reasonable to

assume these design characteristics, even with other brands, could evoke the same reactions that could drive purchase intention. Pugliese and Cagan (2002) identify over 40 characteristics or rules needed to produce a Harley-like or heavyweight motorcycle. The V-twin engine, frame, handlebars, and seat all are key elements of the defining Harley-Davidson design characteristics whose variations are depicted in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows the top three identifiable model types "perceived as Harley by Harley-Davidson owners" (Pugliese & Cagan, 2002, p. 155). A heavyweight motorcycle, for purposes of this study, is one that resembles the shape grammar of a Harley-Davidson, with a specified engine size. Harley-Davidson's tracking mechanism of engine size in excess of 600cc can be added to the definition of a heavyweight motorcycle, which is a V-twin cruiser-style motorcycle with a larger than 600cc engine. It is interesting to note that with brand markings removed, it would take a trained eye to identify the difference between a U.S. and a non-U.S. heavyweight motorcycle that ascribed to Harley-Davidson shape grammar. Again, this study will focus on all cruisers and touring motorcycles that are part of the heavyweight community.
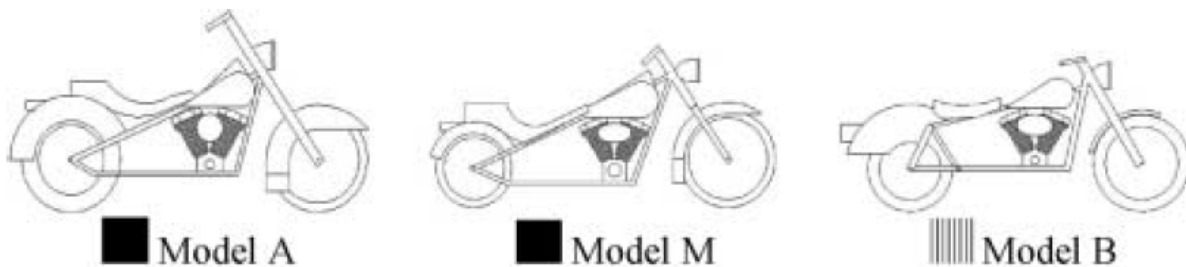
Figure 1. Harley-Davidson shape grammar

As mentioned above, the heavyweight motorcycle is differentiated from other motorcycles by engine size and Harley-like construction or shape-grammar. While BMW does not produce a touring style motorcycle to match Harley-Davidson shape grammar, they produce motorcycles with comparable engine size and touring uses and are therefore included in this

study. In the case of heavyweight motorcycles in the U.S., country of origin could serve as a differentiating brand characteristic, due to its influence on consumer beliefs, attitudes and perceptions (Munjal, 2014). The study intentionally excludes manufacturers of off-road and racing only motorcycles, such as KTM, as they represent a potential different segment of the market. Dirt Bikes can serve as beginner motorcycles that are ridden by teenagers or those learning to ride, who do not necessarily transition to street riding (Laplante, 2012). As opposed to dirt bikes and sport bikes, heavyweight motorcycles have physical characteristics, especially their comfortable riding position, that make owning them open to all generations. With the additional consideration that heavyweight motorcycles, such as a Harley-Davidson, can invoke patriotic feelings (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), the social identity found with a heavyweight motorcycle brand may involve one's national affiliation. Of note, Tajfel (1974) and Tajfel and Turner (1979) detailed Social Identity Theory in their foundational research, giving rise to the term social identity.

Justification for Study

Schouten and McAlexander (1995) put forth the notion of "sub-cultures of consumption" which is defined as "a distinctive subgroup of society that self-selects on the basis of a shared commitment to a particular product class, brand, or consumption activity" where the sub-culture provides influence for a potentially larger purchasing audience (p. 43). The authors spent three years conducting an ethnographic study of the Harley-Davison Subculture (HDSC) offering a marketing perspective for considering motorcycles as a unique topic. Their work is interesting in that the HDSC combines members from a variety of demographic categories into an aggregate of one consumer type. The authors describe the HDSC as a place that allows one to temporarily become someone else. They identified values associated with the HDSC that include "personal

freedom," "patriotism and American heritage…and…machismo" (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995, pp. 50-51). Schouten and McAlexander (1995) point out that as one becomes part of the HDSC, they experience a transformational experience (p. 55). To this end, building upon the idea that motorcycle communities support self-expression among subgroups of consumers, it is important to understand how intergenerational differences affect brand identification and related branding outcomes for heavyweight motorcycles. It is interesting to note that many motorcycle brands or manufacturers, such as BMW (Austin, 2009) and Ducati (Morandin, Bagozzi, & Bergami, 2013), have their own communities formed around those brands, and that the Harley-Davidson characteristics of patriotism and machismo may extend to those brands as well.

Statement of the Problem

Consistent with research that has already been presented, in 2018, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* published an article stating that motorcycle manufacturers were experiencing challenges with level or declining sales. The article cites two problematic, age-based trends where Generation Y consumers are not riding motorcycles and Baby Boomer consumers are no longer able to ride (Barrett, 2018). When combined with the above background on the motorcycle industry and the scholarly research on symbolic consumption, the problem is that as sales for heavyweight motorcycles decrease, shifting preferences among generational cohorts make it challenging for marketers to bring younger consumers into not only their brand, but the product in general, and make them loyal users. The first and larger challenge is to bring younger consumers to motorcycles as a product. It is within this challenge that the idea of susceptibility to interpersonal influence becomes important—especially when considered in the context of the military, which espouses the brand personality of heavyweight motorcycles. The problem can be further expanded to include the need to have a detailed understanding of how these influences

may drive brand identification with all major manufacturers of heavyweight motorcycles. It is important to note that Suzuki has seen the greatest number of younger riders of all the major heavyweight manufacturers, but the report providing that information does not specify the type of motorcycle attracting those riders (Statista, 2018). Suzuki and the other non-U.S. brands manufacture both heavyweight and non-heavyweight motorcycles.

Research Questions

In an attempt to address the problem described above, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

- How do influences from generational cohort members who have a current or potential future interest in purchasing a heavyweight motorcycle, interact with the relationships between susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and motorcycle purchase intention, brand identification and brand loyalty?

- How does brand identification explain purchase intention and brand loyalty as it relates to susceptibility to interpersonal military influence?

- How does susceptibility to interpersonal military influence relate to motorcycle purchase intention and brand loyalty towards heavyweight motorcycles?

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate how generational cohorts relate to an individual's brand identification with heavyweight motorcycles and subsequent purchase intention and brand loyalty. The study also seeks to provide insight into how susceptibility to military interpersonal influence relates to brand identification, purchase intention and brand loyalty. The model

guiding the dissertation is presented in Figure 2; the relationships between constructs will be

discussed in detail in Chapter 2.
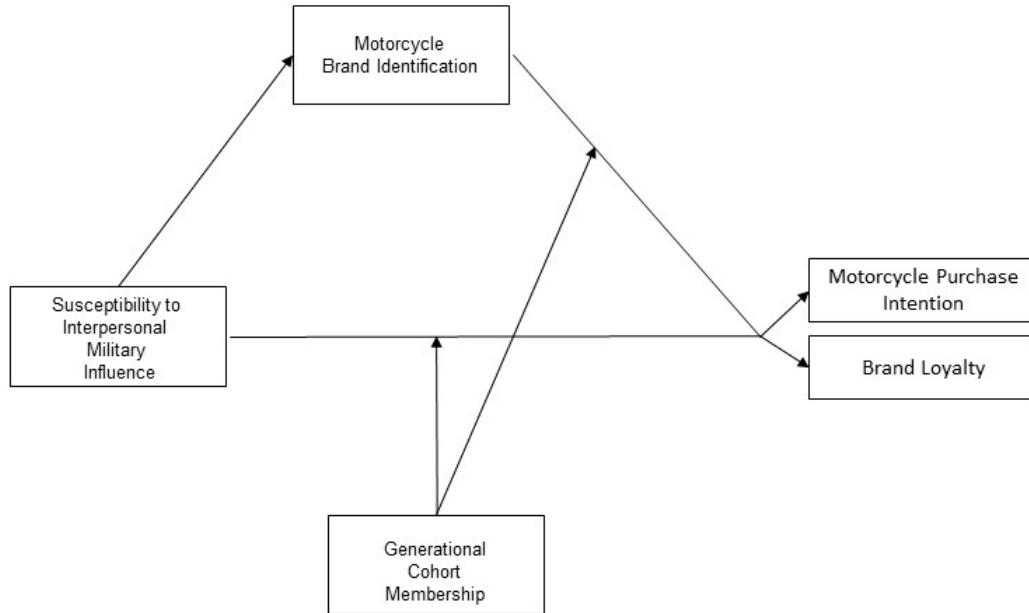
Figure 2. Conceptual Model

From a theoretical standpoint, while there is research covering the antecedents and

consequences of brand identification (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012), and generational

consumption (Tangsupwattana & Liu, 2018), a gap in the literature still exists in two main areas.

The first area deals with how social identity theory informs the discussion of generational

cohorts and brand identification concerning motorcycle purchase intention. This gap is

significant in that these different constructs and the theory overlap each other in important ways

that could help understand consumer behavior in a large industry that has clear challenges to its

survival. The second gap deals with military influence on civilian and military consumers. This

gap seems to be difficult to explain as advertising continues to use the military in their

promotions. As an indicator of the gap in research, a search of the phrase "military influence on

consumers" using EBSCO, ABI/Inform, and Google Scholar produced no usable results directly

matching the topic. Addressing these gaps will not only extend the literature in this area, but also extend our understanding of the intersection of identity and consumption.

From a practitioner standpoint, this dissertation can help provide useful information to heavyweight motorcycle manufacturer marketing efforts. Towards that end, this study will provide a foundation for companies to:

- Develop efficient communication methods to launch a distinctive and attractive brand identity for younger consumers and/or new consumers to the brand. Communication is important in creating and maintaining brand personality and subsequent brand identification among consumers.

- Establish a positive relationship between brand and consumer, taking into consideration characteristics and social needs of generational cohorts. If brand personality appears attractive to the consumer, then brand identification should be created or strengthened.

- Develop brand-building co-creation activities targeted at the identity differences between Generation Y and Baby Boomers.

- Build stronger brand communities to support brand identification and loyalty.

- Develop brand-building activities targeted at individuals who respond to military interpersonal influence.

Definition of Terms

Research regarding brand concepts involves several definitions that must be provided to better understand the relevant literature. Below are the key terms and definitions supporting this dissertation.

Table 1.

Key Definitions

Term	Definition	Reference
Attitudinal Loyalty	"psychological commitment that a consumer makes in the purchase act….without necessarily taking the actual repeat purchase behavior into account"	Jacoby, 1971 and Jarvis, 1976 as cited in Nam, Ekinici & Whyatt. 2011 p. 1015
Brand	"a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers…an intangible asset that is intended to create distinctive images and associations in the minds of stakeholders"	American Marketing Association
Brand Affect	Emotional response produced in consumer by use of a brand	Marzocchi, Morandin, & Bergami, 2011, pp. 96–97;
Brand Experience	"subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments."	Brakus et al., 2009, p. 53
Brand Identity	"the distinctive and relatively enduring characteristics of a focal brand (or company)."	He et al. 2011, p. 649
Brand Personality	"Human characteristics associated with a brand"	Aaker, 1997, p. 347
Consumer Brand Identification	"consumer's psychological state of perceiving, feeling, and valuing his or her belongingness with a brand"	Lam et al., 2012, p. 307
Consumer Brand Relationship	"the extent to which consumers feel that they are "in sync" with the brand"	Ghani & Tuhin, 2016, p. 951
Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence	"the need to identify or enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands…"	Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989, p. 474
Generation	"group of individuals born and living at the same time who, by virtue of their birth placement, share some common cultural or social characteristics"	Markert, 2004, p. 20
Generational Cohort	Groups divided into ten-year groupings who are "experiencing similar external events during their lifetime"	Markert, 2004, p. 21

Table 1.

Key Definitions

Term	Definition	Reference
Heavyweight Motorcycle	45-degree V-twin engine over 600cc – motorcycles that fit the "shape grammar" of a Harley-Davidson	Pugliese & Cagan, 2002
Social Identity	"That part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that group membership"	Taijfel, 1981, p. 255 as cited in Jackson & Smith, 1999, p.120

Organization of the Study

The study will be organized into four chapters following the introduction. A literature review will be completed in Chapter 2 covering the theories (social identity, generational, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence) and key constructs (brand identification and brand loyalty) in support of the five hypotheses to be tested in this study. The proposed methodology is presented in Chapter 3, detailing the instrument and sample size that will be used to collect data to analyze the conceptual model. The results will be analyzed and discussed in Chapter 4; followed by a discussion of general findings, managerial implications, an examination of research limitations, and possible areas for future research in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

This research will investigate the relationship between susceptibility to interpersonal military influence, as well as the role of generational cohorts, as they relate to brand identification and resultant brand loyalty and purchase intention. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this topic was selected due to the author's personal interest in motorcycle branding and the potential influence of generational theory on consumer choices in this changing industry. The examination of susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and heavyweight motorcycle brands allows the research to contribute to a gap in literature. The review in this chapter will present existing research on social identity theory, generational theory, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Research covering the main constructs of brand identification, purchase intention and brand loyalty will also be presented.

Existing research into these topics utilizes a variety of methods, with interesting contributions from ethnographic studies to quantitative analysis employing survey data. The breadth of these methods helps present a holistic coverage of the research areas. The major themes evident in the research are presented below:

- One's social identity can be created and validated through consumption – a concept referred to as symbolic consumption (Sorensen & Thomsen, 2006).

- Generational identity can help influence and explain behavior and can be integral to an individual's social identity (Van Rossem, 2018; Gurau, 2012).

- The Baby Boomer Generation and Generation Y have distinct identities (Bathmanathan et al., 2018; Markert, 2004).

- Brand identification is an area where an individual's self and social identity intersects with the brand identity or personality of a product or service (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010).

- Brand identification mediates both brand loyalty and purchase behavior (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; He et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2001; Esch et al., 2006).

- Purchase intention positively influences purchase behavior (De Canniere, Pelsmacker & Geuens, 2010).

- Brand communities are a manifestation of a group of individuals' identifications with a brand and their social identity (Morandin et al., 2013; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010).

- Individuals are influenced by others who possess referential power over a product's consumption or loyalty to a brand (Fernandes & Panda, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Social identity theory. Social identity theory belongs to the discipline of social psychology, which can be incorporated into branding and marketing research (Reicher, 2004; Tajfel, 1982; He et al., 2012). In its simplest, but incomplete form, social identity involves an individual's association or affinity for a group or an aspiration to become part of a group (Jackson & Smith, 1999). Current research indicates that social identity is a complex and dynamic system (Reicher, 2004; Jackson & Smith, 1999), which encompasses multiple components and dimensions, and which interacts with the environment (Carter, 2013). Henri

Tajfel originated social identity theory in 1959, continued to develop it through the 1970s, and then joined efforts with John Turner to fully delineate the theory (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). Jackson and Smith (1999) expanded on the initial work done by Tajfel (1982) to propose a framework of social identity. Jackson and Smith (1999) identified four "dimensions" of social identity that included "perceptions of the intergroup context," "attraction to the in-group," "interdependency beliefs or a common fate," and "depersonalization" (p. 121). The dimensions provide a model that considers how one perceives members outside their group, or the "out-group," in a negative way, and how one perceives a member of the group with which they identify, the "in-group," in a positive way. It also seeks to explain one's connectedness to their identified group and one's replacement of their individual identity with identity of the group (Jackson & Smith, 1999).

Social identity is contextual, or situationally dependent (Carter, 2013), and is dynamic – changing based on one's triggered identity (Reicher, 2004; Champniss, Wilson, & MacDonald, 2015; Carter, 2013). It involves degrees of adhesion to the in-group and repulsion to the out-group (Jackson & Smith, 1999; Austin, 2009), while maintaining both cognitive and emotional components (Lam et al., 2012, p. 308; Tajfel, 1982). It is multi-dimensional and involves some degree of depersonalization (Jackson & Smith, 1999). It acknowledges that there is a link between one's social identity and one's behavior as influenced by group norms (Christensen et al., 2004), and it stems from one's self-identity or self-categorization as developed or built by group interaction (Terry et al., 1999). Social identity relates to consumer brand relationships through the construct of symbolic consumption, which allows one to use products to build, reinforce, and communicate ideas about the individual and social self (Sorensen & Thomsen, 2005).

Champniss, Wilson, and MacDonald (2015) reinforce the dynamic nature of social identity when involved in purchasing behavior. They state that social identity can relate to behavioral norms within one's group. The authors suggest that marketers can guide an individual's selection of a social identity and can even help define that identity by adding characteristics to it, citing Harley-Davidson's use of the Harley Owners Group as an example. Christensen et al. (2004) also discuss norms within groups. They describe "injunctive norms" as having a "moral tone" dictating what individuals "should do" and "descriptive norms," or "typical behavior," done "regardless of its appropriateness" (p. 1296). Christensen et al. (2004) conclude that individuals use group norms as a baseline for guiding their behavior. Carter (2013) reveals that one experiences positive feelings when complying with the injunctive norms of the group. Descriptive norms produce a positive or negative response by individuals when they choose to conform to those norms. This situation is referred to as "identity-relevance of one's behavior," where the norms confirm one's "social identity" to influence behavior (Carter, 2013, p. 1306). These norms create external influencing forces. When patriotism and freedom represent norms supporting an individual's social identity, a military member's use of a product may relate to a strong interpersonal influence on purchase decisions. This does not imply associations with patriotism and freedom are unique to the military but posits that those characteristics are frequently associated with the armed forces of the United States. The military member's use of a given motorcycle brand may establish a descriptive norm that can trigger a social identity and drive brand loyalty and purchase behavior.

Using a brand as an example of norms and influence, Austin (2009) indirectly recognizes the dimensions of social identity in his study of motorcycle rallies and their encompassing rituals, describing them as "boundary building" for the group (p. 71). His research examined

BMW motorcycle riders and their participation in rallies associated with that specific motorcycle brand as evidence that the group membership created stronger ties with other riders or the "in-group" than those in the "out-group." Austin (2009) suggested that these ties were stronger than demographic commonalities shared with members of the out-group, producing a "collective conscience" (Durkheimm, 1915/1965, as cited in Austin, 2009, p. 87). The explanation of norms lays the foundation to understand how a military service member can create both a moral and typical external boundary condition for those who seek to purchase heavyweight motorcycles to reinforce patriotic or freedom based social identities.

Generational Theory. While the plethora of articles in today's media would have one believe that generational theory is a new idea, the concept dates to the early 20th century. Mannheim (1928; 1952) lists two dimensions of a generational cohort: "common location in a historic time period and a distinct consciousness that is a result of important events of that time" (Joshi et al., 2010, p. 397). Different definitional boundaries exist in describing the various generations (Garau, 2012), and while it is necessary to arrive at a decision of the age groupings making up a generational cohort prior to continuing this research paper, the explanatory value of generational theory is of greater significance than the exact generational brackets. Other authors (Schewe & Noble, 2000) argue that cohorts should be defined by shared experience. This dissertation acknowledges the idea of a cohort having a shared experience but uses the 10-year marker as an indicator of those shared experiences for a cohort and the 20-year delineator for an entire generation. Of note, Mannheim (1928; 1952) posited that a person is more likely to register a major event in their life between the ages of 17 to 25 than at other ages and to have that event influence their generational characteristics (Roberts, 1986). Mannheim's (1928;1952) theory helps further illuminate when a shared event may influence a generation, but the

important continued theme is that cohorts form around a shared set of experiences in general (Roberts, 1986). To illustrate, Parment (2013) cites one of his previous studies (2011) in describing some of the key environmental factors experienced by Generation Y consumers—to include "a period of economic growth, a strong emergence of social media…Internationalization …and strong influences from popular culture…financial turbulence and a lack of security." Baby Boomer Generational members were influenced by the "Vietnam War, a revolutionary outlook, travel and internationalization of trade, food and culture" (Parment, 2013, pp. 191–192). Using the accepted definition of the Baby Boomer Generation as a starting point, this research will use the generational and cohort definitions provided by Markert (2004) in Figure 3.

```
                          Generation
                (The Baby Boomers: 1946-1965)
                     (Gen-X: 1966-1985)
                     (Gen-Y: 1986-2005)

          ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
      Early Cohort                            Later Cohort
  (Early Boomers: 1946-1955)            (Late Boomers: 1956-1965)
  (Early Xers: 1966-1975)               (Late Xers: 1976-1985)
  (Early Ys: 1986-1995)                 (Late Ys: 1996-2005)

    ┌──────────┐                        ┌──────────┐
  Bihort 1      Bihort 2              Bihort 3      Bihort 4
(Early-Early   (Late-Early          (Early-Late    (Late-Late
 Boomers)       Boomers)             Boomers)       Boomers)
[1946-1950]    [1951-1955]          [1956-1960]    [1961-1965]
(Early-Early   (Late-Early          (Early-Late    (Late-Late
 Xers)          Xers)                Xers)          Xers)
[1966-1970]    [1971-1975]          [1976-1980]    [1981-1985]
(Early-Early   (Late-Early          (Early-Late    (Late-Late
 Ys)            Ys)                  Ys)            Ys)
[1986-1990]    [1991-1995]          [1996-2000]    [2001-2005]
```

Figure 3. Generation and Cohort Brackets (Source: Markert, 2004, p. 21)

As this study seeks to identify differences in brand identification between Generation Y and the Baby Boomer Generation, it will compare the reference group born between 1946 to 1965 (Baby Boomer Generation) to those born between 1986 to 2005 (Generation Y) and will further narrow the group with a focus on Baby Boomer Generational members born in the *later* cohort between 1956 and 1965 and Generation Y members born in the *early* cohort between 1986

and 1995—specifying some of the shared experiences for each of the two major cohorts as these are the cohorts more likely to ride motorcycles in each generation. This dissertation acknowledges again that definitions of the generations and cohorts vary based on the publication and researcher.

When integrating Social Identity Theory with Generational Theory, it is important to note that both involve the confluence of categorization of an individual's self-concept with experiences. Recall that the idea of "self-categorization," where individuals "create a social" identity by way of comparison with the similarities and differences of others is essential to the formation of one's social identity (Van Rossem, 2018, p. 436; Tajfel & Tuner, 1986). Similarly, individuals categorize themselves based on events and experiences occurring during their lifetime (Markert, 2004). Together, the two theories converge towards an understanding of viewing one's self based on social categories and experiences that are bound by group norms. In support of this idea, Van Rossem (2018) found that an individual's identity is in part based on their identification with their generation and that they generally feel positively towards their own generation when compared with others. Further, in their exploration of generational identity within organizations, Joshni et al. (2010) connect generational theory to social identity theory by noting that generational membership can create a "collective identity" based on age and experiences (p. 398). Acknowledging that there are many binding forces which could create adherence to an in-group and repelling of the out-group, one of those agents could be perceptions of one's own generation. In some instances, the categorizations of in and out groups would be made possible based on those who found commonality and exclusion based on generational factors.

Van Rossem (2018) demonstrates a correlation between one's generation and their social identity by studying how generations help inform one's perception of the in-group and out-group. Although his study focused on generational attitudes in the Belgium workplace, the findings are still relevant to this dissertation in showing that there are characteristics or "stereotypes" common to a generation, and that generations are influenced by their perception of themselves and other generations, and that these characteristics can influence behavior (Van Rossem, 2018, p. 435). Extending this view to the current study, generational experiences associated with a person's birth year may influence purchasing behavior (Howe & Strauss, 2000, as cited in Gurau, 2012). Collectively, the studies by Joshni et al. (2010) and by Von Rossem (2018) address the topic of generational potential influence on identity and support the underlying premise of this dissertation. Generational influence is only one factor that could drive one's social identity, identification with a product or brand and their resultant behavior. External influencers can also play a role in these relationships.

Theory of susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Brand communities or other social entities may provide strong influences regarding brands and behaviors, and it is important to understand how these influences may function. Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989) developed a scale to measure consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence and in doing so helped to explain and define the construct, consolidating ideas about the components of interpersonal influence from other authors. The relationship between social identity theory and the theory of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence is clear. Bearden et al. (1989) explained that influence occurs at both a normative and informative level. While social identity is relative to one's environment at any given time (Reicher, 2004), susceptibility to interpersonal influence is consistent within an individual and often attributable to an individual's lack of confidence

23

(Bearden et al., 1989). When an individual is responding to interpersonal influence, they are doing so either to conform to what they believe others want for a direct benefit or to reinforce their own identity. The first response is referred to as a utilitarian norm, and the second is a value expressive norm (Bearden et al., 1989). It is in the latter case where interpersonal influence overlaps with social identity and where the military may influence heavyweight motorcycle purchase norms.

In addition to normative influences, the authors also cite informational influences where individuals look to others' words or actions to arrive at a conclusion about a product or brand (Bearden et al., 1989). In a recent study, Fernandes and Panda (2019) discussed reference groups and consumers' tendencies to adhere to social norms. Reference groups serve as a point of comparison for an individual to receive "social cues" as a prompt in conforming to social norms (Fernandes & Panda, 2019, p. 132). Fernandes and Panda (2019) indicate that reference groups help shape the behavior of those that identify with the group or who seek to be part of it. The authors also speak to the value of expressive reference groups, who when used by an individual, "enhance their self-image" (Fernandes & Panda, 2019, p. 132). This supports the possibility that consumers who seek to espouse the same values as military or veterans may use those groups to influence their decisions about purchasing a heavyweight motorcycle.

Harley-Davidson and Indian Motorcycle military advertising and discounts, as well as publicized Honda, BMW, and Suzuki military discounts, helps to establish the military as a reference group for all potential customers. Reference groups can moderate consumer behavior (Fernandes & Panda, 2019) and support the ability of potential influencers, such as military members, to serve as a moderating force to consumer brand relationships. Contractor and DeChurch (2014) introduced the idea of a "structured influence process (SIP)" to demonstrate

how "social networks" and "social motives" provide for "social influence" with regards to behaving in a manner "supported by scientific research" (pp. 13650, 13653). Contractor and DeChurch (2014) list six "social interactions" that explain social influence. One of the interactions is "affiliation," which is a person's need to form "relationships" and to "belong" (p. 13653). Wang, Yu, and Wei (2012) show that peers help steer the behavior and attitudes of those new to a group through communication used as a catalyst to "the social learning process" (p. 200). The social learning process has its roots in social learning theory as forwarded by Bandura (1971). Their model establishes the relationship between peer group identification with purchase intention— mediated by peer communication, product involvement, and product attitude (Wang, Yu, & Wei, 2012, p. 200). Peng et al. (2018) discussed social influence in their study of social networks. Their work contributes to a list of "properties of influence" that help show that influence is contextual and based both on temporal and environmental conditions. Influence is also described as "propagative" whereby an "influence chain" is created as information is passed from one person to the next. It is "asymmetric" in the way that the influence of one person on another in the chain is not equal (Peng et al., 2018, p. 20).

There are clear intersections between the three theories discussed in this chapter, where generational identity can be viewed as a form of social identity and where social identity relates to consumer brand relations through symbolic consumption and interpersonal influence. Social identity theory supports generational theory through the lens of group categorization and behavior, where generational cohort membership may influence an individual's social identity based on a set of shared experiences. Both social identity theory and generational theory may explain the development of interpersonal factors that shape and influence consumption behavior

and identification with brands. One's susceptibility to interpersonal influence helps further relate to how an external force can interact with one's identity to further inform consumption behavior.

Hypotheses Development

As this dissertation seeks in part to examine generational cohorts' relationships with brand identification, Fournier's (1988) work is especially important. She posited that relationships may be influenced by "life themes" and "life projects," the latter of which aligns with the events that may occur at different times for each generational cohort and which can relate to things like purchase behavior—such as marriage or having children—what she calls "role-changing events" (Fournier, 1998, p. 346), thereby establishing a relationship between generational theory and brand relationships. Further, recall from Chapter 1 that Huber (2018) identified possible changing timelines for Generation Y lifecycle events as a cause for decreased Generation Y motorcycle ridership. The correlation between life events and brand relationships is key to understanding symbolic consumption. To this end, Fournier's (1998) seminal work on consumer brand relationship lays a foundation for understanding the importance of consumer brand relationships, namely consumer brand identification.

Conceptually, brand identification is a consumer's sense of "belongingness with a brand" (Lam, Ahearne, & Schillewaert, 2012, p. 307). Lam et al. (2012) state that social identity and brand identity are multi-component constructs; in the latter, consumers identify with a brand due to "identity similarity," "identity distinctiveness," and "identity prestige" (p. 308). This multidimensionality enables consumers to support their image of themselves with the positive aspects of a brand, while simultaneously separating themselves from those outside of their group. Stated differently, the importance of the symbolic elements found in a brand's "personality" is key to the relationship with brand identification (Lam et al, 2012, p. 321). This finding is a

central tenet of the current work. Understanding that consumers place value in symbolic, or self-expressive elements of a brand (Lam et al., 2012) establishes the link between symbolic consumption and consumer brand identification. Where the perceived characteristics of the military match the elements of brand personality of motorcycles, the conditions are set for external influence of consumer attitudes and behavior.

Susceptibility to Military Influence and Consumer Loyalty and Behavior

When examining the consequences of brand identification, purchase behavior is a salient outcome, along with loyalty. The link between brand identification and purchase behavior and loyalty was studied by several authors (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Esch et al., 2006; He et al., 2011). It is important to note that intention is a driver of behavior (Ajzen, 1991; De Canniere, et al., 2010). Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) demonstrated a significant relationship between antecedents, including ones tied to consumer identity, and brand loyalty as mediated by brand identification. Esch et al. (2006) found a significant relationship between brand image and purchase behavior. He et al. (2011) discussed a significant relationship between brand identification and loyalty as mediated by trust, value, and satisfaction. Research specifically examining the direct link between brand identification and purchase behavior with regards to the motorcycle industry is limited to discussions on brand communities (Marzocchi, Morandin & Bergami, 2011; Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006), and does not address influence from the military. Related constructs such as brand awareness and brand attachment are similar to brand identification and capture the attachment component of brand identification. Esch et al. (2006) conducted a study to determine if there was a relationship between brand awareness and brand image with current and future purchase behavior, as mediated by brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand attachment. The authors described brand attachment as "bonds, connections, and

27

identifications with the brand" which are "longer lasting" (Esch et al., 2006, p. 100). They found

a significant relationship between brand attachment and current and future purchase behavior.

These findings again support the idea of symbolic consumption as a driver of purchase behavior.

There is a link between "attitudes and purchase intentions" for customers who seek out

experiences with a brand for multiple reasons that could be based on factors such as cognition,

emotions, and pleasure (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010, p. 539). The drivers of symbolic

consumption are tied to experiencing a brand and signaling an identity (Sorensen & Thomsen,

2005, p. 571). Again, while there is research on the role of brand identification, purchase

intention and purchase behavior, there is a gap dealing with the relationship of the military with

both brand identification, purchase intention and purchase behavior with regards to heavyweight

motorcycles. Social identity theory and the theory of susceptibility to interpersonal influence

help to explain a possible relationship between this influence and purchase intention and

behavior. Recall from Chapter 1 that U.S. heavyweight motorcycle brands such as Indian,

Harley-Davidson, and non-U.S. brands such as Honda, Suzuki, and BMW, attempt to evoke

patriotic associations through the use of connections to the U.S. military or discounts provided to

them (Harley-Davidson Sales, 2020; Indian Motorcycles, 2020; Military Discounts, 2020) and

that heavyweight motorcycles can inspire patriotic feelings (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995).

Recall also that the design alone of Harley-Davidson motorcycles represents freedom (Pugliese

& Cagan, 2002), and that both U.S. and non-U.S. based manufacturers use this design.

Extending these findings to the current study, and given the roles of norms (Bearden et al., 1989)

and reference groups (Fernandez & Panda, 2019) in the formation of social identity and symbolic

consumption, motorcycle brands can signal one's desired social identity. This triggered identity,

which can be influenced by members of the military, directly drives symbolic purchase behavior,

similar to the relationship that brand identification has with purchase behavior.

While the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is not an underlying foundational theory for this research, it is useful to help understand purchase intention and its relations to purchase behavior (Wang et al., 2014). The theory not only helps provide insight into intention, but also how norms interact with those intentions. The interaction of norms, especially those established by the military, and intentions form a basis for several of the hypotheses that follow. Ajzen's (1991) model shows that intentions are driven by attitude, norms, and control (as cited in Wang et al., 2014). The idea of purchase intention is almost self-explanatory, so it is difficult to find a definition of it in literature, but it is a measurable construct with established scales (Jalilvand, Samiei, & Mahdavinia, 2011). Using the scales to help narrow the definition of the construct, it represents a desire to purchase, a preference for a brand, and a willingness to recommend that brand (Kim et al., 2008; Jalilvand et al., 2011). In their study of purchase intention for luxury brands, Kuang-peng et al. (2011) found that social influence is positively correlated to purchase intention. Balaji, Roy, and Sadeque (2016) explored the ideas of identification with future intentions in the context of universities and found that identification mediated the relationship with intentions and future behavior. Their model also shows the moderating effect of self-brand connections. As their findings connect identification and intentions, they can be extrapolated to apply to the mediating effect of brand identification on purchase intention as hypothesized below.

H1a: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence is positively related to heavyweight motorcycle purchase intention.

There are clear links in research that show brand loyalty as a consequence of brand identification, (Kuenzel & Haliday, 2010; Kim et al., 2001; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012, p.

409), driven by consumers' symbolic consumption. Supporting this research, Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) review the two general approaches to operationalizing the brand loyalty construct. They list the first approach as behavioral, measured in repeat purchases, acknowledging the challenge with the simplicity of that approach and the difficulties in directly correlating purchase behavior with loyalty. Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) cite Dick and Basu (1994) in explaining the second approach, which not only measures behavior but attitude as well. The authors describe attitudinal loyalty linked to the "attributes with the brand" (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007. p. 36). As defined in Chapter 1, attitudinal loyalty represents a "psychological commitment" (Jacoby, 1971; Jarvis & Wilcox, 1976, as cited in Nam, Ekinci, & Whyatt , 2011 p. 1015) or as described by Mechinda, Serirat, and Gulid (2009), it is expressed "in terms of consumer's strength of affection toward a brand" (p. 131). Given the psychological underpinnings of attitudinal loyalty and susceptibility to interpersonal influence, the two are logically connected. Of note, attitudinal loyalty is a separate construct from other brand-related constructs such as brand love, which may include additional indicators such as brand separation anxiety. Overlaps exist between many brand relationship constructs as presented in different research publications (Khamitov et al., 2019). As relevant others impact consumer decision-making, it can be expected that the propensity of consumers will be influenced by those in the military who will have a direct and positive impact on brand loyalty. Thus, the following hypothesis is offered:

H1b: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence is positively related to heavyweight motorcycle brand loyalty.

Generational Cohort Effects on Military Influence and Consumer Intentions and Behavior

Consumers use brands to help build their identities where brands are made more

meaningful to consumers when the brand is incorporated into life experiences (Elliot &

Wattanasuwan, 1998). Tangsupwattana and Lui (2018) identify experiences as especially

important to Generation Y consumers in forming a relationship with a brand, understanding that

identity formation is a result of experiences common to a generational cohort. These

generational influences allow for different interpretations of symbols associated with

consumption and help create varying social identities between consumers. Gonzalez-Fuentes

(2019) states that Generation Y consumers have experienced globalization or internationalization

as a driving force in the development of their identities and this has influenced both their national

and global perspectives as consumers. The author discusses the effect of exposure to increased

globalization on the Generation Y consumer's preference to consume products from their own

country. Generation Y consumers from societies with characteristics of high individualism and

diversity, such as the U.S., are more likely to be driven by their global identities over their

national ones (Gonzalez-Fuentes, 2019). This finding would make American Generation Y

consumers less likely to be influenced by domestically based influences such as patriotism or the

military.

Also, in recognition that generational cohorts have unique social identities,

Tangsupwattana and Liu (2018) examined symbolic consumption and its interaction with

Generation Y consumers. The authors linked emotions and symbolic consumption, highlighting

the fact that reason alone does not drive purchase behavior and that marketing can affect

consumer emotions. They forwarded the idea that Generation Y consumers are largely

influenced by emotions and that while there are several studies linking symbolic consumption to

brand loyalty, their work addresses a gap regarding Generation Y consumers. Tangsupwattana

and Liu (2018) reference Belk (1984) and Landon (1974) by stating, "to define symbolic

31

consumption is to focus on the notion that consumer's identities can be expressed through the selection of brands which convey certain symbolic messages" (p. 515). Tangsupwattana and Liu (2018) cite Sirgy (1982) in providing the dimensions of consumer behavior, which include the actual and ideal self and the social self. The authors' study of Generation Y consumers and coffee consumption found that individuals buy products based on the "experience or relationship" (Tangsupwattana & Liu, 2018, p. 522). Gonzalez-Fuentes' (2019) research on the intersection of a Generation Y's global identity and their idea of self is made even more important based on Tangsupwattana and Liu's (2018) work. Ferris (2019) further explained that Generation Y consumers also place value on the utilitarian benefits of a product. These could include ease of transportation or lower costs to operate a vehicle. While their work does not deal with motorcycle purchase behavior, it is relevant in that it helps establish the relationship between product attributes, identity, and purchase behavior, and allows for differences in generational cohort responses to brands. Based on the arguments presented above, where Generation Y consumers place value on the internal experiences tied to consumption and the utilitarian value of a product, and where Generation Y members are more likely to favor a global identity when making purchases, the following hypothesis is presented:

H2a: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence will have a stronger positive relationship with heavyweight motorcycle purchase intention for Baby Boomers than Gen Yers.

Oliver (1999) defines customer loyalty as "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, causing repetitive same brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite influences and marketing efforts" (McMullan & Gilmore, 2007, p. 1085; Oliver, 1999, p. 34). Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) indicate that

loyalty can manifest itself through a consumer's resistance to other brands and provide social support to consumers through the interpersonal influence of brand loyal consumers. Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) describe brand affect and trust as antecedents to both purchase and attitudinal loyalty, which leads to greater market share and price tolerance for a given brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). The connection between brand affect and brand loyalty is germane to symbolic consumption as it helps explain how positive feelings derived from brand value-expressive attributes drive consumer repeat behavior (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007).

Because of their buying power and interest to retailers, Parment's (2013) study, as mentioned previously, examined the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation Y consumers in the context of their behavior and purchase involvement with three product types – the last being automobiles. Revisiting Parment's (2013) choice to compare these two cohorts helps justify the selection of cohorts in this dissertation as the groups potentially show the greatest contrast. Lazarevic (2012) explored the need to create brand loyalty in Generation Y consumers. His study discussed characteristics of Generation Y consumers that included an enhanced "brand consciousness" (p. 47; Merrill, 1999) and a heightened "consumption orientation" (p. 47; O'Donnell, 2006) and a "group and community orientation" (p. 47; Markow, 2005). Generation Y consumers also do not typically display brand loyalty (Lazarevic, 2012; Sebor, 2006; Wood, 2004). Lazarevic's work helps to provide a foundation for the idea that different generations have different attitudes and behaviors towards brands. He forwards the hypothesis that brand loyalty can be established with Generation Y consumers by creating a consistent self-image (Lazarevic, 2012). Gonzalez-Fuentes' (2019) work shows how globalization may interfere with this self-image and resultant brand loyalty as influenced by members of the military. Further,

Arifine et al. (2019) found that multi-brand loyalty allows consumers to "enhance multiple identities" and to appeal to different "mood-states" (pp. 2435-2436). This idea aligns with Reicher's (2004) description of social identity as a dynamic construct and supports the role of interpersonal influence as a driver of consumer commitment with symbolic brands. Thus, the following hypothesis is offered:

> *H2b: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence will have a stronger positive relationship with heavyweight motorcycle brand loyalty for Baby Boomers than Gen Yers.*

Susceptibility to Military Influence and Brand Identification

Identity can be formed by generational and interpersonal influences. While internal identity forces can help drive consumer brand identification, external forces such as influence from reference groups (Fernandez & Panda, 2019) and a desire to adhere to group norms (Bearden et al., 1989; Christensen et al., 2004) can also relate a consumer's identification with a brand. The ability of similar or close others to influence how individuals make decisions is defined as the susceptibility to personal influence (Bearden et al., 1989), which supports the notion that consumers expect others to evaluate their choices, which may cause them to make choices different from the ones they would have made in the absence of scrutiny from others. The focus of this influence is on the external forces, which serve as the aforementioned reference groups and creators of norms that underpin the influence.

Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) studied the antecedents and consequences of brand identification and found that brand-self similarity, along with four other antecedents, related positively to brand identification. They also discovered that greater consumer involvement with the brand category positively moderates the relationships between the antecedents and brand identification. The motorcycle industry provides both products and brands that allow for

symbolic consumption in support of one's identity. This dissertation suggests that brand

category involvement is facilitated through an individual's influence from close and similar

others who are be associated with the military. The influence of those associated with the

military serves a type of reference group, which has been shown to have both a positive and

negative influence on consumers' desire to identify with a brand through self-brand connections

(Escalas & Bettman, 2003, 2005). Further, the idea that reference group membership facilitates

an individual's self-brand connection can be extended to the current study. Military membership

or affiliation will aid an individual's brand identification with a motorcycle manufacturer or

motorcycle type (e.g., heavyweight motorcycles). Recalling again the patriotic brand personality

embraced by several heavyweight motorcycle brands, military membership and/or related

affiliations may help establish norms for brand choice and identification and subsequent,

patriotism-based symbolic consumption. Based on these ideas, the following is hypothesized:

*H3: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence is positively related to brand
identification with heavyweight motorcycle manufacturers.*

Generational Cohort Effects and Brand Identification

Eastman and Liu (2012) found that there are significant differences in status consumption

between the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation Y. These differences present another

justification for the selection of these two cohorts as comparative groups in this dissertation.

Eastman and Liu's (2012) findings showed that Generation Y consumers were influenced most

by status consumption and Baby Boomer Generational members the least, controlling for

income, education, and gender (Eastman & Liu, 2012). Eastman and Liu's (2012) work also

represents a generational coverage of a specific area of symbolic consumption. While

automobiles and motorcycles represent different sub-cultures of consumption, the perception of

the two generational cohort groups on both types of products may involve some similarities. Heavyweight motorcycles could easily satisfy the criteria for status consumption, especially when viewed considering how they affect one's social identity (Schouten & Alexander, 1995). In light of this literature, it is evident that different generational attitudes on brand symbolism and status can correlate with varying degrees of brand identification with a particular brand, especially when interpersonal influence is salient to the consumer and relevant to the product category.

Recall that Parment (2013) identified Baby Boomers as having a revolutionary outlook and that the Motorcycle Industry Council indicates the motorcycle culture as "bad ass" (Racing World, 2019). Also, reference Generation Y shifting life cycle stages causing less of a need to push back against feelings of boredom associated by some with life events such as marriage, parenting, or work, as well as possible differences in discretionary spending power between the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation Y consumers (Huber, 2018). Baby Boomer Generation members tend to purchase motorcycles because of their "cool" (Ferris, 2019) symbolism, recalling again that Generation Y places utilitarian attributes ahead of symbolic ones (Ferris, 2019). Given the high level of symbolism within the motorcycle category (Schouten & Alexander, 1995) along with the need for evaluation by similar others in symbolic purchases, this dissertation posits that generational memberships will strengthen the relationship between susceptibility to military influence and brand identification (Bathmanathan et al., 2018; Eastman & Liu, 2012; Lazarevic, 2012).

Mediating Role of Brand Identification on Consumer Intention and Behavior

The mediating effects of brand identification in consumer brand relationships has been well established in the literature. As mentioned above, research by Kuenzel and Halliday (2010)

found that brand personality congruence and reputation may influence brand identification, which in turn relates to brand loyalty. Brand communities positively correlate with brand identification (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010), which is contextually relevant to the military brand community surrounding heavyweight motorcycles. Kim et al. (2001) lend further support to the role of social identity in building consumer brand relationships by examining how a brand's personality and "self-expressive value" may influence the "attractiveness of brand personality," which in turn, relates to an individual's level of brand identification and ultimately brand loyalty (p. 198). Tuskej et al. (2013) demonstrated that consumer brand identification also plays a role in strengthening brand relationships, specifically brand commitment. In their examination of Harley brand communities, Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) forwarded a conceptual model that demonstrated the relationship between social identity and brand behavior as mediated by brand identification. The model also demonstrated the relationship between social identity, social norms, desire to participate in a brand community, social intentions, and group behavior as they related to brand behavior. The authors introduce the idea that the common will of the group drives the behavior of that group. Bahozzi and Dholakia's (2006) research not only demonstrates the mediating role of brand identification with regards brand behavior but shows the link between social identity on that behavior through the influence of the group. Recall that Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) list six antecedents to consumer brand identification, namely brand-self similarity, brand distinctiveness, brand prestige, brand social benefits, brand warmth, and memorable brand experiences, whereby brand-self similarity and brand social benefits are most directly related to the model in this dissertation (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012, p. 409). The authors also showed that brand identification mediated the relationship between the aforementioned antecedents and brand loyalty and brand advocacy, where brand advocacy is a

component of purchase intention. Khamitov, Wang, and Thomson (2019) list the five "main concepts" of consumer brand relationships that have been studied in relation to their possible influence on brand loyalty, which include brand attachment, brand love, self-brand connection, brand identification, and brand trust. In the end, the social benefits that are antecedents to brand identification (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012) are derived from reinforcing one's social identity, and through the act of symbolic consumption itself. Belk (1988) provides an example where consumers use automobiles to create a social identity that influences how others view the owner of the automobile. Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998) show how the social identity can confirm and reinforces one's self-identity. Consumer Brand Identification (CBI) represents the one consumer brand relationship construct most closely integrated with social identity theory. Understanding the literature on the mediating role of brand identification with brand behavior and intentions, it is hypothesized that:

H4a: Brand identification mediates the relationship from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to purchase intention.

H4b: Brand identification mediates the relationship from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to brand loyalty.

Moderated Mediation of Brand Identification

The degree of the mediation effect is contingent upon the extent to which an individual's brand identification with motorcycle manufacturers changes as a function of their susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and membership in a specific generational cohort. Recall that brand identification is defined as "a consumer's belongingness with a brand" or relationship to a brand (Lam et al., 2012, p. 307) and that relationship can vary as a function of how influential a close, similar, or personal other who is related to military is in shaping one's decision-making.

The likelihood that a consumer's purchase intention and brand loyalty will change as a function of their susceptibility to military influence is plausible for several reasons. First, the symbolic meaning of the military (e.g., patriotism) appears to differ between Baby Boomers and Gen Yers such that Baby Boomers have a more symbolic attachment to products that creates greater susceptibility to military interpersonal influence (Ferris, 2019). Second, Gen Yers tend to prefer other transportation options that are more utilitarian, which contrasts with the heavyweight motorcycle industry (Ferris, 2019), suggesting that purchase behavior for heavyweight motorcycles and attitudinal loyalty is likely greater for Baby Boomers. Third, status consumption or the related construct of brand prestige, which is an established antecedent of brand identification is stronger for Gen Yers (Eastman & Liu, 2012; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Given the role brand identification plays in purchase and loyalty outcomes, generational differences are likely to play a role in the symbolic consumption of heavyweight motorcycles. Although both cohorts are likely to have some level of brand identification with manufacturers of heavyweight motorcycles, it will be more impactful for Baby Boomers, leading to greater purchase intention and brand loyalty. Given this, the author of this dissertation expects this to lead to a greater mediation effect of brand identification for Baby Boomers than Gen Yers and presents the following hypothesis:

H5: Generational cohort membership will moderate the mediating effects of brand identification on the positive relationship between susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and purchase intention and brand loyalty such that the relationship will be higher among members of the Baby Boomer cohort compared to those in the Gen Y cohort.

Figure 4 below applies the aforementioned research in a model showing the resultant hypothesized relationships. Methods to explore the research questions will be discussed in Chapter 3.
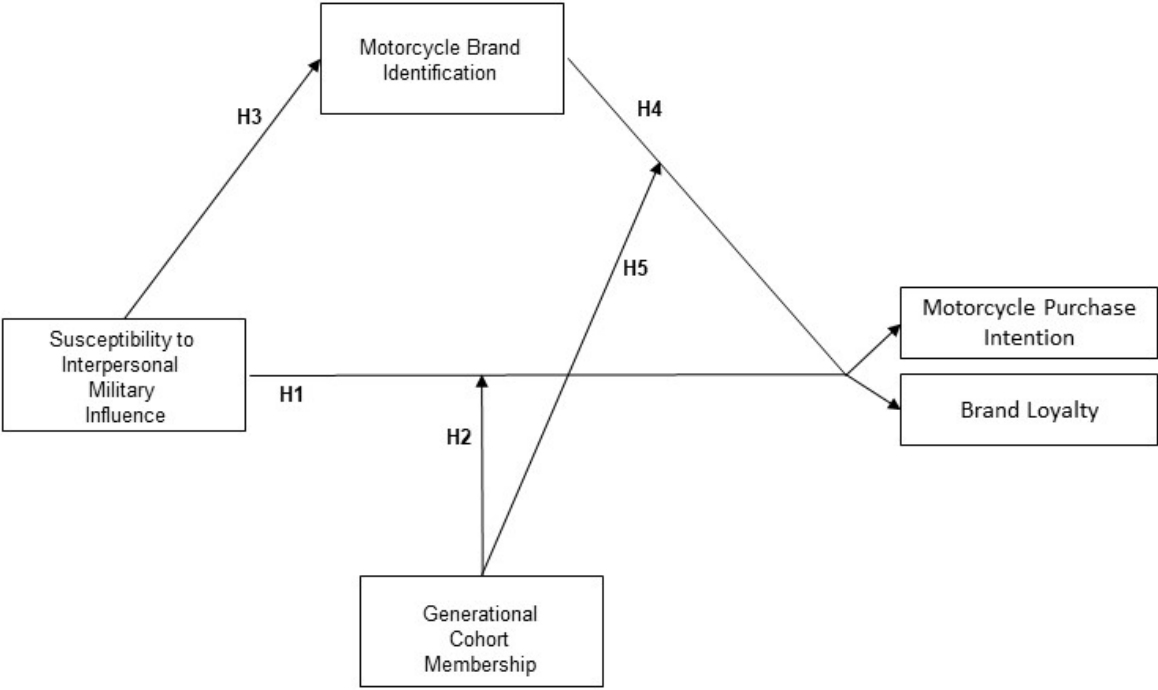
Figure 4. Conceptual Model with Hypotheses

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

Overview

This study used quantitative methods to carry out the cross-sectional research, as this was the most appropriate method to answer the research questions and to carry out the analysis. Maxwell (2013) indicated that quantitative methods are used by researchers seeking to explain "a statistical relationship between variables" (p. 29). As shown in the model introduced in Chapter 1 and shown again below in Figure 5, this research sought to answer the following research questions:

- How do influences from generational cohort members who have a current or potential future interest in purchasing heavyweight motorcycles interact with the relationships between susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and motorcycle purchase intention, brand identification and brand loyalty?

- How does brand identification explain the purchasing intention and brand loyalty as they relate to susceptibility to interpersonal military influence?

- How does susceptibility to interpersonal military influence relate to motorcycle purchase intention and brand loyalty towards heavyweight motorcycles?
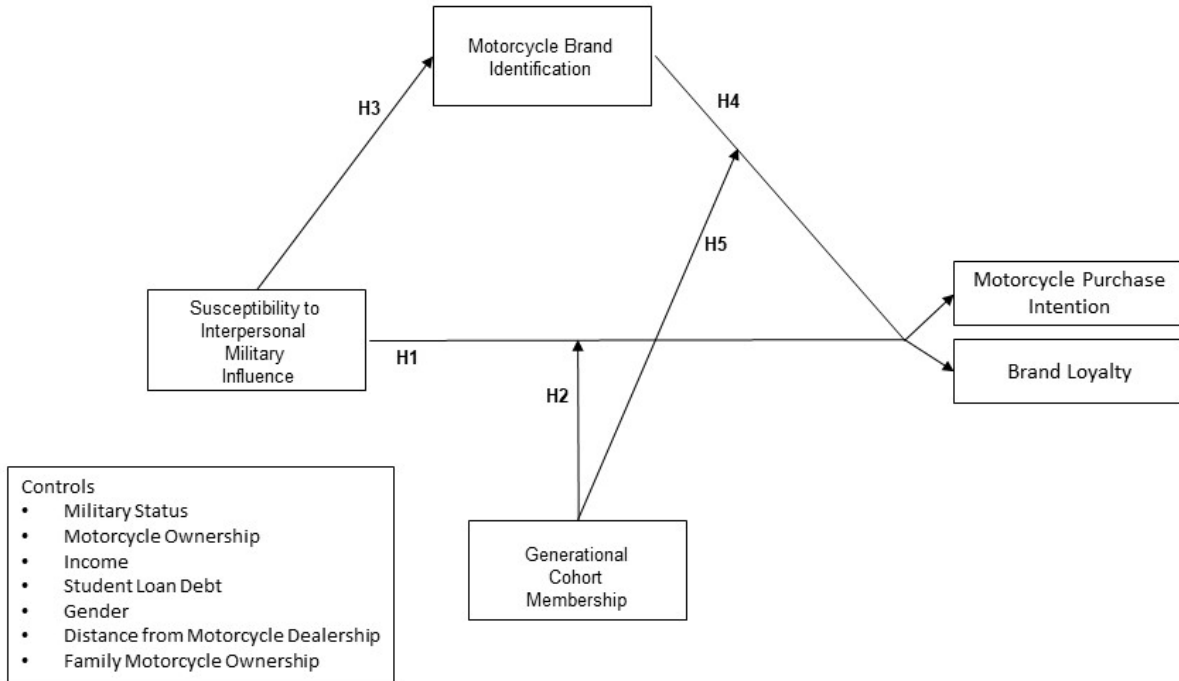
Figure 5. Conceptual Model with Control Variables

The hypotheses as restated from Chapter 2 are:

>**H1a: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence is positively related to heavyweight motorcycle purchase intention.**

>**H1b: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence is positively related to heavyweight motorcycle brand loyalty.**

>**H2a: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence will have a stronger positive relationship on heavyweight motorcycle purchase intention for Baby Boomers than for Gen Yers.**

>**H2b: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence will have a stronger positive relationship on heavyweight motorcycle brand loyalty for Baby Boomers than for Gen Yers.**

H3: Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence will have is positively related to brand identification with heavyweight motorcycle manufacturers.

H4a: Brand identification mediates the relationship from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to purchase intention.

H4b: Brand identification mediates the relationship from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to brand loyalty.H5: Generational cohort membership will moderate the mediating effects of brand identification on the positive relationship between susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and purchase intention and brand loyalty such that the relationship will be higher among members of the Baby Boomer cohort compared to those in the Gen Y cohort.

Population and Sample

The Motorcycle Industry Council listed 13,158,100 riders in the U.S. as of 2018. The median age for a rider in 2018 was 50 (Roadracing World, 2019). Referring to the age brackets for the generations in Chapter 2, the Baby Boomer generation was born between the years 1946-1965, with the early cohort of the Baby Boomer Generation being born between 1946-1955 and the late cohort being born between 1956–1965. Generation Y was born between the years of 1986-2005, with early cohort of Generation Ys being born from 1986-1995 and late cohort Generation Ys being born from 1996-2005 (Markert, 2004). As mentioned previously, different birth years were used by various authors to define the generations, so the numbers below were calculated manually adding the population by age for each cohort. Using the U.S. Census Bureau National Projection Data in 2017, the population of each generation in 2017 was estimated as follows.

Table 2.

Generational Boundaries (U. S. Census Data, 2017)

	Generational Cohorts					
	Baby Boomers	**Early Boomers**	**Late Boomers**	**Gen Y**	**Early Gen Y**	**Late Gen Y**
Current Age Range (years)	**52-71**	62-71	52-61	**12-31**	22-31	12-21
Birth Year Range	**1946-1965**	1946-1955	1956-1965	**1986-2005**	1986-1995	1996-2005
Total Population	**75,814,948**	32,240,714	43,574,234	**87,788,814**	45,678, 632	42,110,182

Given the research questions for this study, it was necessary to use a non-random quota sample of the population to ensure that a sufficient number of each of the two generations were represented and also to have allowed for a comparison between groups that would provide adequate analysis of covariates (e.g., military status and motorcycle ownership). Due to the older median age of riders and the median household income for a rider, $62,500 (Roadracing World, 2019), a focus was placed on comparing members of the later cohort of the Baby Boomer Generation (BB) with members of the early cohort of Generation Y (Gen Y). The population for these cohorts was also closer with over 43 million members of the later cohort of the Baby Boomer Generation and over 45 million members of the early cohort of Generation Y. The unit of analysis for this study was at the individual level. Sample groupings ensured minimum quotas of at least 100 for each of the two generations, and also for military membership and motorcycle ownership– the survey was administered to U.S. citizens only, and where a respondent did not own a motorcycle, they were required to express interest in future motorcycle purchase to participate in the survey.

Members of early BB and late Gen Y were permitted to participate in the survey after data collection had met a minimum threshold of 100 with the late BB cohort and 100 with the early Gen Y cohort, to enable the desired focus on those two cohorts. Two main potential

confounds of military status and motorcycle ownership were controlled for by creating quotas for equal sample populations of military and non-military members, as well as motorcycle vs. non-motorcycle current owners. It was possible that military personnel may have been disproportionately influenced by other members of the military, and thus both populations were represented to ensure the variable was controlled for properly with a covariate analysis. It was also possible that current motorcycle owners may have had different brand identification tendencies, again requiring an adequate sample of both groups to control for the variable. The study also controlled for income, student loan debt, gender, distance to a motorcycle dealership, and whether the participant's family owns a motorcycle. These variables allowed for equivalency, regardless of group differences to be established.

The minimum desired sample size was 144, based on the recommended sample size chart provided by Hair et al. (2017, p. 26). To have achieved a power of .8 and a significance level of .05, a desired R^2 of .1 was selected—the most conservative R^2 estimate in the chart, which allowed for a sample size of 144 to test a model with eight relationships as depicted in the theoretical model. This study sought a sample size of at least 200 to ensure quotas of 100 for each generation were met.

Survey Design and Development

The study utilized an online survey constructed from original scales and those that were adapted to the context of this study. Survey participants were screened into the groups by answering a set of questions based on their age, heavyweight motorcycle ownership status, and military status. After the participants were screened to ensure eligibility to take the survey and to ensure sample quotas were met, they were asked to complete the online survey. The survey was grouped into sections, starting with a brief introduction, and then followed by scales measuring

the constructs under consideration, after also having collected demographic and control data. Respondents were prompted to select their favorite cruiser of heavyweight brand before answering questions about that brand. The survey concluded with a closing statement. The variables measured in this study were those proposed in Figure 5: brand identification, brand loyalty, susceptibility to military interpersonal influence, and purchase intention. The initial survey described in this chapter was designed to measure purchase behavior, but as discussed in Chapter 4, a purchase intention scale was added as a change to the proposed methodology. The susceptibility to interpersonal influence measure was modified for the context of military influence from an existing measure developed and validated by Bearden et al. (1989). An additional scale (Kim et al., 2001) for brand loyalty was modified to measure motorcycle brand loyalty. Scale items used in the survey are presented below in Table 3, and a draft of the survey document can be found in the Appendix A.

Table 3.

Constructs and Scales Used in the Survey

Construct	Author	Items
Attitudinal Loyalty	Mechinda, Sirivan & Gulid, 2009	I consider myself a loyal user of this *brand* My next *purchase* will most likely be *of this brand* I would like to *use this brand* again I would recommend this *brand* to people who seek my advice I would tell other positive things about this *brand*
Brand Identification	Kim, Han, & Park, 2001	This brand's successes are my successes. I am interested in what others think about this brand. When someone praises this brand, it feels like a personal compliment. When I talk about this brand, I usually say "we" rather than "they." If a story in the media criticized the brand, I would feel embarrassed. When someone criticizes this brand, it feels like a personal insult.

Table 3.		
Constructs and Scales Used in the Survey		
Construct	Author	Items
Brand Loyalty	Kim, Han, & Park, 2001	I will continue to use this brand because I am satisfied and acquainted with the brand. I will use this brand despite competitors' deals. I prefer the brand to others. I would buy additional products and service in this brand
Purchase Behavior	Esch et al., 2006	How often have you bought the brand in the past 10 years? *Never, Once, Twice, More than two times* How often did you use the brand on average in the last 10 years? *Never, Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Yearly* How often do you plan to buy the brand in the next 10 years? *Never, Once, Twice, More than two times*
Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (adapted)	Bearden et al., 1989	I rarely purchase the latest *motorcycles* until I am sure *those with a military affiliation* approve of them. It is important that *those with a military affiliation* like the products and brands I buy. When buying products. I generally purchase those brands that I think *those with a military affiliation* will approve of. If *those with a military affiliation* can see me using a product, I often purchase the brand that they expect me to buy. I like to know what brands and products make good impressions on *those with a military affiliation*. I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that *those with a military affiliation* purchase. If I want to be like someone *affiliated with the military*. I often try to buy the same brands that they buy. I often identify with other people *affiliated with the military* by purchasing the same products and brands they purchase. To make sure I buy the right product or brand, I often observe what others *affiliated with the military* are buying and using. If I have little experience with a product, I often ask my *military* friends about the product. I often consult other *miltary* people to help choose the best alternative available from a product class. I frequently gather information from military friends or family about a product before I buy.
Note. All scales are anchored by 1-Strongly Disagree, 7-Strongly Agree, except purchase behavior, whose scales are presented below the item.		

Data Collection

Prior to the survey being distributed, permission was obtained from the Rollins College Institutional Research Board (see Appendix B). Data collection was conducted using paid Qualtrics survey respondents. The cost per survey was eleven dollars.

In addition to the 200 requested survey respondents from Qualtrics, the survey was also distributed online to members of the Combat Veteran Motorcycle Association (CVMA) of which the author of this dissertation is a member. Full membership in the group is restricted to former or current members of the U.S. military who have served in combat zones. Support membership is limited to former or current members of the U.S. military who have not served in combat zones. Family membership is limited to spouse and children of full members. This CVMA group represented a unique sample population. There are over 23,000 current full members of CVMA. All members had access to a members' only online forum and membership Facebook pages, where the survey link was distributed to CVMA members.

Data Analysis

Given the complexity of the moderated mediation model with two dependent variables, structural equation modeling was used to analyze the hypotheses, and controlled for potential confounds and demographic differences. Hair et al. (2017) indicated that the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling focused on explaining the variance in dependent variables where the relationship between the variables was unknown in a model. Hair et al. (2017) also stated PLS-SEM was appropriate when "the goal is predicting key target constructs or identifying key "driver" constructs" (p. 23). The variables that were considered in this model, all at the individual level, were as follows:

- Exogenous Variables (Independent)

  - Generational cohort (categorical variable moderator)

  - Susceptibility to interpersonal military influence (continuous/interval variable/reflective) -

  - Brand identification with a heavyweight motorcycle manufacturer (continuous/interval variable/reflective) - mediator

- Endogenous Variables (Dependent)

  - Heavyweight motorcycle brand loyalty (continuous/interval variable/reflective)

  - Heavyweight motorcycle purchase behavior (categorical variable/reflective)

Hair et al. (2017) provided the following definitions of terms mentioned above:

- Endogenous latent variable: "serve only as dependent variables or as both independent and dependent variables in the structural model" (p. 316).

- Exogenous latent variable: "are latent variables that serve only as independent variables in a structural model" (p. 316).

- Reflective indicators: "representative sample of all the possible items available within the conceptual domain….highly correlated with each other….commonly called a scale" (p. 47).

CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

As detailed in the first three chapters, this study seeks to explore generational influences on brand identification, attitudes, and behavior with regards to susceptibility to military interpersonal influence and motorcycles. As a note, susceptibility to military interpersonal influence is also referred to as military influence in this study. This chapter will first discuss the pilot survey and modifications to methodology and then present an analysis of the measurement model (outer), followed by the structural model (inner) for both the direct relationships and complete model, and conclude with a multigroup analysis of the moderating variable as well as the control variables (Hair et al., 2017, p. 31).

Sample Population

To answer the research questions and to analyze the hypotheses, a survey was given to 226 respondents via Qualtrics ($n = 205$), as well as via email to friends and family ($n = 19$) and via Facebook to members of the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association ($n = 2$). Final demographic breakdowns of the 226 respondents in the sample are listed in Table 4.

Table 4.		
Sample Demographics		
Demographic	Number of Respondents	% of Total Data Group
GENERATION		
Baby Boomer	110*	48.67
Generation Y	116**	51.33
GENDER		
Gender - Male	144	64.00
Gender – Female	81	36.00
MILITARY AFFILIATION		
Military Affiliation - Military	100	44.25
Military Affiliation- Civilian	126	55.75
MOTORCYCLE OWNER		
Motorcycle Owner - Yes	105	46.46
Motorcycle Owner - No	121	53.54
FAMILY OWNS MOTORCYCLE		
Family Ownership - Yes	72	31.86
Family Ownership - No	154	68.14
STUDENT DEBT		
Student Debt - Yes	35	15.49
Student Debt - No	191	84.51
FAVORITE BRAND		
Favorite - US Brand	129	57.08
Favorite - non-US Brand	97	42.92
Note. *Baby Boomer respondents included $n=108$ from the late cohort (1956-1965) and $n=2$ from the early cohort (1946-1955); **Generation Y respondents included $n=114$ from the early cohort (1986-1995) and $n=2$ from the late cohort (1996-2005)		

Pilot Survey and Methodological Changes

Using the mean and standard deviation for each respondent, data was evaluated for

straight lining and other potential problems. As Qualtrics data was received, unacceptable

responses were identified, removed, and replaced to achieve the minimum requested sample size of 200 and to meet the sample quotas. Two scales were added to the survey with reverse coded questions. These scales, opinion seeking and opinion leaders, were not part of the conceptual model and in the end were used as attention checks for survey respondents. While Qualtrics would not allow removal of a respondent solely based on failure to answer a reverse coded question consistently with the normally coded questions, the reverse scales helped retain respondents who may have otherwise appeared to be straight-lining answers, but who answered reverse coded questions "correctly." Qualtrics sets a minimum response time as half the median time for responses in the first soft launch. The median time was 6 minutes; the subsequent minimum survey time for a respondent was three minutes. All questions were forced responses; as a result, there was no missing data. As part of the process to clean the data, where a respondent filled in free text that may have conflicted with a provided selection, the free text was used in the final survey data. For example, if the respondent was asked to select how many years they owned a motorcycle and chose more than two and then filled in the number two – two was used in the final data. If a free text answer was not feasible or logical, for example, if the person answered that they were twenty-one years old but had a motorcycle endorsement for more 10 years, then that respondent was eliminated from the final sample. Dummy variables were assigned to the generational cohorts and to the selected favorite motorcycle brand to aid in the analysis.

To begin evaluation of the survey instrument, one member of Generation Y and one member of the Baby Boomer Generation, who is also an expert in survey design, were asked to evaluate the survey for readability prior to the soft launch. They both indicated confusion with the purchase behavior scale for non-motorcycle riders, an issue that was confirmed in the pilot

survey. After establishing screening criteria to filter U.S. citizens who either owned or were interested in owning a motorcycle, and who were members of either the Baby Boomer or Generation Y cohort, Qualtrics "soft launched" the survey to 20 respondents. After analyzing the results of the soft launch, changes were made to the survey, and the original 20 responses were not included in the final sample of 226. A second "soft launch" was conducted of another 20 respondents. Each group included at least 100 of each quota, contained within the total final sample size of 226:

- Military-affiliated/ non-military-affiliated
- Motorcycle owners/Non owners who were interested in a future purchase
- Baby-Boomers (1946-1965) /Generation Y (1986-2005) (Makert, 2004)

Two changes were made to the methodology presented in chapter three. First, as Hair et al. (2017, p. 42) indicates, moderators consisting of categorical variables are assessed in PLS with a multigroup analysis (MGA). The MGA feature in Smart-PLS 3.0 was utilized in lieu of examining the individual moderator for each hypothesized interaction. The MGA allowed a full and complete analysis of the generational interactions on the relationships presented in the model. Second, the purchase behavior scale was replaced with a purchase intention scale. The justification for this change was due in part to issues identified with data analysis in the pilot survey, which were confirmed in the full sample. These issues dealt with highly skewed data likely resultant from respondent confusion driven by ownership status. As a result, a three-item scale for purchase intention (Jalilvand et al., 2011) was adapted and added to the survey instrument and appears in Table 5. Note that participants were instructed to identify their favorite brand of motorcycle in the survey; their selection was then piped into the survey to customize items for several scales, including purchase intention.

Table 5.
Purchase Intention Scale
Purchase Intention Scale (Jalilvand, Samiei, & Mahdavinia, 2011)   7 Point Likert Scale - 1 – Strongly Disagree; 7 Strongly Agree
I would buy [*Favorite Brand*] brand motorcycle rather than other motorcycles.
I am willing to recommend that others buy [*Favorite Brand*] motorcycles.
I am willing to purchase [*Favorite Brand*] motorcycles in the future.

Data Description

Each question was examined looking at data distribution with skewness and kurtosis as well as means and standard deviations. As seen in Table 6, the majority of the scales contained indicators with normally distributed data with acceptable skewness and kurtosis values between -1 and 1 (Hair et al., 2017, p. 61). However, some items showed non-normal distribution with skewness and kurtosis values between -2 and 2. Of note, none of the purchase intention indicators/questions were within the -1 to 1 range for kurtosis and skewness, with one question in the scale scoring above a 2. Susceptibility to military interpersonal influence indicators showed kurtosis scores below -1 but above -1.5. As noted by Hair et al.'s (2017) data without a normal distribution is less problematic when using PLS-SEM for analysis (pp. 61-62). Brand identification, brand loyalty, and purchase intention scales showed higher mean values (4 or above) and median values (5 or above) than the military influence scale which had mean scores below 4 and median scores of 4. However, the military influence scale showed higher standard deviations (above 2 for each indicator) than the other scales.

Table 6.

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness
BI1	5.249	5	1.456	0.292	-0.691
BI2	5.229	6	1.612	0.538	-0.981
BI3	5.478	6	1.374	0.377	-0.841
BI4	4.604	5	1.877	-0.688	-0.527
BI5	4.058	4	2.036	-1.230	-0.094
BI6	4.512	5	1.937	-.899	-0.417
BL1	5.927	6	1.180	1.510	-1.160
BL2	5.649	6	1.269	0.293	-0.825
BL3	5.902	6	1.172	0.481	-0.898
BL4	5.927	6	1.283	0.933	-1.170
SN1	3.595	4	2.137	-1.390	0.122
SN2	3.902	4	2.032	-1.288	-0.185
SN3	3.844	4	2.035	-1.230	-0.096
SN4	3.756	4	2.017	-1.273	-0.064
SN5	3.951	4	2.050	-1.246	-0.134
SN6	3.917	4	2.048	-1.220	-0.053
SN7	3.751	4	1.995	-1.222	-0.048
SN8	3.859	4	2.061	-1.223	-0.069
SI1	4.054	4	2.063	-1.261	-0.201
SI2	3.966	4	2.078	-1.285	-0.123
SI3	3.810	4	2.034	-1.290	-0.021
SI4	3.902	4	2.108	-1.378	-0.089
PI1	5.770	6	1.303	1.739	-1.205
PI2	5.917	6	1.154	1.146	-1.074
PI3	6.000	6	1.167	2.245	-1.326
PB1	1.330	1	1.320	3.110	1.460
PB3	4.434	2	5.930	3.833	1.930
PB5	1.971	1	2.606	68.494	7.111

Note: PB min= 0, max=99; all other indicators min=1, max=7

Reflective Measurement Model Results (Outer Model)

Internal Consistency and Reliability. Internal reliability for all constructs except military influence was achieved with Cronbach's alpha scores between .60 and .90. The Cronbach's alpha score exceeded .90 for the military influence variable. Composite reliability scores all exceeded the minimum threshold of .70 but showed potential issues with scores exceeding .95 for the military influence construct, indicating that the items in the scale were measuring the same phenomena (Hair et al., 2017, p. 112). To ameliorate the reliability issues, eight of the twelve indicators for the military influence scale that showed high collinearity were removed. Resultant Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability scores were within acceptable ranges with the four remaining indicators (SI1, SI2, SN1, SN2). Other than improving internal reliability and consistency, the elimination of the eight military influence indicators did not alter the over results of the outer model.

Convergent Validity. The average variance extracted for all constructs exceeded the .500 threshold (Hair et al., 2017, p. 113) and, therefore, the indicators for each construct helped explain over half of the construct's variance, demonstrating convergent validity. Internal collinearity issues between constructs were all within acceptable VIF ranges of below 5 (Hair et al., 2017, p. 194). All outside model indicator loadings for each construct were above the .708 threshold and significant at $p < .01$ as shown in Table 7 (Hair et al, 2017, p. 113). Outer loading values further supported the model's convergent validity between constructs.

Table 7.		
Indicator Outer Loadings		
Indicator	Loading	P Value
BI1_1 <- Brand Identification	0.813	.001
BI1_2 <- Brand Identification	0.747	.000
BI1_3 <- Brand Identification	0.831	.000

Table 7.		
Indicator Outer Loadings		
Indicator	Loading	P Value
BI1_4 <- Brand Identification	0.844	.000
BI1_5 <- Brand Identification	0.742	.000
BI1_6 <- Brand Identification	0.840	.000
BL1 <- Brand Loyalty	0.875	.000
BL2 <- Brand Loyalty	0.880	.000
BL3 <- Brand Loyalty	0.845	.000
PI1_1 <- Purchase Intention	0.870	.000
PI1_2 <- Purchase Intention	0.892	.000
PI1_3 <- Purchase Intention	0.859	.000
SI1 <- Sus to Mil Influence	0.894	.000
SI2 <- Sus to Mil Influence	0.854	.000
SN1_1 <- Sus to Mil Influence	0.786	.000
SN1_2 <- Sus to Mil Influence	0.905	.000
SN1_3 <- Sus to Mil Influence	0.908	.000

Discriminant Validity. The complete model was assessed for discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Heteromethod Correlation (HTMT) threshold of .85 or below (Hair et al., 2017, p. 119), with initial discriminant validity exceeding the allowable level. To achieve discriminant validity, every indicator in the purchase intention and brand loyalty scale was removed, one at a time, and discriminant validity was assessed each time before the indicator was placed back in the scale. Discriminant validity was finally achieved with removal of the BL4 indicator, which expressed overall preference for a brand. The highest HTMT value after the change was with purchase intention and brand loyalty at .822. Results of the reflective model assessment are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8.

Reflective Model Assessment Criteria (Hair et al., 2017)

Latent Variable	AVE	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	Discriminant validity
Brand Identification	0.646	0.916	0.891	Yes
Brand Loyalty	0.752	0.901	0.836	Yes
Purchase Intention	0.763	0.906	0.845	Yes
Military Influence	0.742	0.920	0.884	Yes

Note. AVE > .5 = acceptable; composite reliability < .95 acceptable. Cronbach's alpha .06-.09 = acceptable, HTMT < .85 = acceptable.

Structural Model Results (Inner Model)

The structural model was analyzed in four steps. The first step examined only direct relationships in an unmediated model. In the second step, the mediating variable was introduced, and the full PLS path model was explored. In the third step, a multigroup analysis was performed in the model with direct relationships, to explore the moderating effects of generational cohort. The fourth and final step used a multigroup analysis to examine the moderator in the complete model with mediation introduced. The model depicted in Figure 6 shows only the direct relationships between the susceptibility to military interpersonal influence with brand identification, brand loyalty, and purchase intention, with associated R^2 and path coefficients. The analysis of the structural model for both the unmediated model and complete model with mediation utilized the guidelines established by Hair et al. (2017) to examine the internal model for coefficients of determination (R^2), predictive relevance, path coefficients, and effect sizes (p. 106). Results for all analyses presented in this chapter were realized through processing the conceptual model with the PLS algorithm, bootstrapping with 5000 sub-samples, and through the blindfolding process to arrive at a measure of model predictability. As a note, hypotheses can only be fully evaluated with the structural analysis and multi-group analysis of

the complete model; therefore, they are not discussed in the analysis that follows of the model with only direct relationships.

Direct Relationships (Unmediated Model)

Coefficients of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2). The R^2 was first evaluated for the direct relationship model, using the criteria established by Hair et al. (2017, p. 199) where .25 is weak explained variance, .50 is moderate explained variance, and .75 is strong explained variance. Brand identification, with an $R^2 = .278$, was above the threshold to demonstrate weak explained variance. Brand loyalty and purchase intention had an R^2 of .015 and .017, respectively (Figure 6), showing insufficient explained variance below the weak classification threshold. Brand identification showed predictive value after bootstrapping with a Q^2 of .187 (Hair et al., 2017, p. 209). Given the R^2 values presented above, along with the Q^2 value, only brand identification is assessed as having predictive validity in the model with only direct relationships.

Size and Significance of Path Coefficients and Effect Sizes. As seen in Figure 6, PLS and bootstrapping processes showed positive and significant path coefficients from military influence to brand identification, but not to purchase intention or brand loyalty. Hair et al. (2017) classifies effect sizes as small (.02), medium (.15) and large (.35) (p. 200). Given that criteria, effect size was only acceptable with a large effect of $f^2 = .385$ for military influence to brand identification. Military Influence to brand loyalty had no effect with an $f^2 = .015$; military influence to purchase intention had no effect with an $f^2 = .017$. (Hair et al., 2017, p. 200).
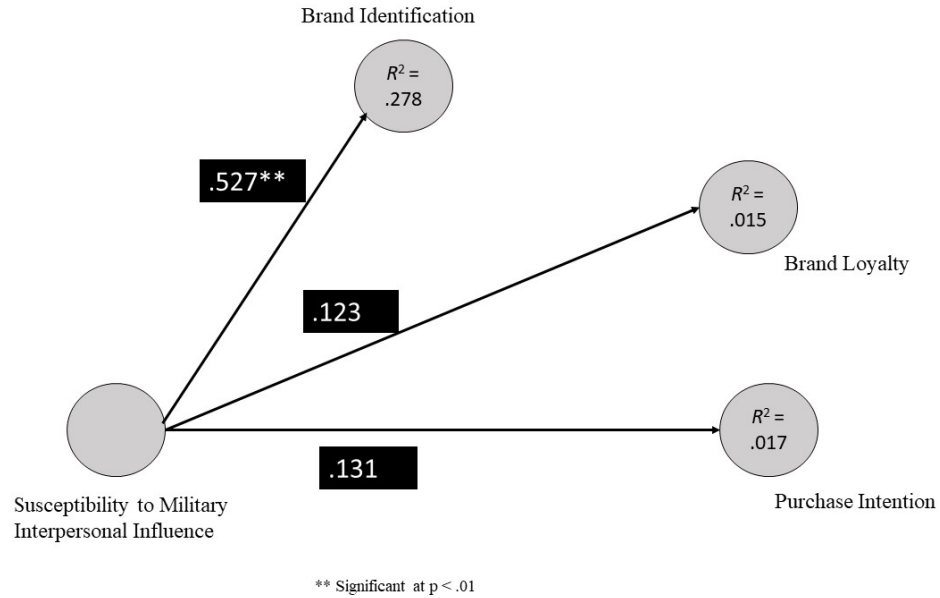
Brand Identification

$R^2 = .278$

.527**

$R^2 = .015$

Brand Loyalty

.123

$R^2 = .017$

.131

Susceptibility to Military
Interpersonal Influence

Purchase Intention

** Significant at p < .01

Figure 6. Model with Only Direct Relationships - Path Coefficients and R^2

Full Model (with Mediation). The hypotheses were explored with the structural model analysis for the complete model as described in the section below. Generational moderation, a categorical variable with two-levels: Baby Boomers and Generation Y, was analyzed separately using a multigroup analysis.

Coefficients of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2). The latent variables in the complete model all had weak to medium explained variance as indicated by the R^2 values shown in Figure 7. Blindfolding was performed to arrive at a Q^2 value for each latent variable, with a Q^2 showing predictive power, with a score above zero, for brand identification (.163), brand loyalty (.238), and purchase intention (.155) (Hair et al., 2017, p. 209). Given the R^2 and Q^2, the predictive validity of the structural model with mediation is higher than the model with no mediation.

Size and Significance of Path Coefficients and Effect Sizes. As shown in figure 7, the path was negative from military influence directly to brand loyalty and purchase intention and therefore H1a and H1b were unsupported. Recall, H3 predicted the positive relationship between military influence and brand identification; the path coefficient was positive and significant, supporting H3. In partial support of H4a and H4b, the path coefficients indicating direct effects from military influence to purchase intention and brand loyalty were negative and significant, and the indirect effects as mediated by brand identification were positive and significant. The specific indirect effects were also positive and significant, demonstrating mediation, with a path coefficient of .324 from military influence to brand loyalty as mediated by brand identification and with a path coefficient of .265 for the mediated path to purchase intention. Zhao, Chen and Lynch (2010) indicated that when the mediated effect and direct effect are both present, but in opposite directions, partial mediation of the competitive type exists in the model. Competitive mediation is confirmed when the product of the indirect effects multiplied by direct effects is also negative (Zhao, Chen & Lynch, 2010). The results described above meet Zhao, Chen and Lynch's (2010) criteria for partial mediation of the competitive type. Therefore, there is only partial support of hypotheses H4a and H4b.

The relationship from military influence to brand identification had a near large effect size ($f^2 = .330$); brand identification to brand loyalty had a large effect size ($f^2 = .475$); and brand identification to purchase intention had a medium effect size ($f^2 = .271$). Military influence to brand loyalty and purchase intention had small effect sizes of $f^2 = .053$ and $f^2 = .042$, respectively.
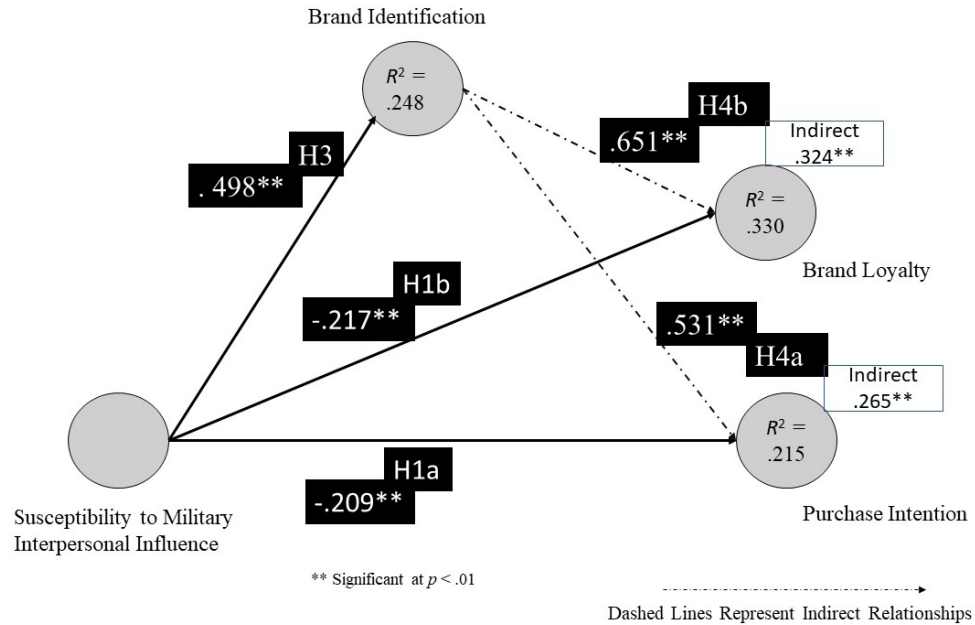
Figure 7. Complete Model Path Coefficients and R^2

Direct Relationship Multi Group Analysis (MGA)

Although not connected to a hypothesis, an MGA was performed on the model without

mediation to further explore changes in moderation due to the presence of a mediator, in order to

better understand the relationship between the mediator and DVs. It is with the MGA analysis

where the change in relationship between the mediator and DVs is again evident, as indicated by

how generational cohort interacts with the unmediated model's relationships as compared to the

complete model. For the Baby Boomer generation (Table 9), only the path coefficient from

military influence to brand identification was positive and significant. All path coefficients for

Gen Y (Table 9) were positive and significant, showing that generation interacted with

susceptibility to military interpersonal influence, such that the relationship between military

influence and purchase intention and brand loyalty is stronger for Generation Y than for Baby

Boomers. As shown in Table 10, the R^2 improved for both brand loyalty and purchase intention

with the Generation Y group as compared to the complete unmediated model, and when

compared to the BB group. The findings with regards to the interactions for Generation Y were the opposite result of what was hypothesized and are not supported when mediation is introduced in the full model.

Table 9

Direct Relationship Multi Group Analysis Path Coefficients

Path	Complete Data Coefficient (p-value)	Baby Boomer Coefficient (p-value)	Generation Y Coefficient (p-value)
Military Influence to Brand ID	.527 (.000)	.525 (.000)	.488 (.000)
Military Influence to Brand Loyalty	.131 (.133)	-.133 (.446)	.358 (.000)
Military Influence to Purchase Intention	.123 (.426)	-.201 (.346)	.325 (.002)

Table 10.

Direct Relationship Multi Group Analysis R^2

Endogenous Variable	Complete Data - R^2	Baby Boomer - R^2	Generation Y - R^2
Brand ID	.278	.275	.238
Brand Loyalty	.017	.018	.128
Purchase Intention	.015	.040	.106

Note. R^2 values - .75 = substantial; .5 moderate; .25 weak

Complete Model with Mediation - Multigroup Analysis (MGA)

Before a multigroup analysis was performed for the complete model to explore the moderating effects of generational cohort, and the remaining two hypotheses – H2 and H5, an ANOVA was completed to assess how respondents selecting a U.S. brand as their favorite compared to those selecting a non-U.S. brand. The ANOVA identified significant differences in the sample population for the two groups. While this was not hypothesized, it was interesting to observe that non-U.S. brand favoritism produced stronger brand identification. The R^2 values are show in Table 11 and path coefficients in Table 12 to highlight the differences derived from

respondents selecting U.S. brands as their favorite as compared to those who selected non-U.S. brands. This data analysis suggests that U.S. perceived country of origin products do not produce stronger relationships with the latent variables in the model.

Table 11.

U.S. Favorite vs Non-U.S. Favorite Brand - R^2

Variable	Complete Model	Non-U.S.	US
Brand ID	.248	.355	.195
Brand Loyalty	.330	.322	.366
Purchase Intention	.215	.18	.246

Table 12.

Path Coefficients US vs Non-US Favorite Brand

Variable	Complete Model Path Coefficient (p-value)	Non-U.S. Path Coefficient (p-value)	US Path Coefficient (p-value)
Brand ID to Brand Loyalty	.651 (.000)	.610 (.000)	.671 (.000)
Brand ID to Purchase Intention	.531 (.000)	.471 (.000)	.550 (.000)
Military Influence to Brand ID	.498 (.000)	.596 (.000)	.442 (.000)
Military Influence to Brand Loyalty	-.217 (.000)	-.078 (.430)	-.235 (.001)
Military Influence to Purchase Intention	-.209 (.001)	-.088 (.545)	-.198 (.070)

With regards to the moderator, recall that MGA is the preferred method to explore moderation with categorical variables in PLS-SEM and therefore was used to examine generational interaction on the model's direct and indirect relationships. Hypothesis 2 predicted moderation of the relationship between military influence on purchase intention (H2a) and brand loyalty (H2b). The MGA showed that H2 was not supported as moderation did not produce

significant positive path coefficients from military influence to brand loyalty and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 5 predicted moderation of the relationship from military influence to purchase intention and brand loyalty as mediated by brand identification. However, as seen in the hypotheses' summary provided in Table 13, the Baby Boomer cohort showed an increase in the value of the total effect path coefficient from brand identification, as it mediated the relationship between military influence to purchase intention, but not to brand loyalty. The specific indirect path coefficient was also higher for Baby Boomers at .287 than for Generation Y at .228. Therefore, generation interacted with brand identification, such that the relationship between military influence and purchase intention, as mediated by brand identification, is stronger for Baby Boomers than it is for Generation Y. This provides partial support for H5, with moderated mediation indicated from both the significant change to path coefficient, as well as the increase in explained variance (R^2) for purchase intention from .215 to .258 as seen in Table 14. Of note, brand loyalty R^2 increased for Generation Y from .330 to .478. Multigroup analysis showed an increase in effect size for brand identification to purchase intention for the Baby Boomer group (f^2 = .271 to f^2 = .342) and an increase in effect size from brand identification to brand loyalty (f^2 = .475 to f^2 =.687) for the Generation Y group.

Table 13.

Complete Model Hypotheses Summary with Multigroup Analysis of Generational Moderator

Path	Complete Model Path Coefficient	Path Coefficient Baby Boomer	Path Coefficient Gen Y	Hypothesis
Sus to Mil Influence -> Purchase Intention	-.209**	n/a	n/a	H1a (not supported)
Sus to Mil Influence -> Brand Loyalty	-.217**	n/a	n/a	H1b (not supported)

Path	Complete Model Path Coefficient	Path Coefficient Baby Boomer	Path Coefficient Gen Y	Hypothesis
Sus to Mil Influence -> Purchase Intention (generational moderation)	n/a	-0.357**	.038	H2a (not supported)
Sus to Mil Influence -> Brand Loyalty (generational moderation)	n/a	-0.299**	.007	H2b (not supported)
Sus to Mil Influence -> Brand Identification	.498**	n/a	n/a	H3 (supported)
Mil Inf ->Brand ID -> Purchase Intention	.265**	n/a	n/a	H4a (partially supported)
Mil Inf -> Brand ID -> Brand Loyalty	.324**	n/a	n/a	H4b (partially supported
Mil Inf ->Brand ID -> Purchase Intention (generational moderation)	n/a	0.287**	.228**	H5 (partially supported)
Mil Inf -> Brand ID -> Brand Loyalty (generational moderation)	n/a	0.287**	.318**	H5 continued
Sus to Mil Influence -> Brand ID (generational moderation)	n/a	0.495**	.469**	No hypothesized relationship

Note. **Significant at $p < .01$

Table 14.

Complete Model Comparison of R^2– Multigroup Analysis

Endogenous Variable	Complete Data - R^2	Baby Boomer - R^2	Generation Y - R^2
Brand ID	.248	.245	.220
Brand Loyalty	.330	.254	.478
Purchase Intention	.215	.258	.293

Note. R^2 values - .75 = substantial; .5 moderate; .25 weak.

A change in relationship between variables in the unmediated model versus the model

with mediation was indicated as both R^2 and the path coefficient were higher from military

influence to brand identification in the unmediated model than when mediation was introduced. When the multigroup analysis was performed with only direct relationships present, generation interacted with susceptibility to military interpersonal influence such that the relationship between military influence and purchase intention and brand loyalty was stronger for Generation Y than for Baby Boomers. This interaction was not present for the moderator in the complete model.

Covariate Analysis

Data on military status, motorcycle ownership, income, student loan debt, gender, distance from a motorcycle dealer, and family motorcycle ownership were collected for each respondent as control variables. A multigroup analysis was run on each categorical variable, except for dealer distance, to determine any large differences between each group. An analysis of zip codes revealed that all respondents were within an hour's drive of either a U.S. dealer or an international dealer; therefore, this variable was not further analyzed. In addition to the multigroup analysis, an ANOVA was run for each control variable, and only family ownership was significant at p < .05, demonstrating that the other control variables did not significantly interact within the model.

Family ownership. Family ownership (parent or sibling owns a motorcycle) verse non-family ownership groups were further evaluated. Non-family ownership produced higher significant path coefficients from military influence to brand loyalty and purchase intention as mediated by brand identification and from military influence to brand identification. The R^2 was higher for non-family ownership and lower for family ownership for brand identification and purchase intention. The interaction of the non-family ownership produced counterintuitive results but could represent an aspirational factor existing with those whose family does not own a

motorcycle. In the end, family ownership, although significant in the model, did not affect the hypotheses.

   Aggregate control variable analysis. Although only the family ownership covariate was significant, changes in path coefficients and coefficients of determination of the other control variables demonstrated some interaction between the control variables and with the latent and moderating variables considered in the model. To assess how this could impact the overall results, various data groups were created and analyzed to further explain the control variables. Results of the MGA with these data groups led to a focus on the two control variables with greatest demonstrated changes in path coefficients and explained variance—military status and gender. A data group with the moderating variable and these two control variables was analyzed. When male Generation Y respondents with a military affiliation were explored ($n =$ 37), the model yielded interesting results. The path coefficient from military to brand identification was extremely high at .756 and was significant at $p < .01$. The direct path coefficient from military influence to purchase intention was .387 and was significant at $p < .05$. As opposed to the results from the multigroup analysis for the complete model, there is a positive and significant relationship between military influence and purchase intention for this data group. This result demonstrates that the controls are interacting in a complex way to influence the results and are worthy of future study.

Summary

   The findings fully supported one of the five hypotheses and partially supported two others. The model, as a whole, had moderate predictive power and large to moderate effect sizes. Analysis of data demonstrated competitive mediation in the model, which indicates that the theoretical model as analyzed in this section is incomplete, missing another independent

variable or mediator (Zhao, Chen & Lynch, 2010). This will be discussed more fully in the next

chapter. There was support for the prediction that generational cohort membership interacted

with the relationship from military influence to purchase intention, as mediated by brand

identification, and is stronger for Baby Boomers than Generation Y. An analysis of only the

direct paths also demonstrated generational interaction with the model's direct relationships but

is stronger for Generation Y than Baby Boomers . This indicates that generation might have

interacted with the model's relationships in a different way when not mediated and could also be

a result of an incomplete model. As a note, the FIMIX-PLS procedure was run and identified two

segments in the data. While one of the two unidentified data groupings support all hypotheses, it

was not possible to determine through the segment assignment using POS-PLS what the

commonalities within each group were – making the finding a topic for future research but not

useful in the current analysis.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As described in the beginning of this study, motorcycles have been part of American life for more than a century (Library of Congress, 2020). While they are ubiquitous in American culture, indications are that Americans' interest in motorcycles, specifically with younger riders, is on the decline (Barrett, 2018; Murphy, 2019). Heavyweight motorcycles are designed in a way that allows those from across generations to ride them. Pugliese and Cagan (2002) found that these heavyweight motorcycles—more commonly known as cruisers or touring motorcycles—can evoke specific reactions from consumers, specifically, those of "freedom, power, and brotherhood" (p. 141). Based on the reactions generated by heavyweight motorcycles, they can appeal to those who may be susceptible to influence from the individuals who personify the motorcycle's characteristics. This research examined the influences on those interested in motorcycles to help understand this negative industry trend and to suggest ways to ameliorate it.

The findings presented in this chapter are the result of data gained through surveys from 226 respondents, representing two generations, the U.S. military, and the civilian community. Respondents either owned or expressed interest in owning a touring or cruiser motorcycle and then answered questions about their favorite cruiser or touring motorcycle brand.

General Findings

This study sought to answer several research questions involving military influence on heavyweight motorcycle consumers from two generations: Baby Boomers and Generation Y. These questions explored how generational influences interact with susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and its relationship to brand identification with heavyweight motorcycles and resultant brand loyalty and purchase intention. The researcher hoped to uncover how interpersonal and generational influences lead a current or future heavyweight motorcycle owner to form a relationship with a brand, with the goal of not only filling a gap in literature but to provide useful information to marketing managers.

Consumer brand relationships have been extensively researched (Fournier, 1988; Kim et al., 2001; Kuenzel & Haliday, 2010). Literature has also explored the idea of social identity and symbolic consumption (Sorensen & Thomsen, 2006), the impact of generational influences on social identity (Van Rossem, 2018) and referential influences on consumers (Fernandes & Panda, 2019). This study expands upon the work of these authors by filling a gap in the literature with regards to how the military can serve as an external influencer to those who are susceptible to interpersonal influence, specifically with regards to their identification with brands. It also shows how consumer brand relationships can apply more specifically to heavyweight motorcycles, especially with regards to generational influences.

Military and generational influence on purchase intention and brand loyalty. The hypothesized direct relationship from susceptibility to military interpersonal influence to purchase intention (H1a) and brand loyalty (H1b) was unsupported. Although the paths were statistically significant between these variables, the valence of the coefficients was negative. In other words, susceptibility to military interpersonal influence led to decreases in both brand

loyalty and purchase intention. The second hypothesis explored generational interaction with the direct relationships between military influence and purchase intention and brand loyalty. It predicted that Baby Boomers would strengthen the relationship from military influence to purchase intention (H2a) and brand loyalty (H2b), but was also unsupported as respondents from the Baby Boomer generation led to significant path coefficients that were even more negative when compared to Generation Y. This indicated generational influence from Baby Boomers attenuated the influence susceptibility to interpersonal military influence had on brand loyalty and purchase intention to an even greater extent. While literature on the generational behavior indicated that Baby Boomers purchase motorcycles due to their symbolism (Ferris, 2019) and had a revolutionary outlook (Parment, 2013) that matched the heavyweight motorcycle image, it is likely other factors outweighed these in producing the findings above. Baby Boomers were also highly influenced by the Vietnam War (Parment, 2013). The effect of that war and the widely reported anti-military sentiment that occurred during, and immediately after, the war could lead military influence to work in the opposite direction of what was hypothesized. This unexpected generational interaction with the relationship between susceptibility to military interpersonal influence, purchase intention and brand loyalty would generate negative consumer attitudes and behavior towards a brand (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007).

Military Influence on Brand Identification. Whereas the direct (H1) and moderated relationships (H2) from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to purchase intention and brand loyalty were not supported, the direct relationship from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to brand identification (H3) was supported. This indicates that those susceptible to influence from the military will positively identify with heavyweight motorcycle brands. This finding extends the work done by Fernandes and Panda (2019) pertaining to the

72

influence of reference groups on consumer behavior to now specifically include the military as a consumer reference group with regards to heavyweight motorcycles. The result indicates that while susceptibility to military influence did not positively relate to the purchase intention and brand loyalty, it did relate to brand identification, where the person's identity and brand's identity overlap (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010). Social identity theory can help explain this result by showing that group norms can help not only shape one's social identity but define it (Champniss, Wilson, & MacDonald, 2015; Christensen et al., 2004). The findings extend the research on identity and norms to also include the influence of the military.

Brand Identification as a Mediator. The study also demonstrates that, in addition to the direct effect between military influence and brand identification, brand identification partially mediates the relationship from military influence to purchase intention and brand loyalty, in partial support of H4. This finding, which extends previous brand identification literature (Lam et al., 2012; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2001; Esch et al., 2006) to heavyweight motorcycles, indicates that identification with a brand can help explain a positive relationship between those susceptible to military interpersonal influence and their favorite heavyweight motorcycle brand. In other words, the identity match between consumer and brand explains how susceptibility to military interpersonal influence relates to purchase intention and brand loyalty, a relationship that does not exist without that mediation. This again highlights the importance of social identity theory (Joshni et al., 2010; Tajfel, 1982) as an explanatory factor in the conceptual model, showing that the consumer's social identity can be influenced by the military in a way that changes the consumer brand relationship.

Recall from Chapter 4 that negative direct effects, coupled with positive indirect effects, indicate not only that partial competitive mediation exists, but also that the conceptual model is

incomplete. In the case of the conceptual model presented in this paper, there is likely a negative mediator missing from the model, which would explain the negative direct relationship from military influence to brand loyalty and purchase intention (Zhao, Chen & Lynch, 2010). There are several potential negative variables that could produce the reported relationship between military influence and consumer brand relations, to include attitude towards military service, political orientation, or even social connection with the military. For example, a negative attitude towards military service would negatively mediate the relationship between susceptibility to military interpersonal influence and brand loyalty or purchase intention. This could also be true if one held a political framework that saw the military as an unnecessary or even hostile presence in society. If an individual had never interacted with someone in the military, they may be more likely to have a negative reaction to military influence as it relates to consumer brand relationships. Identifying the missing mediator can only be accomplished with additional research.

As a final note on mediation, further analysis of the mediating relationship of brand identification produced interesting findings that demonstrated that while brand identification partially mediates brand loyalty and purchase intention, this effect also holds when generation interacts with the model's direct relationships when the indirect effect is not present. Analysis of the model with no mediation found that the moderating effect of generation for Gen Y was positive and significant for the direct relationship from susceptibility to interpersonal military influence to both purchase intention and brand loyalty. Supporting this finding, literature indicates that generational factors can influence one's social identity (Joshni et al., 2010; Von Rossem, 2018). A possible explanation for the interaction is that Generation Y respondents may hold identity-related characteristics that would respond positively if brand loyalty and purchase

74

intention were considered separately from identity. For this generation, brand identification is not necessary to make the link with behaviors and attitudes. While the Baby Boomer generation may react negatively to military influence because of Vietnam, Generation Y was shaped by the 9/11 attacks in New York (Parment, 2013) which could have produced strong positive feelings about the military, but which are not tied to one's social or individual identity (Colford & Sugarman, 2016). Generation Y consumers also make non-identity based decisions about products for utilitarian reasons (Ferris, 2019). The military may serve as referential group to Generation Y, indicating the utility of a heavyweight motorcycle brand.

Generational Influence and Brand Identification Mediation. When the mediating relationship is present , the moderating variable of generational cohort shows that Baby Boomers have a higher level of brand identification on the pathway to purchase intention, but not to brand loyalty (in partial support of H5). This supports previous literature on the difference in generational consumption (Eastman & Liu, 2012) and the impact of generational identity (Tangsupwattana & Liu, 2018). The finding indicates that in the case of this older generation, their individual identity and the brand's identity help foster the intent to purchase and advocate for a brand to others but do not necessarily lead to resultant brand loyalty behaviors and attitudes. The disparity between intention and brand loyalty in this case could be due to the uncertainty of an older generation with regards to their health that prevent loyalty behavior such as repurchase. Their love of products that seem cool (Ferris, 2019) could help drive the intention.

The study also presented two other findings not tied to the hypotheses. First, those who had an interest in a heavyweight motorcycle brand, but who did not have a family member that currently owned a motorcycle, were more likely to have a stronger brand identity and subsequent

purchase intention and brand loyalty. As mentioned in the last chapter, this could represent the aspirational aspect of motorcycle ownership tied to the larger community of motorcycle owners and not limited to the influence of one's family. Of note, media publications also discussed the role of income, debt, and different lifestyle cycles as potential reasons for declining motorcycle sales (Huber, 2018; Marino-Nachison, 2018). This study's covariate analysis did not support the influence of demographic variables on the study's outcomes. The second finding was even more surprising and showed that those with a preference for non-U.S. brands had a greater amount of brand identification tied to military influence and showed a positive relationship directly from military influence to brand loyalty. The result demonstrates that U.S. manufacturer country of origin is not important in establishing the military and brand link.

Managerial Implications

The research findings described above, showing the influence of the military on brand identification and its mediating effect on brand loyalty and purchase intention, can help guide marketing managers. These managers can also use the understanding of generational influences to inform their work.

Marketing managers working for heavyweight motorcycle manufacturers should incorporate military themes into promotions and advertising. Managers from non-U.S. companies should also use this tactic, understanding that military influence extends to non-U.S. brands. As described already, many of the motorcycle manufacturers do this to some extent already. However, the link between a consumer's susceptibility to interpersonal military influence and brand identification indicates more specifically that marketing efforts should focus on the intersection of one's individual's identity and the brand's identity as influenced by the military. Advertising campaigns should relate aspects of the military's identity, such as support

of freedom, a spirit of teamwork, and individual strength, to the motorcycle brand. For example, ads should match the brand's freedom of the road and toughness with the military's characteristics of independence and strength and the consumer's desire to share these qualities.

Managers should segment customers into generational groupings and focus integrated communications plans based on an understanding of generational differences by:

- Appealing to Baby Boomers with campaigns focused on characteristics of rebellion and independence, tying those aspects of military identity in with the brand's identity.

- Appealing to Generation Y by focusing on the military's utilitarian history with motorcycles that makes members of the military expert references, understanding the military is already a trusted institution by this generation (Colford & Sugarman, 2016).

- Educating Generation Y consumers on the motorcycle's brand communities and incentivize them to join those communities to enhance their experience with the brand.

- Appealing to the aspirational aspects of purchase intention: create an image of motorcycle ownership as something to be achieved versus an expense to be created.

- Considering the use of expert spokespeople, who have a tie to the military, in their communications.

Limitations

This study's sample was limited to mostly paid respondents (n=205) who actively seek out survey opportunities for compensation through Qualtrics. The sample excluded the broader group of motorcycle aficionados who do not take paid surveys, except for a small group of friends, families, and riding colleagues (n=21) who volunteered to take the survey. A larger sample audience should be surveyed at bike events, restaurants, bars, and coffee shops. The change in environment is important given military influence is contextual (Peng et al., 2018).

The larger and more broadly acquired sample, taken outside of paid survey takers, may help confirm or deny some of the more counterintuitive findings in this research.

The study was also limited by using only a quantitative approach, which did not allow an exploration of the "why" behind the findings or for insights into why all hypotheses were or were not supported. A qualitative study would be better able to examine the exact components of one's susceptibility to military interpersonal influence as it relates to brand identification, as well as the exact overlaps between individual and brand identity that leads to greater purchase intention and brand loyalty.

The final limitations of this study lie in its temporal and geographic boundaries, specifically its cross-sectional design and limited U.S.-based audience. A longitudinal study could help to both better identify and explain generational influences as one moves through different life stages and various states of maturation. An international study could analyze both susceptibility to military interpersonal influence and generational influences in all the countries where manufacturers sell heavyweight motorcycles.

Future Research

Future research should include a detailed exploration of generational influences on potential motorcycle owners. This research should be driven by the ideas forwarded by Parment (2013) to confirm what characteristics from each generation actually drive purchase intention and brand loyalty with durable goods, to expand on the findings of the current study.

Research should also examine other possible sources of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence. While the military was an unexplored topic regarding influence, there may be others outside of the normal realms of celebrities and sports figures—for example, first responders or even well-known volunteers.

Finally, future research should seek to identify the missing variable or variables in the conceptual model presented in this study that explain the negative relationship between susceptibility to military interpersonal influence and brand identification and purchase intention. Some possible additional mediators worthy of future research were suggested earlier in the chapter, and include one's attitude towards the military, political orientation or social interaction with the military.

References

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *34*, 347-356.

Ajzen, I. (2011). The theory of planned behaviour: Reactions and reflections. *Psychology & Health, 26*(9), 1113-1127. https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2011.613995

American Marketing Association. (2020). Definitions of marketing. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/

Arifine, G., Felix, R., & Furrer, O. (2019). Multi-brand loyalty in consumer markets: A qualitatively-driven mixed methods approach. *European Journal of Marketing*, *53*(11), 2419-2450. doi.org/10.1108/EJM-07-2017-0474

Armstrong, M. (2019, April 24). Harley Davidson in trouble. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.statista.com/chart/17791/harley-davidson-key-figures-yoy/

Austin, D. M. (2009). Ritual and boundary distinction in a recreational community: A case study of motorcycle rallies and riders. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, *2*(24), 70-93.

Balaji, M., Roy, S. & Sadeque, S. (2016). Antecedents and consequences of university brand identification. *Journal of Business Research, 69*(8), 3023-3032.

Bandura, A. 1971. *Social Learning Theory*. New York, NY: General Learning Press.

Bandyopadhyay, S., & Martell, M. (2007). Does attitudinal loyalty influence behavioral loyalty? A theoretical and empirical study. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 14*(1), 35-44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2006.03.002

Bathmanathan, V., Rajadurai, J., & Sohail, M. S. (2018). Generational consumer patterns: A document analysis method. *Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal, 10*(3), 958-970.

Barrett, R. (2018). Harley, other motorcycle makers face big challenges. *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.jsonline.com/story/money/business/2018/01/16/harley-davidson-motorcycle-manufacturers-face-big-challenges-2018/1038305001/

Bearden, W. O., Netemeyer, R. G., & Teel, J. E. (1989). Measurement of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *15*(4), 473. doi.org/10.1086/209186

Belk, R. W. (1984). Three scales to measure constructs related to materialism: Reliability, validity, and relationships to measures of happiness. *Advance in Consumer Research*, *11*(1), 291-297.

Brakus, J.J., Schmitt, B.H. & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: What is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty? *Journal of Marketing, 73*(3), 52-68.

Carter, M. J. (2013). Advancing identity theory: Examining the relationship between activated identities and behavior in different social contexts. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *76*(3), 203-223. doi.org/10.1177/0190272513493095

Champniss, G., Wilson, H. N., & Macdonald, E. K. (2015, January-February). Why your customers' social identities matter. *Harvard Business Review, 10*.

Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The chain of effects from brand trust and brand Affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty. *Journal of Marketing*, *65*(2), 81-93. doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.65.2.81.18255

Christensen, P. N., Rothgerber, H., Wood, W., & Matz, D. C. (2004). Social norms and identity relevance: A motivational approach to normative behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *30*(10), 1295-1309. doi.org/10.1177/0146167204264480

Colford, M., & Sugarman, A. (2016). Millennials and the military. In J. Mattis, & K. N. Schake (Eds.), *Warriors and Citizens: American Views of Our Military.* Hoover Institution. Retrieved from https://www.hoover.org/research/millennials-and-military

Contractor, N. S., & DeChurch, L. A. (2014). Integrating social networks and human social motives to achieve social influence at scale. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 111(Supplement_4), 13650-13657. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1401211111

Cortez, A. (2015, August 4). History of military motorcycles. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://wp.bikebandit.com/blog/history-of-military-motorcycles

De Cannière, M. H., De Pelsmacker, P., & Geuens, M. (2009). Relationship quality and purchase intention and behavior: The moderating impact of relationship strength. *Journal of Business Psychology, 25*, 87-98. DOI 10.1007/s10869-009-9127-z

Dick, A.S., & Basu, K., 1994. Consumer loyalty: Towards an integrated conceptual approach. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *22*(2), 99-113.

Duprey, R. (2017, November 15). Indian motorcycle gaining on Harley-Davison market share. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.fool.com/investing/2017/11/15/indian-motorcycle-gaining-on-harley-davidson-marke.aspx

Durkheim, E. (1915/1965). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Eastman, J. K., & Liu, J. (2012). The impact of generational cohorts on status consumption: An exploratory look at generational cohort and demographics on status consumption. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, *29*(2), 93-102. doi.org/10.1108/07363761211206348

Elliott, R., & Wattanasuwan, K. (1998). Brands as symbolic resources for the construction of identity. *International Journal of Advertising*, *17*(2), 131-144. doi.org/10.1080/02650487.1998.11104712

Escalas, J., & Bettman, J. (2005). Self-construal, reference groups, and brand meaning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *32*(3), 378-390.

Esch, F., Langner, T., Schmitt, B. H., & Geus, P. (2006). Are brands forever? How brand knowledge and relationships affect current and future purchases. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *15*(2), 98-105. doi.org/10.1108/10610420610658938

Fernandes, S., & Panda, R. (2019). Influence of social reference groups on consumer buying behavior: A review. *Journal of Management Research*, *19*(2), 13.

Ferris, R. (2019, January 29). Millennials may claim another victim: Harley-Davidson and the classic American motorcycle. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/25/actually-young-people-really-could-kill-harley-davidson.html?fbclid=IwAR0H39sTFLg___pJTC9ExJE4uQgOIB7vhH08WKd_y2TOrGMyq9ytx0TIn24

Fournier, S. & Lee, L. (2009, April). Getting brand communities right. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://hbr.org/2009/04/getting-brand-communities-right

Franck, T. (2017, July 12). Millennials don't like motorcycles, and that's killing Harley's sales. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/12/millennials-dont-like-motorcycles-and-thats-killing-harleys-sales.html

Ghani, N. H. B. A., & Tuhin, M. K. W. (2016). Consumer brand relationships. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, *6*(4), 950-957.

Gurău, C. (2012). A life-stage analysis of consumer loyalty profile: Comparing Generation X and Millennial consumers. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, *29*(2), 103-113. doi.org/10.1108/07363761211206357

Gonzalez-Fuentes, M. (2019). Millennials' national and global identities as drivers of

    materialism and consumer ethnocentrism. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 159*(2),

    170–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2019.1570904

Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017) *A Primer on Partial Least*

    Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

    Publications Inc.

Hanbury, M. (2017, July 13). Millennials could be a problem for America's most iconic

    motorcycle brand. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from

    https://www.businessinsider.com/millennials-are-hurting-harley-davidson-sales-2017-7

Harley-Davidson Military Clothing. (2020). Retrieved (2020, June 11) from

    https://hdmilitarysales.com/

Harley-Davidson Military Sales. (2020). Retrieved (2020, June, 11) from

    https://blog.hdmilitarysales.com/

He, H., Li, Y., & Harris, L. (2012). Social identity perspective on brand loyalty. *Journal of*

    Business Research, 65(5), 648-657. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.03.007

Hogg, M. A., Terry, D. J., & White, K. M. (1995). A tale of two theories: A critical comparison of

    identity theory with social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *58*(4), 255.

    https://doi.org/10.2307/2787127

Honda Financial Services (2020). Retrieved (2020, September 4) from

    https://www.hondafinancialservices.com/leasing/military-offer.

Honda Motorcycle History (2020). Retrieved (2020, September 4) from

    https://www.motorcycle.com/manufacturer/history-honda-motorcycle.html

Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2000). *Millennials rising*. New York, NY: Vintage.

Huber, T. (2018, April 17). Millennials kill again – This time it's motorcycles. Retrieved (2020,

    June 11) from https://www.rideapart.com/articles/244832/millennials-kill-again-this-

    time-its-motorcycles/

Indian Motorcycles. (2020a). Veterans Charity Ride to Sturgis. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from

    https://www.indianmotorcycle.com/en-us/veterans-ride/

Indian Motorcycles. (2020b). The story of a legend. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from

    https://www.indianmotorcycle.com/en-us/history/

Jacoby, J. (1971). A model of multi-brand loyalty. *Journal of Advertising Research,*

    11(3), 25-31.

Jackson, J. W., & Smith, E. R. (1999). Conceptualizing social identity: A new framework and

    evidence for the impact of different dimensions. *Personality and Social Psychology*

    Bulletin, *25*(1), 120135. doi.org/10.1177/0146167299025001010

Jalilvand, M. R., Samiei, N., & Mahdavinia, S. H. (2011). The effect of brand equity components

    on purchase intention: An application of Aaker's model in the automobile industry.

    International Business and Management, 2 (2), 149-158.

Jarvis, L. P., & Wilcox, J. B. (1976). Repeat purchasing behavior and attitudinal brand loyalty:

    Additional evidence. In K. L. Bernhardt (Ed.), *Marketing: 1776–1976 and beyond* (pp.

    151–152). New York, NY: American Marketing Association.

Joshi, A., Dencker, J. C., Franz, G., & Martocchio, J. J. (2010, July). Unpacking generational

    identities in organizations. *The Academy of Management Review, 35*(3), 392-414.

Kaire, M. (2016). Motor scooter popularity in Florida. Retrieved (2020, June 11). from

    https://www.kairelaw.com/personal-injury/brief-overview-florida-scooter-laws/

Khamitov, M., Wang, X. (Shane), & Thomson, M. (2019). How well do consumer-brand

    relationships drive customer brand loyalty? Generalizations from a meta-analysis of

    brand relationship elasticities. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *46*(3), 435–459.

    doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucz006

Kim, C. K., Han, D., & Park, S.-B. (2001). The effect of brand personality and brand

    identification on brand loyalty: Applying the theory of social identification. *Japanese*

    Psychological Research, 43(4), 195–206. doi.org/10.1111/1468-5884.00177

Kim, D., Ferrin, D. & Rahav, R. (2008). A trust-based consumer decision making model in

    electronic commerce: The role of trust, perceived risk, and their antecedents. *Decision*

    Support Systems, 44(2), 544–564.

Kuang-peng, H., Annie, H. C., Peng, N., Hackley, C., Rungpaka, A. T., & Chun-lun Chou.

    (2011). Antecedents of luxury brand purchase intention. *The Journal of Product and*

    Brand Management, 20(6), 457–467.

    doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.libproxy.db.erau.edu/10.1108/10610421111166603

Kuenzel, S., & Halliday, S. V. (2010). The chain of effects from reputation and brand personality

    congruence to brand loyalty: The role of brand identification. *Journal of Targeting,*

    Measurement and Analysis for Marketing, *18*(3–4), 167-176. doi.org/10.1057/jt.2010.15

LaPlante, Gary. (2012). Top 10 reasons why dirtbike riding is good for streetbike riders.

    Retrieved (2020, August 30) from https://www.cycleworld.com/2012/10/30/learning-in-

    the-dirt/

Lam, S. K., Ahearne, M., & Schillewaert, N. (2012). A multinational examination of the

    symbolic-instrumental framework of consumer-brand identification. *Journal of*

    International Business Studies, *43*, 306-331.

Lam, S. K., Ahearne, M., Mullins, R., Hayati, B., & Schillewaert, N. (2013). Exploring the

    dynamics of antecedents to consumer–brand identification with a new brand. *Journal of*

    the Academy of Marketing Science, *41*(2), 234-252. doi.org/10.1007/s11747-012-0301-x

Landon, L. Jr. (1974). Self-concept, ideal self-concept, and consumer purchase intentions.

    Journal of Consumer Research, 1(2), 44-51.

Lazarevic, V. (2012). Encouraging brand loyalty in fickle generation Y consumers. *Young*

    Consumers, *13*(1), 45-61. doi.org/10.1108/17473611211203939

Library of Congress. (2020). Topics in chronicling America - Motorcycle mania: Early history of

    motorcycles. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from

    https://www.loc.gov/rr/news/topics/motorcycles.html

Mannheim, K. (1952). *The Problem of Generations' in Mannheim, K. Essays* on the Sociology of

    Knowledge. London, England: RKP (first published 1923).

Marino-Nachison, D. (2018). Motorcycles: Why Millennials aren't buying, and what to do about

    it. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.barrons.com/articles/motorcycles-why-

    millennials-arent-buying-and-what-to-do-about-it-1523632340

Markert, J. (2004). Demographics of age: Generational and cohort confusion. *Journal of Current*

    *Issues in Research in Advertising, (26)*4.

Markow, D. (2005). Children's reactions to tragedy. *Young Consumers: Insight and Ideas for*

    Responsible Marketers, 6(2), 8-10.

Marzocchi, G., Morandin, G., & Bergami, M. (2013). Brand communities: Loyal to the

    community or the brand? *European Journal of Marketing*, *47*(1–2), 93-114.

    doi.org/10.1108/03090561311285475

Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative Research Design.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McMullan, R., & Gilmore, A. (2008). Customer loyalty: An empirical study. *European Journal of Marketing*, *42*(9/10), 1084-1094. doi.org/10.1108/03090560810891154

Mechinda, P., Serirat, S., & Gulid, N. (2009, April). An examination of tourists' attitudinal and behavioral loyalty: comparison between domestic and international tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 15 (2),* 129-148.

Merrill, C. (1999). The ripple effect reaches Gen Y. *American Demographics, 21*(11), 15-17.

Military Discounts Central. (2020). Retrieved (2020, September 4) from https://www.militarydiscountscentral.com/motorcycledealerships/

Morandin, G., Bagozzi, R. P., & Bergami, M. (2013). Brand community membership and the construction of meaning. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *29*(2), 173-183. doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2013.03.003

Munjal, V. (April 25, 2014) Country of Origin Effects on Consumer Behavior. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2429131 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2429131

Murphy, K. (2019, July 23). Will the youths save the motor company? (2020, June 11) Retrieved from https://www.rideapart.com/articles/361448/harley-davidson-sales-decline-again/

Nam, J., Ekinci, Y., & Whyatt, G. (2011). Brand equity, brand loyalty and consumer satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research, 38(3),* 1009-1030. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.01.015

O'Donnell, J. (2006, October 11). Gen Y sits on top of consumer food chain: They're savvy shoppers with money and influence. *USA Today*. Retrieved from https://usatoday30.usatoday.com/money/advertising/2006-10-11-retail-teens-usat_x.htm

Oliver, R.L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty? *Journal of Marketing, 63*, 33-44.

Parment, A. (2011). *Generation Y in consumer and labour markets*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Parment, A. (2013). Generation Y vs. Baby Boomers: Shopping behavior, buyer involvement and

implications for retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *20*(2), 189-199.

doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2012.12.001

Peng, S., Wang, G., & Xie, D. (2017). Social influence analysis in social networking big data:

Opportunities and challenges. *IEEE Network*, *31*(1), 11-17.

doi.org/10.1109/MNET.2016.1500104NM

Polaris. (2017, January 9). Victory motorcycle important announcement. Retrieved (2020, June

11) from https://www.polaris.com/en-us/news/company/victory-motorcycles-important-

announcement/

Pugliese, M. & Cagan, J. (2002). Capturing a rebel: Modeling the Harley-Davidson brand

through a motorcycle shape grammar. *Research in Engineering Design, (13)*3, 139-156.

DOI 10.1007/SO0163-002-0013-1.

Reicher, S. (2004). The context of social identity: Domination, resistance, and change. *Political

Psychology*, *25*(6), 921–945. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2004.00403.x

Roadracing World. (2019). Motorcycle industry council (MIC) presents framework of plan to

boost ridership. Retrieved (2020, June 11) from https://www.roadracingworld.com/news

/motorcycle-industry-council-mic-presents-framework-of-plan-to-boost-ridership/

Roberts, C. (1986). Tracing formative influences on event recall: A test of Mannheim's

sensitivity hypothesis. *Social Forces*, *(65)*1, 74-86.

Schewe, C. & Noble, S. (2000). Market segmentation by cohorts: The value and validity of

cohorts in America and abroad. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *16*(1–3), 129-142.

Schouten, J. W., & McAlexander, J. H. (1995). Subcultures of consumption: An ethnography of

the new Bikers. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *22*(1), 43. doi.org/10.1086/209434

Sebor, J. (2006). Y me. *Customer Relationship Management, 10*(11), 24–27.

Sirgy, M. J. (1982). Self-concept in consumer behavior: A critical review. *Journal of Consumer Research, 9*(3), 287-300.

Sørensen, E. B., & Thomsen, T. U. (2006). The lived leaning of symbolic consumption and identity construction in stable and transitional phases: Towards an analytical framework. *European Advances in Consumer Research, 7,* 571-576.

Statista. (2018). Motorcycles 2018: Statista Consumer Survey. Retrieved (2020, August 30) https://www-statista-com.ezproxy.rollins.edu/study/58079/motorcycles-us-2018/

Statista. (2020a). Change in U.S. motorcycle sales as of June 2017, by type. Retrieved (2020, June 6) from: https://www-statista-com.ezproxy.rollins.edu/statistics/252267/change-in-us-motorcycle-sales-by-type/#statisticContainer

Statista. (2020b). Motorcycle brands in the U.S. Retrieved (2020, June 6) from: https://www-statista-com.ezproxy.rollins.edu/statistics/252210/market-share-of-major-motorcycle-manufacturers-in-the-us/

Stokburger-Sauer, N., Ratneshwar, S., & Sen, S. (2012). Drivers of consumer–brand identification. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *29*(4), 406-418. doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2012.06.001

Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information, 13*, 65-93.

Tajfel, H. (1982). Social psychology of intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *33*, 1-39.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). The social identity theory of inter-group behavior. In S.

    Worchel & W. Austin (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations.* Pacific

    Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Tangsupwattana, W., & Liu, X. (2018). Effect of emotional experience on symbolic consumption

    in Generation Y consumers. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, *36*(5), 514-527.

    doi.org/10.1108/MIP-11-2017-0316

Terry, D. J., Hogg, M. A., & White, K. M. (1999). The theory of planned behaviour: Self-

    identity, social identity and group norms. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *38*(3),

    225-244. doi.org/10.1348/014466699164149

Tuškej, U., Golob, U., & Podnar, K. (2013). The role of consumer–brand identification in

    building brand relationships. *Journal of Business Research*, *66*(1), 53-59.

    doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.07.022

Ultimate Motorcycling. (2019). Motorcycle statistics in America: Demographics change for

    2018. Retrieved (2020, June 6) from https://ultimatemotorcycling.com/2019/02/07/

    motorcycle-statistics-in-america-demographics-change-for-2018/

United States Census Bureau. (2019a). By 2030, all baby boomers will be age 65 or older.

    Retrieved (2020, June 6) from https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/12/by-2030-

    all-baby-boomers-will-be-age-65-or-older.html

United States Census Bureau. (2019b). Population and housing unit estimates. Retrieved (2020,

    June 6) from https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest.html

Vallone, D., Smith, A., Kenney, T., Greenberg, M., Hair, E., Cantrell, J., Rath, J., & Koval, R.

    (2016). Agents of social change: A model for targeting and engaging Generation Z across

    platforms: How a nonprofit rebuilt an advertising campaign to curb smoking by teens and

young adults. *Journal of Advertising Research*, *56*(4), 414-425. doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2016-046

van der Westhuizen, L.-M. (2018). Brand loyalty: Exploring self-brand connection and brand experience. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *27*(2), 172-184. doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-07-2016-1281

Van Rossem, A. H. D. (2019). Generations as social categories: An exploratory cognitive study of generational identity and generational stereotypes in a multigenerational workforce. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *40*(4), 434-455. doi.org/10.1002/job.2341

Wagner, I. (2019, January 30). Motorcycle industry in the U.S. – Statistics and facts. Retrieved (2020, June 6) from https://www.statista.com/topics/1305/motorcycles-in-the-us/

Wang, S., Fan, J., Zhao, D., Yang, S., & Fu., Y. (2014). Predicting consumer's intention to adopt hybrid electric vehicles: using an extended version of the theory of planned behavior model. *Transportation, 43*, 123-143.

Wang, X., Yu, C., & Wei, Y. (2012). Social media peer communication and impacts on purchase intentions: A consumer socialization framework. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *26*(4), 198-208. doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2011.11.004

Wood, L.M. (2004). Dimensions of brand purchasing behaviour: consumers in the 18-24 age group. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 4*(1), 9-24.

Zarantonello, L., & Schmitt, B. H. (2010). Using the brand experience scale to profile consumers and predict consumer behaviour. *Journal of Brand Management*, *17*(7), 532-540. doi.org/10.1057/bm.2010.4

Zhao, X., Chen, Q., & Lynch, J. G. (2010). Reconsidering Baron and Kenny: Myths and truths about mediation analysis. *Journal of Consumer Research, 37*. DOI: 10.1086/651257

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Objectives: The objective of this survey is to gather information on consumer attitudes, behavior, and influences towards heavyweight motorcycles.

Who is conducting this survey? This survey is being requested and will be analyzed by Robert Kelly and Dr. Tracy Kizer, Ph.D. Robert is a retired military veteran and employee of a Florida-based university. Dr. Tracy Kizer is an Associate Professor of Marketing at the Crummer Graduate School of Business, Rollins College where Robert is a student in the EDBA program.

How will my data be used? All information collected in this survey will contribute to a research dissertation to better understand intergenerational consumer attitudes, behavior, and influences with regards to heavyweight motorcycles. A final copy of our findings will be available for distribution, if you are interested.

Why was I selected to participate in your survey? You are receiving this request as you have met criteria for inclusion in the study. You are not required to participate, and there are no risks in choosing to participate or not participate in the study.

Will my answers be kept confidential? Your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous. We will minimize any risks by assigning each respondent a unique identifier and by maintaining the data on a third-party storage site (e.g., Qualtrics) and by aggregating the data for analysis. Please try to answer all questions as honestly and accurately as possible.

How much time is required to complete the survey? This survey should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

Who can I talk to if I have questions? If you have questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the researcher(s), Dr. Tracy Kizer at 407-646-2530, Robert Kelly at rkelly@rollins.edu. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Rollins College Office IR Board at (407) 646-2099 or jhouston@rollins.edu

By clicking "I agree" below you are indicating that you are at least 18 years old, have read this consent form and agree to participate in this research study. You are free to skip any question that you choose. Please print a copy of this page for your records.

o I consent

o I do not consent

Thank you for participating in this study by Robert Kelly, a doctoral student in the Executive Doctorate in Business Administration program at Crummer Graduate School of Business, Rollins College. The purpose of this study is to gather information on attitudes, behavior, and influences towards motorcycles. The results of this study may be used to help motorcycle manufacturers in their branding and marketing communication efforts.

In the next few pages, you will first complete a series of simple questions regarding your background. Next you will be asked to answer a series of questions about your favorite motorcycle brand, followed by some additional background questions. The survey consists of 34 questions and should take less than 20 minutes to complete. Your responses will be anonymous. All answers obtained will be kept confidential and will only be reported in an aggregate format.

Thank you again for taking the time to complete this survey.

NOTE: The section headers for the various survey parts written below will be adjusted on the final survey visible to participants to be vague enough not to influence participants. The subject headers listed below are only written this way for the purposes of this proposal as a means of connecting construct measurement to questions.

## Part I: Background and Survey Grouping Questions

1. Do you currently own a motorcycle?
   - o Yes
   - o No

2. Are you currently a member of the reserve or active component of the U.S. Armed forces, or are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
   - o Yes
   - o No

3. When were you born?
   - o Between 1946–1955
   - o Between 1956–1965
   - o Between 1986–1995
   - o Between 1996–2005

Part II: Motorcycle Brand Questions

The next few sections of the survey are about your thoughts regarding a specific type of motorcycle. Before answering the questions, please indicate your favorite brand of heavyweight motorcycle (cruiser style motorcycle) in the free response box below. If you do not have a favorite brand, answer the questions based on the first brand of cruiser type motorcycle that comes to mind. An example of a cruiser style motorcycle is most Indian or Harley-Davidson motorcycles you would see on the road. This motorcycle would be similar in appearance to one of the sketches below:
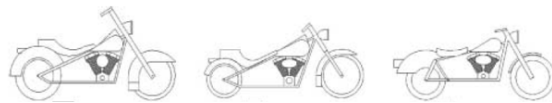
4. My favorite cruiser style motorcycle brand is: _____

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements presented below by selecting the most appropriate option from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). There are no right answers or wrong answers. All we are interested in is a number that best shows your answer about the brand you listed above.

Part IIA: Brand Identification (Kim, Han & Park, 2001)
(1 = Strongly Disagree ; 7=Strongly Agree)

---

5. This brand's successes are my successes.

6. I am interested in what others think about this brand.

7. When someone praises this brand, it feels like a personal compliment.

8. When I talk about this brand, I usually say "we" rather than "they."

9. If a story in the media criticized the brand, I would feel embarrassed.

10. When someone criticizes this brand, it feels like a personal insult.

Part IIB: Loyalty: Brand Loyalty - questions 11-14 (Kim, Han & Park, 2001); Attitudinal Loyalty - questions 15-19 (Mechinda, Serirat & Gulid, 2009)
(1 = Strongly Disagree ; 7=Strongly Agree)

---

11. I will continue to use this brand because I am satisfied and acquainted with the brand.

12. I will use this brand despite competitors' deals.

13. I prefer the brand to others.

14. I would buy additional products and services in this brand.

15. I consider myself a loyal user of this *brand*

16. My next *purchase* will most likely be *of this brand*

17. I would like to *use this brand* again

18. I would recommend this *brand* to people who seek my advice

19. I would tell other positive things about this *brand*

Note: For questions 5-19, the participant's brand response from question 4, will appear in the above scale item in lieu of "this brand" or "the brand". In this way, participants will be reminded of their favorite brand, which enhances saliency. This procedure was also used by Escalas and Bettman, 2003.

Part IIC: Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (Adapted from Bearden, et al., 1989) (1 = Strongly Disagree ; 7=Strongly Agree)

In this section, we are interested in learning about how you relate to others. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements below.

20. I rarely purchase the latest motorcycles until I am sure those with a military affiliation approve of them.

21. It is important that those with a military affiliation like the products and brands I buy.

22. When buying products, I generally purchase brands that I think those with a military affiliation will approve of.

23. If those with a military affiliation can see me using a product, I often purchase the brand that they expect me to buy.

24. I like to know what brands and products make good impressions on those with a military affiliation.

25. I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that those with a military affiliation purchase.

26. If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same brands that they buy.

27. I often identify with other people by purchasing the same products and brands they purchase.

28. To make sure I buy the right product or brand, I often observe what others are buying and using.

29. If I have little experience with a product, I often ask my friends about the product.

30. I often consult other people to help choose the best alternative available from a product class.

31. I frequently gather information from friends or family about a product before I buy.

Part IID: Purchase Behavior (Adapted from Esch et al., 2006)

Please indicate the answer that matches your behavior with the brand you identified at the beginning of this section:

32. How often have you bought the brand in the past 10 years?
    o Never
    o Once
    o Twice
    o More than two times

33. How often did you use the brand on average in the last 10 years?
    o Never
    o Once
    o Twice
    o More than two times

34. How often do you plan to buy the brand in the next 10 years?
    o Never
    o Once
    o Twice
    o More than two times

Part III: Demographic Questions
The remaining questions will help provide additional background information:

---

35. What is your current income?

    o $25k – 44k
    o $55k – 74k
    o $75k – 95k
    o   Over $96k
    o   Prefer not to answer

36. Do you have debt from student loans exceeding $20k?

    o   Yes
    o   No

36a. What is the amount of that debt?

- o Under $30k
- o $21k to 40k
- o $41k to 60l
- o Over 60k

37. What gender do you identify with?

- o Male
- o Female
- o Other

38. What is your zip code? _____ (will be used to locate surrounding motorcycle dealerships)

39. Does either of your parents or siblings currently own a motorcycle?

- o Yes
- o No

40. Are you a parent?

- o Yes
- o No
- o Prefer not to answer

41. What is your marital status?

- o Single
- o Married
- o Divorced
- o Widowed
- o Prefer not to answer

42. If you have a motorcycle endorsement, how many years have you held it?

43. Are you a member of the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association?

- o Yes
- o No

Closing Statement

Thank you for your participation in this survey. Once all surveys are gathered and analyzed, a set of findings and discussions will be produced based on the data. These findings will be published as part of a doctoral dissertation and will be made available to motorcycle manufacturers for their use in marketing and advertising efforts.

Rollins
─── EST. 1885 ───

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

To: Robert Kelly

From: John Houston, Ph.D.
        Chair, IRB

Date: 4/3/2020

Re: Permission to Proceed with Research

IRB#:   **20200403RK**

_____

The Rollins Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved your proposed project titled:

The impact of brand perceptions and brand identification on the difference in motorcycle purchase intentions and brand loyalty between Baby Boomers and Gen Y consumers.

If there are any further changes to this research, as proposed, please resubmit your request for review. Approval of this research extends for 12 months from the date of this letter. If the project lasts longer than 12 months, you will need to request an extension from the IRB in the form of an addendum. On behalf of the board, I would like to express our best wishes for the successful completion of your research project.