

Consumers and Their Brand Love Relationships

A thesis submitted in partial of the requirement for the degree of
doctor of philosophy in marketing

2019

By:

Shanshan Luo

Supervisors:

Ben Wooliscroft

Robert Hamlin

Abstract

This thesis contributes to the concept of consumer-brand love relationship building. Brands are essential to consumers in their everyday lives. Moreover, relationships between consumers and brands are similar to relationships between people, or relationships between people and nature, universe or religions, and, as such, play a central part in people's lives, and therefore are indispensable. Love is the foundation of people's lives. This includes: people's love of their close ones, their love of their job, their love of religions, their love of nature, and their love of brands which are all closely related to them. Consumers' love of a brand is a desire and an emotional yearning for a special and unique brand relationship, which can help consumers expand themselves by including their brands in themselves. Consumers develop and maintain relationships with their loved brands by expanding their sense of self in conjunction with their loved brands' functions, and also by expanding their cognitive abilities, their social identities and personal identities, and their awareness of their life purpose and the meaning of their life.

Consumers engage in relationships with their loved brands, and maintain relationships with their loved brands, with a desire to construct and achieve their self-concept and the image they have of themselves. Different consumers have different needs and goals in their life, and, as such, they understand and interpret their brands and equate them to their love relationships in different ways. This thesis frames the consumer-brand love relationships in two forms: Firstly, the brand love relationship is similar to a close interpersonal relationship. Love is featured as closeness with brand love relationships, and this closeness is analogous to the closeness they experience in their close interpersonal relationships. In the meantime, the interactions between consumers and their loved brands embody the closeness in their brand love relationships. The four properties involved in their interactions illustrates the closeness between consumers and brands, including: consumers have frequent interactions with brands (frequency); consumers have interconnections with brands for a long period of time (duration); consumers' loved brands involve different types of events or activities in their life (diversity); consumers are efficient with, and dependent on their interactions with their brand love relationships (strength).

Secondly, there is a correlation or a parallel that can be drawn between the brand love relationships and the spiritual relationship. Love is featured as spirituality in brand love relationships, and this corresponds with the features of spirituality in spiritual relationships. The four properties in this thesis that demonstrate the spirituality between consumers and brands include: unifying interconnectedness; transcendence; inner resources; and purpose and meaning in life. The two forms of brand love relationships are unique and can co-exist or can remain separate in brand love relationships.

The framework of the two forms of brand love relationships are developed by regarding consumers and their loved brands as “close ones” in the relationship and by employing and extending the theories from the research on close interpersonal relationships. It is developed by regarding consumers and their loved brands as “meaningful and spiritual” in their relationships and by employing and extending the theories from the research on spiritual relationships. In the meantime, culture is one of the influential factors in consumer brand love relationships, and it is considered in this thesis. Young New Zealand consumers are more likely to develop and maintain their brand love relationships, and this has the benefit of helping them expand their uniqueness and their wholeness in terms of their sense of self, and young Chinese consumers are more likely to develop and maintain brand love relationships that deliver cohesion, harmony, and cooperation to foster and expand their interdependent sense of self.

With respect to future research, this thesis provides a framework of consumer brand love relationships with a focus on consumers’ motivation to develop and maintain their brand love relationships. The practical implications of this thesis conclude that marketers should be aware that the self-expansion motives that exist in the consumer-brand love relationships are mutual. On the one hand, consumers seek and pursue brands’ resources, perspectives, and identities in the brand love relationship for the innovation the brand offers and for the personal growth of the consumer. On the other hand, consumers’ loved brands should preserve the established core essence or core features in order to help the consumer advance, evolve, develop, and promote his/her expansion.

Acknowledgements

My Ph.D. journey has been the adventure of a lifetime. There are many people who have supported me in my decision to leave an already established career and come to New Zealand to pursue my Ph.D. studies.

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to my supervisors Associate Professor Dr. Ben Wooliscroft and Dr. Robert Hamlin. I truly appreciate all their contributions of time and ideas to assist me and help make my Ph.D. experience productive and stimulating. Thank you both for your ongoing encouragement, inspiring talks and support all the way through.

This thesis could not have been undertaken without the support of my family. I must express my heartfelt thanks to my mother and father. They have set an amazing example for me of generosity, enthusiasm, kindness, and they continuously provide emotional and moral supports to me. I am still in the process of putting into practice all of these good characteristics I have learned from my parents. So, again thanks to both of you, for your care, love, and support. To my husband Bowei, thank you for your patience while I have been very busy with my research and study. To my beloved son Tianji, I must express my thanks for being such a good boy. You have brought me the greatest happiness as a mother.

Thanks are also owed to my friends and colleagues from the Ph.D. group, as well as special thanks to Dr. Raymond Xia who is not only my colleague, he is also my brother-in-heart, for his care and support all the way through. I must thank Dr. Donia Waseem, Dr. Shijiao Chen, Dr. Kamal Rahmani, Amy Luan, Bernadette, Katayoun, Tabitha, Khai, and all my Ph.D. mates. We have shared our laughter and our tears, and we have supported each other throughout the up and downs of this journey. I must also extend my appreciation and gratitude to the University of Otago for providing such an excellent academic environment. My thanks to everyone, I am forever grateful to you all.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.1.1 Consumer brand love relationships	1
1.1.2 The connection between consumers' self and brand love relationships	4
1.1.3 Culture and consumers' self in brand love relationships	4
1.2 The aim of this thesis	5
1.3 The research problems and research questions	6
1.4 Research design	7
1.5 Outline of this thesis	9
1.6 Research focus	10
1.6.1 Theoretical framework	10
1.6.2 Definitions	12
1.7 Potential contributions of this thesis	13
1.8 Limitations of this thesis	14
Chapter 2 Interpersonal Love Relationships.....	16
2.1 Introduction.....	16
2.2 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Behaviour	18
2.2.1 Attachment Theory	18
2.2.2 Physical attractiveness	19
2.3 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Emotions	20
2.4 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Cognition.....	22
2.5 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Motivation.....	23
2.5.1 Closeness in a love relationship.....	24
2.5.2 Personal performance in close relationships.....	24
2.6 Conclusion	26
Chapter 3 Spiritual Relationships	28
3.1 Introduction.....	28
3.2 Transcendence	29
3.3 Purpose and Meaning in Life.....	30
3.4 Unifying Interconnectedness	31
3.5 Inner Strength/ Innerness	32
3.6 The Differences between Spirituality and Religion	33
3.7 Spirituality and Relationship.....	34
3.8 Conclusion	35
Chapter 4 Motivation in Relationships	37
4.1 Introduction.....	37
4.2 Intrinsic Motivation and Rewards.....	37
4.3 Self-Expansion Motivation and Relationships.....	38
4.3.1 Self-Expansion Motivation	39
4.3.2 Love and Self- Expansion.....	40
4.3.3 Love as motivation to include others in each other's self.....	40
4.4 Conclusion	41

Chapter 5 Consumer Brand Love Relationship.....	43
5.1 Introduction.....	43
5.2 The Concept of Consumer-Brand Love	43
5.2.1 The Concept of Brand Love in Managerial and Practical Perspectives	43
5.2.2 The Concept of Brand Love in Theory and Construct Perspectives	44
5.3 Brand, Brand Experience, and Connections between Brands and Consumers	57
5.3.1 Brand and Brand Meaning	57
5.4 Culture and Brand Relationships	62
5.4.1 Theories of culture	62
5.4.2 Culture and Love	63
5.4.3 Culture and Consumer Behaviour.....	68
5.4.4 Conclusion of culture and consumer behaviour.....	73
5.5 Research Model	74
Chapter 6 Conclusions of the Literature Review	75
6.1 Introduction.....	75
6.1.1 Conceptualisation of Interpersonal Love Relationship	75
6.1.2 Conceptualisation of Spiritual Relationship	78
6.1.3 Conceptualisation of Motivation.....	79
6.1.4 Conceptualisation of Culture and Consumer-Brand Love Relationships	80
6.2 Statement of Proportions.....	81
6.3 Conclusion	84
Chapter 7 Research Methodology	86
7.1 The context: New Zealand and China.....	86
7.2 Paradigm	86
7.2.1 Ontology	89
7.2.2 Epistemology	90
7.2.3 Methodology	90
7.3 Description of Research Sample.....	92
7.3.1 The process to acquire research data	92
7.3.2 The interview method	93
7.3.3 Characteristics of Respondents	94
7.4 Data Collection	99
7.4.1 Stated Purpose of the Research.....	99
7.4.2 Ethical Considerations	99
7.4.3 Interview Questions	100
7.4.4 Data Recording	102
7.4.5 Interview and Observation Notes.....	102
7.5 Analytical approach	106
7.5.1 Data Analysis Process.....	107
7.5.2 Thematic analysis	108
7.5.3 Phases of analysis	109
7.6 Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Control of Biases.....	122
7.7 Summary	126
Chapter 8 Results.....	127
8.1 Introduction.....	127
8.2 Results by Research Proposition.....	127
8.2.1 Research proposition I: Consumers' engagement in relationship with brands is positively related to the close relationship dimensions of:.....	127

8.2.2 Research proposition II: Consumers engaged in relationship with brands are positively related to the spiritual relationship dimensions of:	148
8.2.3 Research proposition III: Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Western culture.	157
8.2.4 Research proposition IV: Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Eastern culture	174
8.2.5 Research proposition V: Young New Zealand consumers and young Chinese consumers have different experience in their brand love relationships could thus be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships.	195
8.3 Conclusion	208
Chapter 9 Findings and Discussions	211
9.1 Introduction.....	211
9.2 New themes and ideas based on RP I	211
9.2.1 Frequency of interactions.....	213
9.2.2 Duration of interaction	217
9.2.3 Diversity of Interactions	220
9.2.4 Strength of interaction.....	223
9.3 New themes and ideas based on RP II	228
9.3.1 Unifying interconnectedness.....	229
9.3.2 Transcendence experience	231
9.3.3 Innerness or inner strength.....	232
9.3.4 Purpose and meaning in life.....	234
9.4 New themes and ideas based on RP III and New themes and ideas based on RP IV	236
9.4.1 Sources of Inspiration	237
9.4.2 Sense of belonging.....	238
9.4.3 Material dimension	239
9.4.4 Emotional alignment.....	240
9.4.5 Transcendental	241
9.4.6 Comparisons between New Zealand respondents' and Chinese respondents' motivation from perspectives of spiritual relationships	242
9.4.7 Self-enhancement.....	246
9.4.8 Willingness to invest to maintain brand relationship.....	247
9.4.9 Eager to use and involve in relationships	249
9.4.10 Comparisons between New Zealand respondents' and Chinese respondents' motivation from perspectives of close relationships.....	251
9.5 New themes and ideas based on RP V	257
9.5.1 Social influence.....	259
9.5.2 Social acceptance	262
9.5.3 Responsibility sharing.....	264
9.5.4 Obligation	266
9.6 Conceptual Model and Conclusion	268
9.6.1 Conceptual Model.....	269
9.6.2 Conclusion	272
Chapter 10 Conclusion	274
10.1 Summary of thesis	274

10.2 Contributions	286
10.2.1 Conceptual contributions	286
10.2.2 Managerial contributions of this thesis	293
10.3 Limitations of the research.....	294
10.3.1 Geographic limitations.....	294
10.3.2 Theoretical boundaries.....	294
10.3.3 Age limitations.....	295
10.3.4 Method limitations	296
10.4 Future research.....	297
10.5 Conclusion	296
Reference	297
Turnitin Result.....	343
Appendix I Ethical Approval.....	345
Appendix II Consent form	345
Appendix III Transcribe	345
Appendix IV Coding	345

List of Tables

Table 2. 1 Four perspectives of love	16
Table 5. 1 Consumer research applied interpersonal love theory	45
Table 5.2 Consumer research applied religion and spirituality theories	56
Table 5.3 Four types of love in China.....	64
Table 5.4 different types of love in Western.....	66
Table 7.1 Characteristics of positivist and interpretivist paradigms	87
Table 7.2 Research Paradigm of this thesis	88
Table 7.3 Characteristics of respondents (New Zealand and Chinese).....	95
Table 7.4 Interview questions	100
Table 7.5 Phases of analysis	109
Table 7.6 Research method to enhance validity and reliability	123
Table 8.1 Four themes	128
Table 8.2 The frequency of interactions	129
Table 8.3 Duration of interactions	136
Table 8.4 Diversity of interaction	143
Table 8.5 Strength of interaction	146
Table 8.6 Four themes	149
Table 8.7 Unifying interconnectedness.....	149
Table 8.8 Transcendence experience	151
Table 8.9 Innerness or inner resources	152
Table 8.10 Purpose and meaning in life.....	155
Table 8.11 Motivation to maintain brand relationships (NZ)	158
Table 8.12 Source of inspiration.....	158
Table 8.13 Sense of belonging.....	160
Table 8.14 Material dimensions.....	161
Table 8.15 Emotional alignment.....	162
Table 8.16 Transcendental	163
Table 8.17 Self-enhancement.....	164
Table 8.18 Willingness to invest.....	165
Table 8.19 Eager to use.....	167
Table 8.20 Motivation to maintain brand relationships (CN)	175
Table 8.21 Source of inspiration.....	175
Table 8.22 Sense of belonging.....	177
Table 8.23 Material dimensions.....	179
Table 8.24 Emotional alignment.....	180
Table 8.25 Transcendental	181
Table 8.26 Self-enhancement.....	183
Table 8.27 Willingness to invest.....	184
Table 8.28 Eager to use.....	185
Table 8.29 Motives to maintain relationships	195
Table 8.30 Cultural influences	196
Table 8.31 Social influences	196
Table 8.32 Social acceptance	200
Table 8.33 Responsibility sharing.....	202
Table 8.34 Obligation	204
Table 9.1 Four perspectives of frequent interactions	217

Table 9. 2 Three influential factors of interaction duration	220
Table 9.3 Three themes of diversity of interactions.....	222
Table 9. 4 Three perspectives of strength of interactions	226
Table 9. 5 Spiritual relationships	246
Table 9. 6 Features of close relationships.....	256
Table 9. 7 Four features in culture	268
Table 9.8 Support for the propositions	269

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Outline of this thesis.....	9
Figure 1.2 Theoretical framework	12
Figure 5. 1 Consumer brand experience (Tarssanen and Kylanen, 2007)	61
Figure 5. 2 Cross-cultural consumer behaviour (Manrai and Manrai, 1996).....	69
Figure 5. 3 Conceptual representations of the self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).....	70
Figure 6. 1 Potential theoretical framework of consumer-brand love relationships ...	77
Figure 7. 1 Thematic map	120
Figure 8.1 Potential conceptual framework of brand love relationships	210
Figure 9. 1 Conceptual model of brand love relationships	271
Figure 10. 1 Consumers' motivation goals in brand love relationships.....	283

Chapter 1 Introduction

During the past twenty years, researchers in marketing have explored the concept of love in the field of marketing, to demonstrate that feeling of love exists between consumers and their possessions or objects (Batra et al., 2012; Shimp and Madden, 1997; Whang et al., 2004).

This thesis investigates the reasons that motivate consumers to develop and maintain love relationships with specific brands. This thesis also investigates whether culture is an influential factor in brand love relationships, for example, in independent culture, and interdependent culture.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Consumer brand love relationships

The concept of love in the marketing field has been mentioned in Shimp and Madden (1988) and love is one of the elements that construct the consumer-brand relationship as discussed by Fournier (1998). Aaker (1997) and Fournier (1998) suggested that in consumer brand relationships, consumers adopt, commend, endorse, and take up a brand as their partner. The brand love concept and construct represent one of the latest evolutions in the field of consumer brand relationships, and the brand love conceptual frame was pioneered and developed by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). Consumers who are willing to develop and maintain relationships with brands have intense interrelations with their loved brands. Brand love relationships are a topic that is of interest to both marketing researchers (e.g., Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Shimp and Madden, 1998; Whang et al., 2004) and market practitioners (e.g., Roberts, 2005).

The majority of academic literature on brand love have to do with applied interpersonal love theories that focus on interpersonal love theories from three perspectives as follows:

1. Consumer brand love relationships grounded on the behavioural perspectives of interpersonal love theory. The applied attachment theory (Bowlby, 1997) by Thompson et al.'s (2006) illustrates that consumers who have a secure attachment to brands are likely to be satisfied with their brands and their attachment leads to brand satisfaction. Meanwhile,

consumers who have strong attachments to brands become anxious if they are separated from their loved brands (Thompson et al., 2005).

2. Consumer brand love relationships grounded on emotional perspectives of interpersonal love theory. Shimp and Madden (1998) applied Sternberg's (1986) triangle theory and defined consumer brand love as composed of the following three components: liking, yearning, and decision/commitment. Whang et al., (2004) applied Lee's (1977) color of love theory and interpreted the love bikers to have for their motorcycles.
3. Consumer brand love relationships grounded on cognition perspectives of interpersonal love theory. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) applied part of Hatfield and Rapson's (1998) compassionate love and passionate love theory, and defined brand love as passionate love, as consumers' intense longing for union with loved brands, yet not compassionate love, because compassionate love includes a wide range of love from strangers to those who are close (such as, friends, lover, or parents).

The current consumer brand love research is grounded on interpersonal love and is viewed from three perspectives, as stated above. In terms of the research on brand love, a gap still exists, that has to do with defining the motivation perspectives of interpersonal love. Aron and Aron (1991) suggested that love is a motivation and desire that combine an individual's cognition, acts, and emotion that improve an individual to develop and maintain a close relationship with specific people. James (2013) mentioned the idea that in close relationships, people differentiate self and others through their interactions and their motives in relationships determine the closeness of a relationship. Kelley (1983) suggested four perspectives of interactions could define the quality of interactions in close relationships as follows: the frequency of the interactions, the diversity of the interactions, the strength of the interactions, and the duration of the interactions.

In this thesis, one form of consumer brand love relationship is grounded on Kelley's (1983) close relationship theory, and this thesis study love from the perspectives of motivation.

Some marketing literature extends and explores the concept of the brand love concept viewing it as analogous to religious love. Pimentel and Reynolds (2004)

introduced the religious (devotion) concept in relation to brand love and suggested that devotion represents religious fervour and refers to the intense relationships between consumers and their brands. Hemetsberger (2009) noted that brand devotion involves consumers who are highly committed to brands and are passionate to be involved in brand relationships, which is closely related to the three features of Sternberg's (1986) interpersonal love theory which includes: passion, intimacy, and decision/commitment. Steiger and Lipson (1985) noted that religion is a concept wherein community or a group holds the same beliefs and practice and is searching for the meaning of life. Therefore, the theory of religion is suitable to apply to the marketing research for brand communities (e.g., Cova, 2006; Muniz et al., 2005) or brand devotion (e.g., Pimentel and Reynolds, 2004; Sarkar and Sarkar, 2015).

This thesis focuses on the relationships between consumers' self and their loved brands instead of brand communities. Hence, the theories of religion are not suitable to apply to this thesis. The theory of spirituality is more suitable in this thesis because spirituality is concerned with the individual engaging in relationships with others, and the individual's relationships with nature and the environment, and with the world (Mauk and Schmidt, 2004). Current research in marketing that applies spirituality is mainly focused on spirituality as a motivation for consumers (e.g., Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi et al., 1993). Current literature lacks studies on brand love relationships that are analogous to spiritual relationships, hence this thesis attempts to fill the gap, by trying to find out if consumers' brand love relationships can provide them with meaning and purpose in life or connectedness and transcendence just as spiritual relationships can provide to consumers. Howden's (1992) theory represents the relational aspect of spirituality and the four features of spirituality which comprise spiritual relationships including: interconnectedness, purpose and meaning in life, inner strength, and transcendence.

In this thesis, the other form of consumer-brand love relationship is grounded on Howden's (1992) spiritual relationship theory, and this thesis study love from the perspectives of motivation.

1.1.2 The connection between consumers' self and brand love relationships

Individuals perceive themselves through their interactions with someone or something, as Andersen and Chen (2002) conceptualised that individuals' knowledge of themselves is affiliated with their knowledge of others in relationships. Meanwhile, the concept of self is unique to each relationship, and overlapping features will occur with similar relationships (Andersen and Chen, 2002; Sedilides and Brewer, 2015).

Individuals expand themselves through their close relationships, or their spiritual relationships or through other relationships, they have that can provide them with expansion opportunities. Aron et al., (2013) suggested that individuals expand themselves in relationships by reflecting on their relationships with others' either physically, socially or intellectually, by including others' perspectives, and by reflecting on their own identities themselves. The self-expansion theory can be applied to both the reciprocated and the unreciprocated love relationship (Aron et al., 1992).

There are two reasons for applying the self-expansion theory to interpret brand love relationships in this thesis, namely: first, the researcher studies consumers' love from a motivational perspective, which is a consumer's desire and motivation to develop and maintain relationships with specific brands. In consumer-brand love relationships, consumers view and include their loved brands' resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves as self-expansion. The second reason consumers include loved brands' resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves might be as a way, and consumers' expansions are not only to acquire brands' tangible resources, but also to expand their knowledge and gain insight about their favourite brands, or their social or personal identities, and to have more meaning in terms of living of living and to enjoy their life.

1.1.3 Culture and consumers' self in brand love relationships

Culture is a pattern of values, thought and procedures that is shared and is the heritage of a certain group of people, which helps people to make decisions, and decide what to do and how to do it. (Goodenough, 1981; Child and Kieser, 1977). Culture is organised by many elements, such as language, value, beliefs,

knowledge, arts, manners, standards, skills, and habits to help an individual to survive in the group, and culture influences an individual's behaviour, cognition, and decisions (Hill, 2002).

Culture shapes and forms people to understand and comprehend phenomena, and to help them interpret the world. Culture formulates an individual's actions and behaviour. The concept of self can only be understood and interpreted in certain situations, and the structure of the inner self and the nature of the outer self are both influenced by culture (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed that the concept of self should rely on culture to decide the relationship between self and others, and the degree to which a person regards himself/herself as connected to or separated from others.

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), an individual who is influenced by an independent culture is more likely to perceive himself/herself as unique and autonomous in his/her awareness. An individual who is influenced by an interdependent culture is more likely to see himself/herself as part of the group, and regard himself/herself as intimately connected with others in the group and less differentiated from the others in the group. Eastern (non-Western) cultures belong to the interdependent culture.

In this thesis, the researcher compares New Zealand consumers' brand love relationships and Chinese consumers' brand relationships, to discuss whether culture might be one of the factors, which have an influence on consumers' brand love relationships, since New Zealand culture is categorised as an independent culture, and Chinese culture is categorised as an interdependent culture.

1.2 The aim of this thesis

This thesis determines the essential factors that motivate consumers to develop and maintain brand love relationships, in two contrasting cultures, as mentioned, in independent culture and interdependent culture.

Consumers develop and maintain brand love relationships with different purpose since consumers develop their relationships either to acquire resources, perspectives, and identities from their relationships or in order to give meaning to their lives based on the inner strength that their loved brands deliver.

Consumers engage in different forms of brand love relationships because they are influenced by their different personal experience. Therefore, consumers' loved brands are closely related to their self-concept since brands provide opportunities for consumers in relation to their personal growth.

This thesis studies consumers' motivation to maintain different forms of brand love relationships, and, as such, the self-expansion theory applies to this thesis. Culture might be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships, and, as such, this thesis undertakes cross-cultural research, by applying in-depth interviews of young consumers from two countries, in particular, New Zealand consumers (University of Otago) and Chinese consumers (Yunnan University of Finance and Economics), in relation to two cultural contexts: an independent culture and an interdependent culture.

1.3 The research problems and research questions

The current literature applies the interpersonal love relationships theories in marketing, from the perspectives of behaviour (e.g. Thompson et al., (2006); or from the perspectives of emotions (e.g. Shimp and Madden's (1986), and Whang et al.'s (2004)); or from the perspectives of cognition (e.g. Fournier, (1998); Carroll and Ahuvia (2006).

In this thesis, interpersonal love is defined as "closeness". The closeness of people's interpersonal love relationships is dependent on whether they have frequent, diverse, strong, and long-term interactions with others in relationships (Kelly, 1983). In this thesis, the researcher explores and investigates the following: 1) whether the consumer-brand love relationship is analogous to the interpersonal love relationship; 2) if the interpersonal love relationship could be another form of the brand love relationship, and 3) if closeness in love could be a motivation for consumers to maintain their brand love relationships.

This thesis studies consumers' behaviour as individuals in terms of their brand love relationships and studies the idea that consumers' brand love relationships might be analogous to spiritual love. In this thesis, spirituality is defined as an individual phenomenon and is about experience that are related to an individual's transcendent experience, innerness, and life meaning and purpose (Howden, 1992; Thoresen and Harris, 2002). Therefore, in this thesis, the researcher explores the following: 1) whether consumer-brand love

relationships are analogous to the spiritual relationships, and 2) if the spiritual relationship could be another form of brand love relationship, and 3) if spirituality could be another motivation for consumers to maintain their brand love relationships.

An individual's world is shaped by his/her everyday experiences and senses and is constituted by the individual's beliefs and assumptions based on his/her culture. Culture and the individual mutually influence and shape each other (Shweder and Sullivan, 1990). Culture might play a part in consumers' perceptions of brands, and individuals construct their self-concept depending on their social perspectives of self, such as their relationships with others, including how others think about the resources and perspectives they have (Aron and Aron, 1991; Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Since there is a lack of research that involves a cross-cultural comparison study in brand love relationships, in this thesis, the researcher compares young New Zealand consumers' brand love relationships and young Chinese consumers' brand love relationships by applying the theory of culture and self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).

Three research questions:

RQ1: Do consumer-brand love relationships mirror close relationships and spiritual relationships?

RQ2: What are the essential factors that motivate consumers to form brand love relationships?

RQ3: Do consumers in brand love relationships behave differently in two different cultural contexts (New Zealand and China)?

1.4 Research design

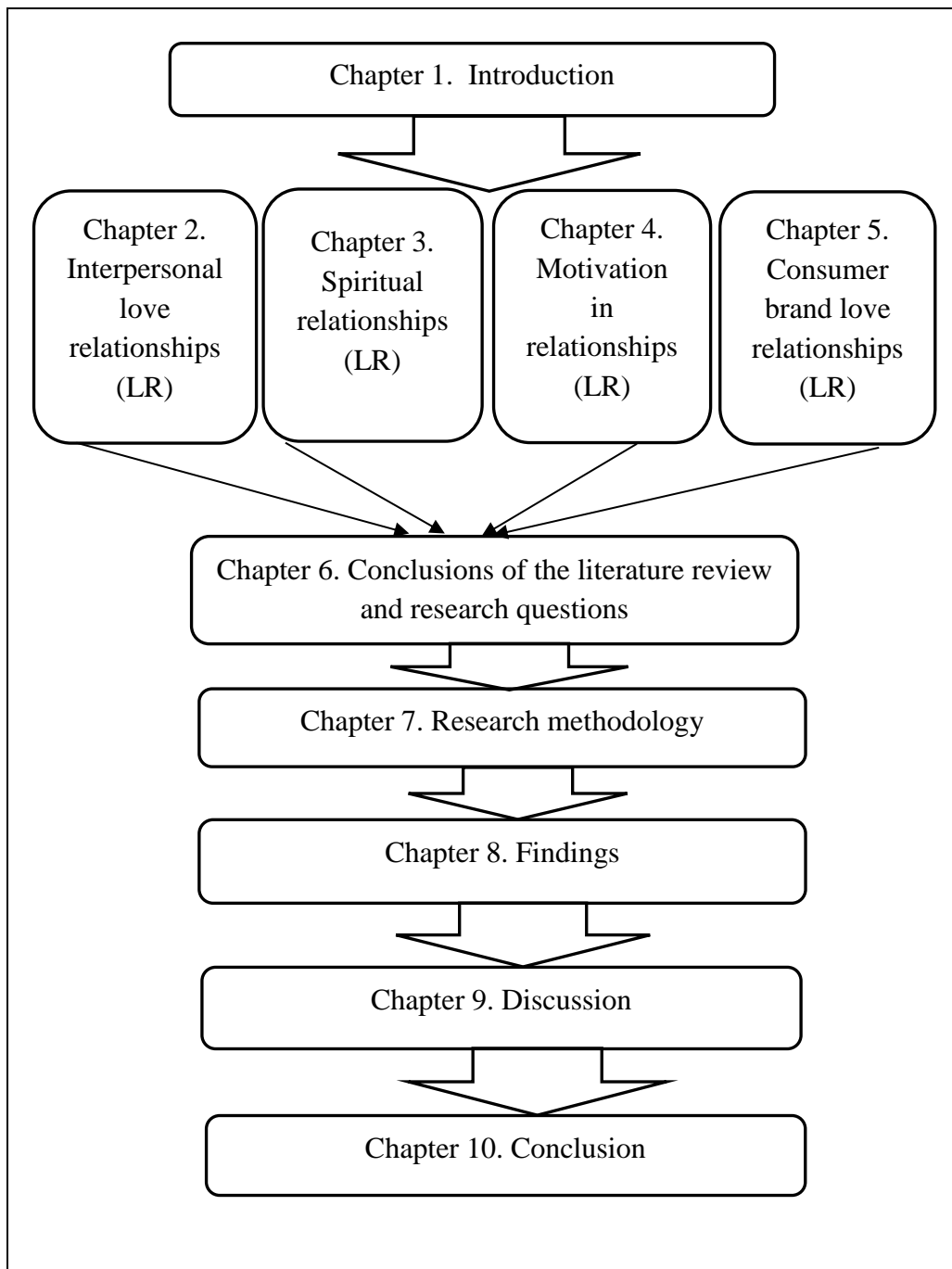
This thesis aims to guide the selection of the research method, and the researcher will carry out phenomenological semi-structured in-depth interviews. This thesis aims to ascertain the essential factors that motivate consumers to develop and maintain brand love relationships through their experiences. Husserl's phenomenology method runs throughout the thesis, from the data collection and analysis, and seeks to understand an individual's motivation, since their actions are influenced by their perceptions.

This thesis involves 60 respondents from two universities (New Zealand: University of Otago, and China: Yunnan University of Finance and Economics), between 18 and 25 years of age. The interviews will be between 20 minutes and 90 minutes, depending on the interviewees. The interview contents will divide into three parts and including the respondents' close relationships, spiritual relationships, and their brand relationships. The questions that relate to the close relationships that involve respondents' life experience include their attitudes, expectations, and emotions with respect to their families, friends, and with others they are close to. Spiritual relationships involve respondents' experience with their possessions or spirits that give meaning to their life. The respondents' experience and stories relating to their loved brands formed the last part of the interview.

Thematic analysis is applied in this thesis as a way to identify the themes and opinions, and the arguments expressed by the respondents. Boyatzis (1998) suggested that the displays of the themes in the analysis offer a deeper description of the data, and thematic analysis provides a systematic way of doing this. This thesis will apply Husserl's phenomenology to focus on consumers' experience, so the thematic analysis can help the researcher interpret the data with a rigorous and systematic analysis.

1.5 Outline of this thesis

Figure 1.1 Outline of this thesis



This section introduces the organisation of the entire thesis, in ten chapters. (Figure 1.1). Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two critically reviews the literature of interpersonal love from the perspectives of behaviour, emotions, cognition, and motivation, and the reasons to apply the close

relationship theory (Kelley, 1983) instead of the other interpersonal love theories.

Chapter Three critically reviews the literature related to the spiritual love relationship from the four perspectives of spiritual relationships and states the reasons Howden's (1992) spirituality theory is applied in this thesis instead of the other spiritual theories.

Chapter Four critically reviews the literature of motivation. This thesis defines love from the perspective of motivation and states the relationships between love and motivation (self-expansion).

Chapter Five critically reviews the literature related to the different forms of brand relationships.

Chapter Six highlights the literature review (from Chapter Two to Chapter Five) to strengthen the narrative of this thesis.

Chapter Seven explains the method applied in research since this thesis employs qualitative research, and the phenomenological methodology to investigate the respondents' life experience and brand experience.

Chapter Eight displays the research results based on the five propositions of this thesis.

Chapter Nine discusses the findings from the five propositions.

Chapter Ten discusses the conclusions that can then be drawn from the thesis and the implications of these results/findings based on the following presupposition, in other words, it deliberates on the way in which this study fills in the gaps in the existing literature. It also discusses the contributions and limitations of this research and outlines directions for future research.

1.6 Research focus

This section includes the following two parts: the theoretical framework of this thesis, and the critical concepts and definitions.

1.6.1 Theoretical framework

This thesis integrates four theoretical perspectives including:

1. One form of brand love relationships that are grounded on the interpersonal love theory (Kelley, 1983), and in this form of brand love relationships, love is defined as motivation.
2. Secondly, in regard to the other form of brand love relationships that are grounded in the spiritual relationship theory (Howden, 1992), in this form of brand love relationships, love is also defined as motivation.
3. Thirdly, love ,as it relates to the two forms of brand love relationships, involves the self-expansion (Aron and Aron, 1995) that consumers might consciously or unconsciously obtain, by appreciating and benefiting from their loved brands' resources, perspectives, and identities in relation to their brand love relationships. Consumers engaged in brand love relationships (whether in the form of interpersonal love or spiritual relationships, or both) tend to include their loved brands (tangible and intangible resources) in terms of how their loved brands help them to achieve their goals.
4. Lastly, the culture and self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991) theory will apply to this thesis, as a culture might be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships. A cross-cultural comparisons study conducts in this thesis as it relates to the two different cultural contexts (New Zealand culture and Chinese culture), the former representing an independent culture, and the last-mentioned representing an interdependent culture.

Figure 1.2 Theoretical framework

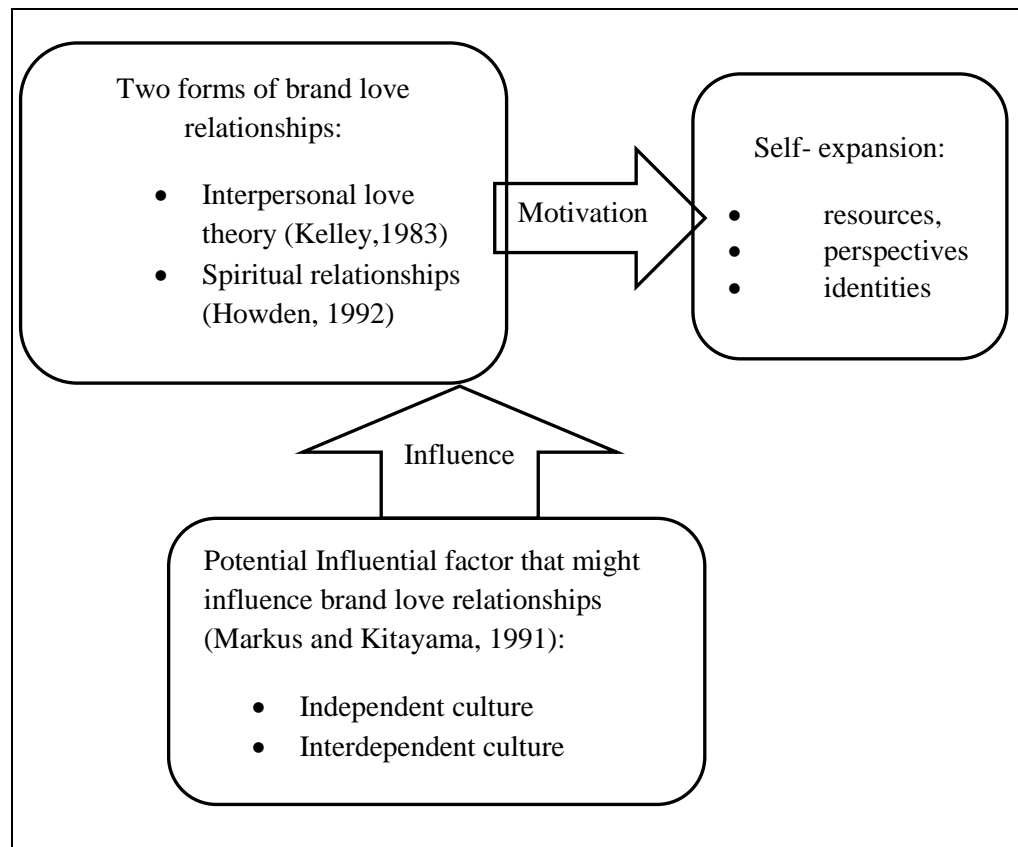


Figure 1.2 shows the potential theoretical framework of this thesis, integrating the interpersonal love theory, spiritual relationships, self-expansion theory and culture, and self that are mentioned above.

1.6.2 Definitions

1.6.2.1 Interpersonal love

In this thesis, one form of brand love relationships is grounded on Kelley's (1983) interpersonal love theory, since interpersonal love in this thesis is defined as motivation. (See Chapter 2)

“Interpersonal love is defined as a “close” relationship, and the close relationship is one of strong, frequent, and diverse interdependence interactions that lasts over a considerable period of time.”(Kelly, 1983, p.38).

1.6.2.2 Spiritual relationship

In this thesis, the other form of brand love relationships that is grounded on Howden's (1992) spiritual relationships theory, because spiritual love in this thesis is also categorised as motivation. (See Chapter 3)

“Spirituality is all about relationships, the relationships between people, the relationships between people and the environment, and relationships between people and objects, and the universe. Spirituality is the dimension of one's being that is an integrating or unifying factor which is manifested through unifying interconnectedness, purpose, and meaning in life, innerness or inner resources, and transcendence ” (Howden, 1992, p.5).

1.6.2.3 Theory of self-expansion theory

“One way in which people seek to expand the self is through close relationships, and one common way people seek (and find) such expansion is through a close relationship in which the self is expanded by having access to the others' physical, social and intellectual resources; his or her current and recalled perspectives; and his or her individual and social identities” (Aron et al., 2013, p.2). (See Chapter 4)

1.6.2.4 Theory of Culture and self theory

“Achieving the cultural goal of independence requires construing oneself as an individual whose behaviour is organised and made meaningful primarily by reference to one's own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. Achieving the cultural goal of interdependence seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship, and people are motivated to find a way to fit in with relevant others, to fulfill and create an obligation, and in general to become part of various interpersonal relationships” (Markus and Kitayama, 1991, p.226-227). (See Chapter 5)

1.7 Potential contributions of this thesis

1. In this thesis, consumers' love of brands can be found through their interaction with brands in brand relationships. As long as consumers

love their brands, they would like to have frequent, diverse, strong ,and long-lasting interactions with the brands they love.

2. Consumers' brand love relationships are analogous to spiritual relationships. The spiritual relationship is an insight into the individual's self-image and provides a sense of harmony. The spiritual-brand love relationship is comprised of four perspectives that include: interconnectedness, inner strength, transcendence, and purpose and life meaning.
3. Two forms of consumer brand love relationships with analogies to brand love relationships are at an equal motivational level to fulfill consumers in different ways, and those two forms of brand love relationship can co-exist in brand love relationships, or they can be separate and distinct. Interactions between consumers and their loved brands are reciprocated and repeated because brands provide resources, perspectives, and identities to consumers for their expansion, and consumers invest their energies, resources, and time to maintain a relationship with their favourite brands.
4. Culture might be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships. Young New Zealand consumers are more focused on whether their favoured brands provide them with self-expansion opportunities to develop their independent self. Young Chinese consumers are focused on whether their loved brands can be accepted and recognised by others they are close to, and whether their loved brands provide them with the self-expansion opportunities to improve their interdependent self.

1.8 Limitations of this thesis

In terms of the findings of this study, several limitations exist. The results of this study undertaken for this thesis are as follows:

The primary research is limited to two universities in New Zealand and China, and the findings compare young consumers' brand love relationships in two different cultures. However, the results might be more fruitful if both the independent culture and the interdependent culture were to include two or more countries. Markus and Kitayama (1994) suggested that while people in the same

culture often share the most similar behavioural tendencies or patterns, some different behaviour still exist.

In this thesis, consumers' loved brands are considered as their life partners, since consumers include brand's resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves to improve their self-expansion.

Following four chapters (chapter 2, chapter 3, chapter 4, and chapter 5) are literature reviews of this thesis. Four chapters demonstrate the similarities between interpersonal relationships and brand relationships (chapter 2), spiritual relationships and brand relationships (chapter 3), consumers' motivation (chapter 4), and one influential factor in brand relationships—culture (chapter 5).

Chapter 2 Interpersonal Love Relationships

2.1 Introduction

Consumers' love of their favourite brands has been widely noted, and most literature (e.g., Ahuvia, 1993; Oliver et al., 1997; Shimp and Madden, 1988) suggested that 'consumers' love' in brand relationships are analogous to 'interpersonal love' in close relationships. This chapter demonstrates various love theories and concepts encompassing: 1) defined love from the perspectives of behaviour; 2) defined love from the perspectives of emotions; 3) defined love from the perspectives of cognition; 4) defined love from the perspectives of motivation.

Love is represented by a complex set of emotions, motivation, behaviour, and cognition; it is associated with a strong desire and feelings of affection, protectiveness, warmth, and respect for a particular person; love is also allied with the willingness to develop and maintain a long-term relationship with a particular person. (Aron and Aron, 1991; Dion and Dion, 1973 Levine, 2006; Murstein, 1988; Shave et al., 1987). Love occurs in relationships that happen between lovers, parents and children, siblings, friends, colleagues, relatives, or others who are engaged in a giving and receiving relationship. There are hundreds of thousands of definitions of love, and this chapter reviews the literature on love from the perspective of emotion, motivation, behaviour, and cognition. The four perspectives of love are classified in **Table 2.1** below

Table 2. 1 Four perspectives of love

Love Theories and Concepts	Authors	Features
Love Defined from perspectives of behaviour	Rubin (1970)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affiliative and dependent need
	Bowlby (1965,1973,1980); Ainsworth (1969,1972); Lamb (1976, 1978); Hazan et al., (1988);	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attachment• People's relational behaviour influenced by their caregivers• Infant also attach to their fathers• Adult attachment in close relationships

	Levine (2007) Grant (1976)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love begins with need
	Bruner and Taruiri (1954); Dion et al., (1972); Hatfield and Sprecher (1986); Davison and McCabe (2005,2006);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical attractiveness in interpersonal/close relationships
Love defined from perspective of emotions	Rubin (1970, 1974);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love is developed from liking
	Sternberg (1986);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love is composed of passion, intimacy and decision/commitment
	Lee (1977); Hendrick and Hendrick (1986)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love includes six types: Eros (passionate love), Ludus (game-playing love), and Storge (friendship love), and three main secondary love styles as Mania (dependent love), Pragma (shopping list love), and Agape (selfless love)
Love defined from perspective of cognition	Berscheid and Walster (1974);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passionate love as reciprocated love
	Hatfield (1988); Hatfield and Rapson (1993);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassionate love and passionate love theory
	Sprecher and Fehr, (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed compassionate love theory : for close others and humanity
	Berscheid and Regan, (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassionate love relationships are long-term family love relationships and friendships
	Gilbert (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassionate love involves a desire to relieve suffering,

Love defined from perspective of motivation		cognition related to understanding the causes of suffering.
	Graber and Mitcham(2009);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassionate love for patients
	Kelley (1983); Berscheid (1985); McClintock (1983);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closeness includes: frequency interactions, diverse interactions, strength interactions, and long-term interactions • Interaction closeness is suitable for a variety of close relationships
	Aron and Aron (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love is a way of self-expansion • Love are more or less involve self-expansion

2.2 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Behaviour

Rubin (1970) suggested that love consists of “affiliative and dependent need”, “predisposition to help”, and “exclusiveness and absorption”. The experience of love is the intense absorption in another, the desire to confide in one’s lover and to be confided in by one’s lover, and high physical arousal. The various theories that have defined love from the perspective of behaviour comprise the following:

2.2.1 Attachment Theory

Bowlby’s (1965, 1973, 1980) attachment theory is derived from the observations of the behaviour of infants and children who were separated from their primary caregiver for a diverse length of time. Infants’ attachments to their parents are divided into three styles comprising secure, avoidant, and anxious/ambivalent. A secure attachment makes infants feel comfortable in their relationship with their caregiver and to be tolerant if their caregiver leaves temporarily. An avoidant attachment style is different from a secure style, in that the child does not react strongly if their caregiver leaves or returns. An anxious infant is afraid to be left alone, and the anxious child shows certain ambivalence to his/her caregiver and feels insecurely attached (Ainsworth, 1969; Bowlby, 1962).

The source of love is defined as an abiding love source and along with the love model is from mother love, and in addition, mother love is the blueprint of adult love (Tweedie, 1979). Ainsworth (1969, 1972) continued Bowlby's (1962, 1982) work suggesting that both adults and infants behave in a manner which will increase the interactions with infants, as the times of interactions are the main deciding factor in how an attachment would form. Lamb (1976) noted that an attachment to their father regularly exists in infants, even if the interactions between the infants and their father is minimal. Shaver et al., (1988) proposed that adult attachment and adult relationships are based on Bowlby's (1962, 1982) attachment theory. Shaver et al. (1988) mentioned that people's caregivers influence their expectations and relational behaviour. Hazan et al., (1998) noted that individuals who are characterised by a secure adult attachment model are comfortable with intimacy in close relationships. People with the preoccupied attachment model are likely to pursue security and safety from others.

Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory is the ground behavioural love relationship theory. However, the word "attachment" only refers to infants' attachment to their parents. Interactions in the attachment theory are not reciprocity interactions since they usually refer to infants' attachment to their parents (Bretherton, 1985).

2.2.2 Physical attractiveness

Davison and McCabe (2005) noted that physical attractiveness helps people to understand themselves and others, and people often make decisions regarding whether or not to build relationships with others based on their physical attraction to the other person. Physical attractiveness is divided into 1) body image, 2) general physical attractiveness, 3) objective physical attractiveness, and 4) subjective physical attractiveness. In terms of one's body image physical attractiveness, it is focused on the subjective views of one's appearance, including body shape and weight. General physical attractiveness includes many features such as clothing, hairstyle, complexion, facial features, or grooming. Objective physical attractiveness is viewed as an essential aspect of research by evolutionary theories. Subjective physical attractiveness suggests

that the way we view our appearance would be similar to how others might rate our attractiveness.

Physical attractiveness is rooted in human beings' perception and willingness to build relationships with others. Bruner and Tagiuri (1954) mentioned that relationships with others are readily understood since a person's perception is defined as the process by which a person perceives and thinks about other people, their qualities, their internal traits, and their characteristics. A physically attractive person is perceived to possess more socially desirable traits (Dion et al., 1972). People are more likely to form relationships with partners who are more attractive than themselves, and physical attractiveness is all about satisfaction with others who are close (Walster et al., 1966; Berkowitz and Walster, 1976), and physical attractiveness is taken as social desirability that is closely related to self-esteem and popularity (Berkowitz and Walster, 1976). In terms of his love story, Sternberg (1986) proposed that passion is one of three components, and physical attractiveness is one of the most critical features of passion.

Physical attractiveness and Attachment are the two main features that support the behaviour perspective of love relationships. Both features can promote relationship satisfaction during the various stages of relationship development. (Campbell et al., 2010). The attachment theory can only be applied to conditioned close relationships, and Bowlby (1969) studied that attachment only refers to infants' attachment to their parents. Physical attractiveness is a feature that others can easily interpret to distinguish, know, perceive, or recognise whether a love relationship is close or not, such as, from love partners' mutual interactions. As long as the love between the partners exists and the desired partners want to interact, the more attractive their partners are (Hatfield and Sprecher, 1986). Love relationships cannot be maintained as long-lasting relationships if physical attractiveness only exists (Hatfield and Sprecher, 1986; Sternberg, 1986).

2.3 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Emotions

Rubin's research (1970, 1974) distinguished love and the related construct of liking. He depicted love as comprised of three elements inclusive of 1) intimacy

(sharing private feelings and thoughts with others), 2) attachment (nervousness and anxiety of separation and the need to be cared for and be with others), and 3) caring (valuing others' feelings and needs as much as their own). Rubin (1970) applied the three elements of love to measure the affiliative, dependent need, as well as the predisposition to help in love relationships, and also to measure the differences between like and love. Nevertheless, the three features of love that serve as validation of Rubin's theory still need to be improved upon, since the theory did not measure the components of "hot" or "passionate". Passionate and hot are two components that are approved of in many other love concepts, such as, those proposed by Freud (1905), Reik (1944), and Tennov (1979). Sternberg's (1986) triangle of love is composed of three elements that involve: passion, intimacy, and decision/commitment. Although Sternberg's (1986) theory demonstrated the same meaning of connectedness and boundedness as in Rubin's (1970) love concept, Sternberg (1986) suggested that love is linked to decision as a short-term aspect, since normally falling in love is unconscious and the decision to fall in love with a person may not be an appropriate factor to describe love in relation to a particular love theory.

Lee's (1977) love theory applied the metaphor of colours as a typology of love. He outlined six types of love and categorises, the three primary types of love styles as 1). Eros (passionate love), 2) Ludus (game-playing love), and 3) Storge (friendship love), and the three main secondary love styles as 1). Mania (dependent love), 2) Pragma (shopping list love), and 3) Agape (selfless love). Although Lee (1977) described love concepts with richness and clarity, his theory lacks sustained work in terms of intensity and profundity (Hendrick and Hendrick, 1986). Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) continued Lee's (1977) work and deepened the study of the six types of love by considering an individual's attitudinal directions and socialization differences, and Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) suggested that the six types of love could happen in one individual simultaneously.

Davis (1985) proposed a cluster theory related to liking and loving, and he interpreted love in terms of eight elements as 1) enjoyment, 2) mutual assistance, 3) respect, 4) spontaneity, 5) acceptance, 6) trust, 7) understanding, and 8) confidence. Davis (1985) suggested that love evolves and develops from

liking. In his research, love, and liking share the same eight features, except love, has evolved, so it has two different features that he compares to liking, which are passionate and caring.

The current research on love from the emotional perspective is that it is not only limited to romantic love, it also includes friendship love, the love between parents and children, and the love with close others. Moreover, passion and decision are not able to describe love precisely because they are the connectedness and closeness that might balance the accuracy and comprehensiveness, which is required to define love (Tennov, 1979; Kelley, 1983; Sternberg, 1986).

2.4 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Cognition

The current research focuses on the perspectives of the cognition of love and defines love as compassionate love and passionate love, and this has contributed to the sociological research on the subject of love.

Berscheid and Walster (1974) defined passionate love as reciprocated love with joy, attainment, physical arousal, and it is accompanied with unrequited love that is associated with despair and stress if one is separated from one's lover. The features of passionate love include passion, physical attractiveness, happiness, and anxiety. Berscheid and Walster (1974), and Hendrick and Hendrick (2003) all agree that it is impossible that both passionate love and compassionate love can exist in the relationship at the same time, because they have many different features that cannot exist simultaneously (e.g., partners cannot be both close friends and lovers at the same time). Hatfield (1988) holds a different opinion that people are capable of approaching both loves in their relationships at the same time, except they have to coordinate themselves to maintain this.

Fehr et al., (2009) suggested that compassionate love includes a broader range of love features than passionate love, and explain that love has more features to contribute to the sociology of love research. The features of compassionate love have to do with 1) providing and allocating support to others in relationships (Smith, 2009; Sprecher and Fehr, 2005), 2) caregiving (Graber and Mitcham, 2004; Robert et al., 2009), 3) empathy (Mikulincer et al

2003; Sprecher and Fehr, 2005), and 4) altruism (Wilson and Gilbert, 2005). Lazarus (1991) suggested that compassionate love is “being moved by another’s suffering and wanting to help”, and compassionate love is more of a concern for others’ welfare and being willing to help others by taking action (Berscheid and Regan, 2005).

In terms of the differences between the two types of love, passionate love is indicated as romantic love and lust, since it is associated with more significant experience of intense feelings between the two partners (Hatfield, 1988; Hatfield and Rapson, 1993). Compassionate love is viewed as an attitude, comprising specific behaviour, and cognitive predispositions, and it is more of a prototype concept than a theory. Passionate love is an intense and romantic love that may not last long once the passion has faded away. Compassionate love is a far less intense love, and it has long-lasting feelings since it involves real-world emotional experience, and since it includes a wide range of people (from close others to strangers), therefore, it is not suitable to apply in close relationships (Fehr et al., 2005; Hatfield, 1988; Hatfield and Rapson, 1993).

2.5 Love Defined from the Perspectives of Motivation

Darwin (1859) in his book <The Origin of Species> has widely described the basis for evolutionary biology and suggested that species evolve and develop over generations through a process of natural selection. Anderson and Jones (1984) suggested that all mammals have evolved to attract potential mates, and while all mammals have preferred mate preferences, the attraction is the motive in relationships. Love is regarded as a universal experience that is associated with motivation and behaviour (Jankowiak and Fischer, 1992; Tennov, 1979), and love is primarily a motivation system that guides various emotions.

Aron and Aron (1992), Kelley (1983), and Pleban and Tesser (1981) suggested that the perspectives of love motivation are composed of two features that include 1) closeness and 2) personal performance. Closeness includes interaction frequency, diversity, duration, and strength (Aron and Aron, 1992; Kelley, 1983; Pleban and Tesser, 1981). Personal performance is an individual’s self-concept or self-definition, that is, who they are and whom they want to be. (Aron and Aron, 1992; Lewandowski et al., 2013).

2.5.1 Closeness in a love relationship

Kelley (1983) developed the concept of closeness in close relationships, which refer to lovers, friends, parents, or close colleagues. Kelly (1983) noted that as long as two people in a relationship have a mutual impact on each other, and they both want to maintain long-term relationships, that relationship can be described as “close”. The component of closeness can be interpreted and understood as influential. Kelley (1983) suggested that in close relationships, both parties have a frequent, diverse, and strong impact on each other over a long period of time. Interaction is the component that connects both parties in their relationships, and McClintock (1983) suggested that interactions demonstrate similar features and functions in all kinds of different close relationships, such as marriage, friendship, parents-children, or colleagues. In other words, interaction closeness is suitable for a variety of close relationships. Because the four features, namely, 1) the duration of interactions, 2) the diversity of interactions, 3) the frequency of interactions, and 4) the strength of interactions in the close relationships are closely connected with each other and increase the closeness in close relationships (Kelley, 1983; Berscheid et al., 1989).

Berscheid (1985) extended Kelley’s (1983) close relationship theory by explaining that since two people’s action sequences are closely intertwined, and closeness is an essential quality, this underlies the variety relationship phenomena.

2.5.2 Personal performance in close relationships

James (1890) noted that all love is directed to the individual self, whether is the love of parents, the love of children, the love of a partner, the love of objects or the love of other goods or conditions, and explains that love is the basis of life. Aron and Aron (1991) defined love as the constellation of behaviour, cognition, and emotions that drive and motivate people to develop or maintain close relationships with other people. In other words, love is a desire and motivation that provides people with resources and hope to make a change in themselves in order to maintain long-term close relationships.

People always keep looking at expanding themselves, while they are in love relationships (Aron and Aron, 1991), since people always have motives to expand themselves to acquire resources, perspectives, and identities to enhance their abilities to achieve their goals and extend their potential efficacy (Brandura, 1977; Aron et al., 1998). Self-expansion in love relationships is not always a conscious process, since “seeking self-expansion is generally not itself a conscious motive” (Aron et al., 2004).

The process of interaction with others is the way to change one’s self-concept from the point of view of holding a certain perspective and is uniquely based on the interactions in close relationships. The intense and prolonged duration interactions in close relationships would help the individual understand themselves well (Cooley, 1902; Kelley, 1983; Mead, 1934). Tice (1992) suggested that in close relationships, individuals have the chance to understand themselves more during their interactions with close others since individuals engage in close relationships that involve a process of self-discovery. In other words, while people are in close relationships, they have to communicate and interact with each other about their attitudes, values, and beliefs, and this is the way people understand their close others and understand themselves (Baldwin, 1992).

Developing and maintaining close relationships is a way to discover one’s self-concept and to understand close others (Swidler, 1980), and it is the way that individuals expand themselves through the process of “including the other in the self” (Aron et al., 1989; Reik, 1944). Reis and Shaver (1988) suggested that in close relationships, the mutual interactions increase the reciprocity of self-disclosure, and people in close relationships would feel they understand and care about others. In close relationships, including others in the self is an essential step and process that everyone would have since individuals understand others with whom they should have mutual benefits (Cialdini et al., 1997). People include others in the self as a way of being concerned with others’ needs, as the self-expansion in close relationships is not only to satisfy self-needs, it also includes satisfying others’ needs (Clark and Mills, 2013).

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter incorporates the literature review of interpersonal love theories, and the researcher categorised the interpersonal love theories from the perspective of behaviour, emotions, cognition, and motivation.

In this thesis, Kelley's (1983) theory of close relationship is applied as an interpersonal love relationship that is similar to the consumer-brand love relationship. In this thesis, the researcher studies interpersonal love from the perspective of motivation because previous research studied brand love from the perspective of emotions, cognition, and behaviour, except there is a gap exists in the current research. Previous research lacks a study on the perspective of motivation, in particular, that love is the motive that drives people to develop and maintain close relationships with a special someone (Aron and Aron, 1991). Consumers are willing to maintain relationships with their brands, because they consciously or unconsciously have interacted with their brands for a long time, and during their intense, diverse and frequent interactions, they have the desire to maintain a relationship with their brands. Consumers have the desire and motive to maintain relationships with their favorite brands, the brands they love, and because of this, consumers are consciously or unconsciously motivated to attain, appreciate, benefit from and adore their loved brands' resources, perspectives, and other aspects related to their favorite brands.

Trilling (1950) explained that to love someone also involves the possibility that one faces that includes 1) the risk of rejection, 2) unsettling surprise, 3) hurt, and 4) other unexpected circumstances. The risk of building up a love relationship with someone is unpredictable and uncertain. If someone is willing to build a reliable and qualitative love relationship with another person, he/she will need to measure narcissism well, in other words, they will need to have strong self-awareness and a taste for living that are both intimately related to narcissism (Erikson, 1950). They will need to have a playful tolerance to engage with other people, and they will need to invest in surprise, and take pleasure in the unexpected risks (Olson et al., 1977).

Love is a relationship that requires the long-term compatibility of authentic friendship or intimate love, which is necessary to formulate a love relationship

(Knox, 1970; Murstein, 1971). Love is a relationship that involves wanting others' approval and sympathy, and an ability to identify with others, mentally, emotionally, and physically (Storm and Storm, 1984). People understand themselves and their close others through their intense interactions in their close relationships (Kelley, 1983) since the way to maintain long-term relationships is to understand one's self-needs as well as the needs for their close other, and help each other. This is because love is about union and transcendence, and love involves the merging of resources, perspectives, and identities (Aron and Aron, 1991; Brehm, 1988; Duck, 1995) and love motivates people to develop themselves so they can maintain their relationships.

This literature review supports **proposition I** that consumers' brand relationships are positively related to their close relationships. Next chapter (Chapter 3) commences by examining the definitions of spiritual relationships, and the similarities between spiritual relationships and brand relationships.

Chapter 3 Spiritual Relationships

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the concept of interpersonal love from the perspectives of behaviour, cognition, emotion, and motivation, and demonstrates there is a gap that exists in current research. This research proposed that interpersonal love is similar to brand love from the perspective of motivation in the last chapter. Current literature suggested that consumer brand relationships are analogous to religious relationships. (Cheng et al., 2007; Cova and Pace, 2006; Pichler and Reynolds, 2004,2007; Sarkar and Sarkar, 2012).

There is a lack of research on consumer brand relationships are analogous to spiritual relationships, and researchers mixed the concepts of religion and spirituality. The concept of religion defined as the institutional, the devotion, and the ritual that has to do with the institution and formalise belief and norm, as the central task. While, spirituality defined as the individual search for meaning, for unity, for purpose in life, and transcendence. Therefore, the comparisons between spiritual relationships and brand relationships are different from the comparisons between religious relationships and brand relationships.

Spirituality concerns relationships, such as the relationships between humans, humans and nature, and humans and cosmic reality (Caleb, 2003). Spiritual relationships provide a sense of harmonious interconnectedness or peace and are closely connected with self, others, divinity, and related nature, as well as the living environment. (Burkhardt, 1989). Spiritual relationships provide insight into the individual self with the process of intimate, powerful, soul-searching, and mystical features (Carpet, 1978; Huebner, 1985). MacDonald (2000) suggested that spiritual relationships are the combination of experience in the spiritual, transcendent, transpersonal, numinous, and mystical. Spiritual relationships are a soul-searching process, which start from interpersonal relationships and which are found in depths of our being, and in our life journey (Carper, 1978; Huebner, 1985; Burkhardt, 1994; Elkins, 1995).

The current literature examines spiritual relationships from four perspectives and defines spiritual relationships as the meaning of the depths of human

existence and the numinous relationship of the whole universe. Spiritual relationships provide individuals with the abilities to achieve new perspectives, to extend themselves. Spiritual relationships help people to appreciate the meaning of life and the purpose of life through non-material elements. Moreover, spiritual relationships highlight inner strength, harmony, life purpose, happiness, and introspection (Burkhardt, 1989; Hill and Smith, 1985; Howden, 1992; Hungelamann et al., 1985). Therefore, this chapter examines spiritual relationships from four perspectives 1) interconnectedness, 2) innerness, 3) transcendence and 4) purpose and meaning in life.

The seven sections in the chapter include 1) transcendence, 2) purpose and meaning in life, 3) innerness or inner resources, and 4) interconnections, 5) the differences between spirituality and religion, 6) spirituality and relationships, and 7) conclusion.

3.2 Transcendence

Two approaches define transcendence, one is related to religion as a believer and theistic, and the other is related to atheistic and nontheistic as supported by humanistic and secular features (Moberg, 2002; de Jager Meezenbroek et al., 2012). In regard to the approach related to religion, Steiger and Lipson (1985) suggested that religion means groups of people gathering and communicating because of the same belief. Religion presents a platform for people to communicate their experiences and expectations about their beliefs. Another definition of transcendence is about the life that individuals are striving for, and individuals are expecting to connect with as it relates to the essence of life. In spiritual relationships, the connection with the essential means to connect with themselves so as to understand who they really are and what they need, and to connect with others and nature (individuals acquire abilities to achieve new perspectives or identities from their relationships, either through their relationships with other people, or with nature) (McSherry et al., 2004; Reed, 1992).

Transcendence is explained as the “self” going beyond itself (Jackson, 1980), and transcendence means that individuals are able to inspect their life from a more objective perspective thoroughly. Transcendence is an essential element

for all human beings because it helps people to explore other aspects of their life. Spiritual transcendence helps individuals interpret their self-concept from the point of view of other people, and it helps people to clearly understand their needs and goals (Franke, 2000; Jackson, 1980).

Transcendence contains the meaning of self-awareness, which is “reflective of the human capacity to extend the self beyond the common boundaries of the immediate context and achieve new perspectives and experience” (Reed, 1987, p.335). Meanwhile, transcendence is the source of intrinsic motivation, it helps people to construct their sense of personal meaning, and it encourages them to pursue their goals and life purpose (Conn, 1985; Piedmont, 1999).

In conclusion, transcendence provides opportunities for individuals to enhance their abilities and extend their understanding of their motivation and goals, and it encourages them to pursue and achieve their goals (MacDonald, 2000; Waisbert and Porter, 1994). Transcendence is related to individuals’ self-creation, since people are aware of their insufficiency and strive to extend themselves (Reed, 1987).

3.3 Purpose and Meaning in Life

Purpose and meaning in life involve a sense of understanding one’s existence, and it involves a sense of having a definite purpose in an individual’s life, striving for personal goals and feeling fulfilment (Autton, 1980; Frankl, 1959; Reker and Wong, 1988; Yalom, 1980). Meaning and purpose in life is an essential feature in spiritual relationships (Chamberlain and Zika, 1988; Howden, 1992; Pargament, 2002) since people need to feel their lives have purpose and meaning. In the process of discovering their purpose and finding meaning for their life, people are looking for hope and a sense of worth (Frankl, 1963; Reker and Peacock, 1981). Finding meaning in life through spiritual relationships helps people to balance their behaviour and life satisfaction, and it helps them enhance their self-esteem and optimism (Pargament, 2002; Walsh, 2003).

Purpose and meaning in life is an essential motive for people who would feel stressed, upset, and desperate if there was no meaning and purpose in their life (Autton, 1980). Frankl (1959/1992) suggested that purpose and meaning in life

is an essential element not only in an individual's spiritual relationship, it is also vital throughout an individual's whole life. Pursuing and seeking the meaning of life is more important than pursuing and avoiding pain (Frankl, 1959/1992). Brown and Williams (1993) supported Frankl's (1959) statement and suggested that looking for meaning and purpose in life is the central element in an individual's life, and seeking purpose and meaning in life is a driving force to encourage an individual to develop the relationships he/she wants, and to pursue the goals he/she wants to pursue.

3.4 Unifying Interconnectedness

Howden (1992) noted that interconnectedness is the feeling of being affiliated and intertwined with others, and it encompasses the feeling of harmony between the individual self and others, and a sense of having a connection to others, and the world. Interconnectedness in spiritual relationships is composed of three core elements: 1) connectedness with self, 2) connectedness with others, and 3) connectedness to the whole world (Hungelmann et al., 1985).

Interconnectedness has three features: 1) an individual would like to engage in social activities or other activities to interact with others and to allow others to know them better; 2) it serves to increase an individual's sense of belongingness; 3) it enables an individual to connect with others and to connect with the world, and the connections enhance an individual's abilities to achieve his/her inner sense of goals (Lane, 1987; Ley and Corless, 1988).

The sense of interconnectedness helps people to understand and interpret that love and relatedness are core components that delivers to people (Fish and Shelly, 1988). The "sources of love and intertwined connection are coming from close relationships where there is unconditional acceptance" (Ley and Corless, 1988 p. 100). People feel a sense of relatedness to others, and the universe and the sense of harmony exist in the connection (Burkhardt, 1989). As long as people feel their interactions with others are of high quality, the sense of harmony they experience is accompanied by their communications and interactions with others. The harmony they experience is indicated by the individuals' strong sense of satisfaction with themselves, with others, and their life (Clark et al., 1991; Shelly and Fish, 1988; Hungelmann et al., 1985).

3.5 Inner Strength/ Innerness

The idea that inner strength is an essential component in spiritual relationships, is an idea that all of the current literature on spiritual relationship agrees with, and innerness is described as central to the human resources that promote an individual's life experience (Burkhardt, 1989; Colliton, 1981; Fish and Shelly, 1983; Howden, 1992; Hungelmann et al., 1985; Roux et al., 2002; Sinnott, 1969; Vaughn, 1986).

Roux et al., (2002) suggested that inner strength is comprised of knowing and searching, since an individual's inner strength is his/her understanding and interpreting what he/she needs in his/her life. An individual's innerness is closely connected with their life experience (Koob and Roux, 1999). An individual understands and explores himself/herself, others, and the world through his/her past experience and understands his/her needs and goals from his/her life experience (Roux et al., 2002; Maloney, 1995; Roux and Keyser, 1994). Nurturing through connection, an individual's friends, families, and colleagues are their strongest source of support through emotions, cognition, and behaviour (Rose, 1990). If an individual is positively supported by his/her close others and from social groups, he/she would be more likely to develop inner strength than those who do not have support (Roux and Keyser, 1994). If an individual is living apart from their support network, a positive attitude, self-reliance, and inner peace can help reduce the difficulties, so that they can look forward with a positive and playful spirit (Maloney, 1995; Roux, 1994; Rose, 1990). Rose (1990) suggested that an individual who has the abilities of self-healing knows how to solve the problems in his/her life, knows his/her limitations, and possesses emotional honesty. Meanwhile, an individual's inner strength connects with the future by living a new norm, since an individual share his/her life experience with others, supporting and encouraging others to overcome their difficult times in life.

The feature of inner strength has to do with an individual's self-awareness, consciousness, and inner resources (Burkhardt, 1989). Inner strength is a communication process where an individual interacts with himself/herself and interprets what he/she needs, and learns how to solve the problems in life and how to achieve a quality of life. An individual interacts and communicates with

others is based on his/her own experience and helps others to solve problems. Inner strength is developed and maintained through the interaction process with connectedness, firmness, and creativity (Kotarba et al., 2003; Rose, 1990).

3.6 The Differences between Spirituality and Religion

The two perspectives to discuss the relationships between religion and spirituality include: 1) the terms of religion and spirituality that have been discussed since religion belongs to the spiritual, and 2) religion involves affiliation with the spiritual. James (1902) suggested that religion is an original experience that occurs in a small group yet has an impact on a large population, and it belongs to spiritual experience (Chaves, 2011; Roof, 2003). Some of the literature makes a distinction between religion and spirituality: Hill et al. (2000) noted that concepts of religion and spirituality are different. Religion is defined as the traditional agreement of a belief system and the practices. Spirituality is a feeling of closeness and connectedness to the sacred, and this involves a sense of connection to people that involves includes the feelings of love and altruism, or the closeness and connectedness is a sense of a connection to nature or the environment, or is a sense of a connection to objects (Beck et al., 1979; Davis et al., 2008; Hill et al., 2000).

Religion is a social phenomenon that is defined as institutional, ritual, and ideological (Asch and Guetzkow, 1951; Darley and Batson, 1973; Zinnbauer et al., 1997). Religion is a social vehicle (Faiver et al., 2001) that delivers beliefs, values, and faith to certain social groups or institutions. Religion standardises the behaviour of people in the social group and expresses the expectations of the social group among the people in the social group (Morrow, 2003; Van Hook et al., 2001).

Spirituality is defined as an internal, personal, effective, thoughtful, and emotional expression of the sacred (Hill and Pargament, 2008; Koenig et al., 2001). Spirituality is concerned with an individual engaging in relationships with others, and an individual's relationship with nature and the environment, and with the world and the universe (Mauk and Schmidt, 2004). Spirituality involves the search for meaning and purpose in life, and search for connectedness, and seek transcendence. More specifically, spirituality is related

to an individual's social and emotional perspectives and an individual's way of living (Hauewas, 2001; Levin, 2000; Walsh, 2010).

In conclusion, the difference between spirituality and religion is that: firstly, spirituality is concerned with an individual phenomenon, and it is concerned with aspects that related to an individual's transcendental experience, innerness, and life meaning and life purpose (Thoresen and Harris, 2002). Religion is identified as social entities or institutional phenomena, since unique beliefs, norms, and practices shape religion, and it has a particular model and requirement for an individual in their social group, and religion has boundaries (Thoresen, 1998). Secondly, spirituality is concerned with a positive phenomenon that relates to an individual's life experience, inner resources and transcendences (Spilka and McIntosh, 1996) while religion is concerned more about the organisational side of life, which is often considered as restricting and inhibiting an individual's potential (Hill et al., 2000; Marty, 1996; Pargament, 2002).

3.7 Spirituality and Relationship

Spirituality is defined as a sense of connectedness, wholeness, unity and the affective expression of the sacred (Hill and Pargament, 2003; Koenig, 1998; Gorsuch and Shafranske, 1984; Thoresen and Harris, 1999). Spirituality is a vital element for people's lives (Faiver et al., 2001) that connects an individual to other people, connects an individual to nature and other objects, and connects an individual to the world (Chittister, 1998; Davis et al., 2001). Spirituality concerns relationships, the relationships between people, between people and the environment, and between people and objects, and the universe (Caleb, 2003). Howden's (1992) research best represents the relational aspect of spirituality. The four elements that compose Howden's (1992) theory, are supported by different literature:

1. Unifying interconnectedness: interconnectedness is the essential elements of spirituality (Hungelmann et al., 1985) and is a state of connectedness with others, to the individual self, and the universe (Fish and Shelly, 1988; Ley and Corless, 1988). Interconnectedness

is a form of harmony, harmony with an individual self, harmony with related others (Burkhardt, 1989).

2. Purpose and meaning in life: Autton (1980) noted that the need for meaning and purpose in life is essential to everyone's life in that people would feel stress and despair if they lack purpose and meaning in life. Moreover, purpose and meaning of life is an individual phenomenon, and it is unique to individuals (Burkhardt and Nagai-Jacobson, 1985; Ellis, 1980; Fish and Shelly, 1988).
3. Inner strength: Moberg (1984) suggested that an individuals' inner strength is closely related to spirituality, and spirituality is built on an individual's ability to give and receive love and forgiveness from others (Liehr, 1989; Stoll, 1979). Love, trust, and honesty are inner strength that fundamentally compose spiritual relationships.
4. Transcendence is noted as an essential element of spirituality by (Banks and Parks, 2004; Barney and Buckingham, 2012; Daly, 2005; Griffith et al., 2007; Lowry, 2012; Pesut, 2008; Walton, 1996). Transcendence is the ability to see beyond the boundaries of the self, environments, and limitations in life (Reed, 1991). Transcendence is beyond the presence of reality and helps an individual to be concerned about their future.

3.8 Conclusion

Spiritual relationships are the relationships between an individual and himself/herself, between an individual's self and others, and the relationships between an individual's self and nature, the environment, objects and other aspects of life and the world around us (Fish and Shelly, 1988; Hill and Pargament, 2003; Koenig, 1998, 2010). In other words, spiritual relationships are the ties that connect to self, to others and the environment (Walton, 1996). Spiritual relationships are developed through close relationships because the emotions and cognition in spiritual relationships are more intense and closer. The intensity, depth, and intimacy emotions and cognition in spiritual relationships enhance an individual's knowledge of self and an individual's soul searching (Norris, 1982; Walton, 1996; Wilson, 1963).

Spiritual relationships develop and create a sense of harmonious interconnectedness for people (Burkhardt, 1989), and provide powerful, intimate, and deep insight and knowledge to enable the individual to know themselves, and know about others (Carper, 1999; Elkins, 1995). In spiritual relationships, the process of acquiring insight about self and others involves interactions with others, nature, or other aspects of life. This chapter demonstrates the four elements that comprise spiritual relationships, and Howden's (1992) theory is the one that most clearly elaborates the features of spirituality in spiritual relationships.

This chapter supports the **proposition II** that consumers engaged in relationships with brands are positively related to the spiritual relationship dimension of unifying interconnectedness; transcendence experience; innerness or inner resources; purpose and meaning in life. The next chapter (Chapter 4) commences by examining the concept of motivation and motivation in relationships.

Chapter 4 Motivation in Relationships

4.1 Introduction

Previous chapter discusses the concept of spirituality and spiritual relationships, and demonstrates there is a gap that exists in current research. This chapter examined the definitions of motivation and the relationship between love and motivation (self-expansion motivation) since self-expansion might be one of the motivation that improve consumers to maintain their brand relationships.

People are interested to know about the cause of human behaviour, and they wanted to find the answers to the “why” or the reason behind every action and behaviour (Deci, 1975). Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are two dimensions of motivation (Deci, 1975). With respect to intrinsic motivation, it originates from the need of individuals have to be fulfilled, based on their capabilities. An individual is intrinsically motivated when he/she pursues goals with pleasure or challenge (Deci, 1975). Extrinsic motivation is motivated by the behaviour of external sources of control, such as parents, teachers, or friends. Extrinsic motivation is the motive that is involved in external pressures or instrumental values. (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

Deci and Ryan (2000) defined intrinsic motivation as the doing of an activity for pleasure, or satisfaction, or challenge. People are inherently interested and want to enjoy what they are doing, and they are intrinsically motivated to learn, to extend their knowledge and skills (Deci, 1975). People who become entirely associated with their activities and are committed to their activities motivated by their intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1975).

This chapter divided into three sections: 1) intrinsic motivation and rewards, 2) self-expansion motivation and relationships, and 3) conclusion.

4.2 Intrinsic Motivation and Rewards

Hull (1943) suggested that intrinsic motivation is composed of positive motives, such as, interest, enjoyment, pleasure, and fulfilment and people’s basic needs are satisfied by their intrinsically motivated behaviour and activities that can provide satisfaction for their innate psychological needs (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

People are motivated to engage in relationships or activities that not only satisfy their self-need, they also like to get rewards. Cameron et al. (2001) suggested that rewards intensify people's motivation and performance. Intrinsic motivation can be sustained and maintained if rewards are continuously or gradually provided. Rewards result in high interest, and continuous rewards increase people's self-efficacy in relationships (Bandura, 1997). Rewards are one important motive that increases motivation in relationships or activities and enhance and create intrinsic motivation. Aronfreed (1968) suggested that rewards are one of the motives that help people to develop and engage in relationships or activities.

Intrinsic motivation is influenced by rewards (both extrinsic and intrinsic) because the rewards are tied to the individual's interests and performance (Herzberg, 2017). People are willing to maintain relationships or activities as long as they are satisfied with the rewards or potential rewards. Even if the previous rewards may not be available any longer, in the relationship or activity, people might still like to stay in the relationship because of the social approval they receive (Banura, 1977, Estes, 1972, Mischel, 1973).

4.3 Self-Expansion Motivation and Relationships

Self-expansion is one of the intrinsic motivation for people to explore, extend, learn, and grow, and is associated with pleasure and challenging activities, often with close friends, relatives, or families (Aron and Aron, 1986). Self-expansion is derived from an individual's psychological needs, and people find motivation through belongingness. Intrinsic motivation expands an individual's potential efficacy. One way that an individual can obtain expansion is through relationships for resources, perspectives, and identities to extend 'included in the self'. Individuals involved in close relationships and spiritual relationships with others tend to share and access others' resources, perspectives, and identities and inclusion of the other into the self (Aron et al., 1995).

Self-expansion is a motivation that expands an individual's ability to achieve goals. In relationships, the way an individual expands himself/herself is by having access to approach others' social, physical, or intellectual resources, or others' perspectives, or others' individual and social identities in their

relationships (Aron and Aron, 1986), as well as in their spiritual relationships. Self-expansion motives guide a desire for the inclusion of others in the self in order to expand the individual self. People's intrinsic motives help them realise their potential satisfaction, and intrinsic needs guide people to set their goals and to behave in order to attain their goals (Deci, 1975).

Aron and Aron (1995) noted that the self-expansion model is the motivation that individuals pursue to strengthen their possible advantages to attain resources, perspectives, and identities to achieve their present and future goals. The self-expansion model belongs to intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1987), and it includes both intrinsic motives and extrinsic motives (Aron and Aron, 1995). There are two dimensions to this organised self-expansion model. The first one is the foundation of self-expansion motivation and is the basic human motive of people seeking to expand their potential efficacy. The second dimension is the inclusion of the other in the self, so that people expand themselves through their close relationships, to share others' resources, perspectives, and identities.

4.3.1 Self-Expansion Motivation

Individuals are seeking to expand themselves in relationships by increasing their ability to achieve their goals and life purpose. Self-expansion motivation not only includes the basic needs of motivation, the "low-order" motives (e.g., physiological needs or safety needs) it also includes the "high-order" motives (e.g., self-actualisation or psychological needs) (Deci and Ryan, 1975, Aron and Aron, 1995). All the resources, perspectives, and identities that an individual tends to acquire are included - knowledge, possessions, physical strength, social status and everything that can assist an individual to achieve his/her goals. An individual's self-expansion in his/her relationships is not only to acquire possessions or tangible resources it is also to enhance his/her knowledge, to achieve his/her social/ bodily identities, and to understand the meaning and purpose of his/her life (Aron and Aron, 1995; Bandura, 1977; Deci, 1975). The self-expansion motivation is not only for the accomplishment of goals, but it is also to accumulate resources and achieve goals.

Lewandowski et al., (2010) suggested that the happier the individual is with his/her self-expansion in the relationship the more rewards he/she can get from the relationship and the higher level of intimacy and commitment to the relationship. Self-expansion motivation draws attention to the reward value of the experience of self-expansion. The self-expansion motivation results in an increased sense of happiness and passion, especially if the rewarding experience is rapid (Aron and Aron, 2013).

4.3.2 Love and Self- Expansion

Anderson et al., (1984) and Miller et al., (2003) suggested that all mammals have evolved to attract potential mates, all mammals have their preferred mate preferences, and the attraction is the motive in relationships. Love is regarded as a universal experience that is associated with motivation and behaviour (Jankowiak and Fischer, 1992; Tennov, 1979), and love is primarily a motivation system that guides various emotions.

Love is a motivation and desire that combines an individual's acts, cognition, and emotions so that the individual is willing to develop and maintain a relationship with a special one (Aron and Aron, 1991). Love is a desire and motivation for an individual to enter a relationship with someone or something. As long as the person has the desire to develop and maintain a relationship that involves closeness and intimacy, the desire and motivation is love, whether the relationships are romantic, or friendships, or between parents and children, or other meaningful relationships (Aron and Aron, 1991; Fehr and Russell, 1991). Love in every relationship to some degree involves self-expansion that an individual might consciously or unconsciously obtain so that they can appreciate and benefit from others' resources, perspectives, and other things in relationships (Aron and Aron, 1991; Shave et al., 1987).

4.3.3 Love as motivation to include others in each other's self

Reis and Shaver (1988) mentioned that closeness and intimacy are the main elements in relationships that make everyone in relationships feel they are understood and cared for by others, and understanding and caring are mutual. People develop and maintain their relationships by enjoying and sharing each other's resources and other things, the more they share, the closer they are, and

the higher the wholeness of relationships (Bakan, 1966; Jung, 1925; McCall, 1974).

Four elements decide the closeness in relationships: 1) the amount of time people interact with each other (frequency), 2) the diversity of interactions they experience together (diversity), 3) the decisions, activities, plans, and other things they go through together (strength), and 4) how long they interact with each other (duration) (Berscheid et al., 1989; Kelley, 1983). Two parties in relationships would feel closer to each other, and feel more affiliated to each other, and would like to include each other in themselves if they have frequent, diverse, strong and long-lasting interactions with each other in their relationships. (Aron and Aron, 1991; Heider, 2013; Ickes et al., 1990). The inclusion of one another in a relationship demonstrates the closeness and intimacy between two parties, and it always includes others' resources, perspectives, and identities and other things they bring to the relationship (Aron and Aron, 1991). Schutz (1970) suggested that relationship closeness is similar to "living in each other's subjective contexts of meaning" (p.167), and "beloved people can be incorporated into the self" (Maslow, 1967 p.103).

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the role of intrinsic motivation in relationships and the relationship between self-expansion and love. The motive or the reason that people are willing to develop and maintain relationships with others is because they are looking for meaning in their lives: firstly, the biological motive of meaning in life is to satisfy the basic needs in an individual's life to he/she has to survive; Secondly, the social motive of meaning in life is that an individual is able to communicate and interact with others to acquire their social and bodily identities; Thirdly, the psychological motive of meaning in life is an individual being able to interact with others and with the world to enhance their knowledge and insight (Berlyne, 1971; Maddi, 1970). Leary (2007) noted that the self-related motive in relationships helps an individual to keep his/her affiliations, interactions, and it can improve them with the development and maintenance of their relationships.

This chapter supports the proposition III and proposition IV that whether consumer brand love relationships are analogous to both close interpersonal relationships and spiritual relationships, except they deliver unique features to fulfill consumers' needs. The features of consumers brand love relationship as they related to a close relationship can be identified and are distinct from the features of consumer brand love relationship and spiritual relationship, in Western culture, and Eastern culture.

Next chapter starts with a discussion on brand and brand relationships through culture, as one influential factor in this research.

Chapter 5 Consumer Brand Love Relationship

5.1 Introduction

Previous chapter concludes one intrinsic motivation (self-expansion) that might improve consumers to develop and maintain their brand relationships. This chapter deals with the concept of brand and brand relationships through one influential factor in this research—cultural factor.

This chapter is organised in three sections as follows: The first section demonstrates the concepts and theories of consumer brand love relationships in two perspectives: the managerial perspectives, and the theoretical perspectives. The second section demonstrates the meaning of brand in brand relationships, consumer brand experience, and discusses the connections between consumers and their brands. The third section demonstrates the relationship between culture and brand relationships.

5.2 The Concept of Consumer-Brand Love

Even though consumers interact with different brands in their daily life, they only develop and maintain intense consumer brand relationships with a few brands (Albert and Merunka, 2013; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). The concept of brand love, one of the latest developments, is a new marketing concept in consumer brand relationships (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2005, 2006). Brand love in consumer brand relationships attaches great importance to the extent to which the consumer has admiration and affinity for certain brands (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2005).

5.2.1 The Concept of Brand Love in Managerial and Practical Perspectives

Kevin Roberts (2004) introduced “Lovemarks” into market research from the perspective of brand management. He suggested that Lovemarks “the next evolution in branding” builds and strengthens the emotional bonds between brands and consumers. Love, the greatest connection in people’s lives not only connects people with their friends, parents, and relatives, love connects consumers with products, services, and other entities, which stimulates “loyalty beyond reason” (Kevin Roberts, 2004, p 25).

Kevin Roberts (2004) proposed “love” in relation to brand relationships as belonging to an emotion that transcends brands and is irreplaceable. Lovemarks are organised by three features: 1) sensuality, 2) intimacy and mystery, and 3) the idea that the features of sensuality and mystery are supported by passion and commitment. Furthermore, Jun et al., (2009) and Schobohm et al., (2016) both have same research results with Kevin Roberts’s (2004) Lovemarks concept and defined brand love as including three features: 1) commitment, 2) passion, and 3) intimacy from managerial perspectives.

The three aspects of commitment, passion, and intimacy are all correlated (Pawle and Cooper, 2006; Jun et al., 2009; Schobohm et al., 2016). Passion is driven by various motivation and passionate attitudes or behaviour that can be caused or followed by commitment. Intimacy reflects a reciprocal emotional exchange between consumers and brands, and intimate involvement can be accompanied by commitment. Commitment indicates the meaning that there is a willingness and desire to continue the relationship and commitment indicates the attitudinal and behavioural placement of relationships from both the consumer and brand side. (Sternberg, 1986; Pang et al., 2009).

5.2.2 The Concept of Brand Love in Theory and Construct Perspectives

The existing research of love in marketing involves two main frameworks: Firstly, researchers construct and define brand love applied interpersonal love theories from the perspective of psychology (Ahuvia, 1993, 2005; Albert et al., 2008; Batra et al., 2012; Shimp and Madden, 1988; Thompson et al., 2006; Whang et al., 2004). Table 5.1 demonstrates the brand love research applied theories of interpersonal love. Secondly, researchers constructed and defined the brand love applied theories of religions, and over the past ten years researchers have contributed to this framework by adding to it (Muniz and Schau, 2005; Pimentel and Reynolds, 2004; Pichler and Hemetsberger, 2007; Sarkar and Sarkar, 2015).

Table 5. 1 Consumer research applied interpersonal love theory

Applied Interpersonal Theories	Features	Research that applied interpersonal love theories
Attachment Theory (Bowlby,1965)	Cognition and emotion of love; seek satisfaction and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive brand attitude, long-term commitment, and separate distress (Thompson et al., 2005); • Attachment in brand relationship is to express cognitive and affective bond between brands and consumers' self (Park et al., 2006);
Triangle theory of love (Sternberg, 1986)	Passion; intimacy; decision/commitment; cognition, emotion, and motivation of love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passion, commitment, and intimacy are three components in the consumer brand relationship construct Fournier (1998); • Liking, yearning, and decision/commitment are three components which construct brand love relationships (Shimp and Madden ,1988); • Intimacy is the main element to maintain consumers in brand relationships (Keh et al., 2007); Oliver (1999); • Passion is an essential element in brand relationships (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2005; Thompson et al., 2005)
The typology of styles of loving (Lee, 1977)	Eros love; Ludus love; Storge love; Mania love; Agape love; Pragma love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eros love , Mania love , and Agape love are three types of love that exist in consumer- product love (Whang et al.,2004)
Compassionate and passionate love (Hatfield and Rapson, 1993)	Compassionate: intimacy, trust, commitment, closeness Passionate: passion, excitement, anxiety,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love in brand relationships is analogous to romantic love; love is passion (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2005) • Brand love is the combination of deep

		affection and separate anxiety (Rossiter, 2012)
Kelley (1983) close relationship theory	Relationship closeness includes four features : frequent, diverse, long term, and strength interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdependent is one of the elements in brand relationships framework (Fournier ,1998)
Self-inclusion of love theory (Aron 1995)	Motivation, cognition and emotion of love; individual includes close others resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers love their brands in order to include brands' identity in themselves, and love objects reflect consumers' different needs, desires, and values. (Ahuvia, 1993, 2005)

5.2.2.1 The Concept of Brand Love Analogies to Interpersonal Love Theories

The studies of brand love rely on interpersonal love theories range from the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1965), the triangular theory of love (Sternberg, 1986), the Colors of love (Lee, 1973), the compassionate and passionate love theory (Hatfield and Rapson, 1994), and the close relationship theory (Kelley, 1993), the self-inclusion theory of love (Aron and Aron, 1986). The following pages will discuss the different marketing research as it relates to interpersonal love theories.

5.2.2.1.1 Attachment Theory (Behaviour Perspectives in interpersonal love)

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1965) is one of the psychological theories that researchers have applied to brand love relationships. Researchers have studied attachment theory in the marketing field from various behavioural perspectives. The features of Attachment Theory (Bowlby,1965) are: people are more confident about themselves if their attachment objects or targets are available to them; the attachment is cultivated over a long-term period, and it is not easy to change; the attachment is developed through past experience; the attachment is developed as a response for support and protection; the attachment in

relationships interacts in a reciprocal way. Attachment is one of the components of love and is focused more on the need for self-growth and less on mutual growth because one party has to invest more to maintain the relationship (Bowlby, 1965).

Thompson et al., (2006) applied the attachment theory in their research, and they suggested that consumers who have a strong attachment to brands hold positive brand attitudes in their brand relationships. Consumers who are willing to commit to long-term brand relationships have a strong attachment to their brands and would suffer anxiety and nervousness if they were separated from their loved brands (Thompson et al., 2005). Baldwin et al., (2006) supported Thompson et al.'s (2005) theory, and noted that attachment only exists in the long-term brand relationship, and the development and maintenance of brand relationships are often based on interactions between consumers and their brands. Moreover, Mikulincer et al., (2003) extended the research by Thompson et al.'s (2005) and noted that the reasons that consumers are willing to develop and maintain relationships with their brands are because their relationships soothe them and provide them with security, protection, help and, comfort.

5.2.2.1.2 Triangle Theory (Emotional Perspectives in interpersonal love)

Triangle theory (Sternberg, 1986) is one of the psychological theories that researchers apply in brand love relationships, and researchers studied the triangle theory in the marketing field from emotional perspectives. The triangle theory of love (Sternberg, 1986) is organised by three components that can be viewed as the vertices of a triangle as follows:

1. Intimacy refers to connectedness, closeness, and the experience of warmth in a loving relationship.
2. Passion is the source of emotion in a loving relationship and is a state of craving for close others.
3. Decision/commitment: decision is the feature where people decide whether or not to love someone in a certain period, and commitment is the feature that maintains the long-term relationship.

Shimp and Madden (1988) were inspired by Sternberg's (1986) theory and proposed three components of love: 1) liking, 2) yearning, and 3)

decision/commitment in a consumption context. Liking is developed from the intimacy that contains the meaning of connectedness, sharing, and feelings of emotional support. Yearning is developed from the passion that represents reciprocal interactions, and a strong positive continuum of possibilities. Decision/ commitment is applied directly from the Triangular theory (1986) since consumers make their decision depending on their positive feelings of brands' attributes and benefits in the short-term and consumers are committed to their brands and are loyal to their relationships in the long-term. The three components of Shimp and Madden's theory (1988) are closely related to loyalty toward the brands. Oliver (1999) who also applied the Triangular theory (1986) proposed the framework of the brand love relationship as affective-conative that represented loyalty toward consumers' brands. Both Shimp and Madden's (1986) and Oliver's research (1999) have contributed to the study of consumer objects/brands relationships from a loyalty perspective, which belongs to the emotional perspectives of love. Fournier (1998) composed a brand relationships framework with six features, and three of the features (passion, commitment, and intimacy) among the six are inspired by Sternberg's theory (1986).

Keh et al., (2007) suggested that intimacy in brand relationships has to do with the feelings of closeness and the willingness to maintain the relationship with brands, and intimacy in the brand relationship belongs to consumers' emotion (Oliver, 1999). Consumers would like to maintain their brand relationships because they have passionate feelings for their brands. Passion in brand relationships is a positive attitude, which influences consumers' emotions. (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Keh et al., 2007; Shimp and Madden, 1988; Thompson et al., 2005).

Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory is the most frequently applied theory in marketing research that demonstrates consumers' love for their brands from an emotional perspective (Shimp and Madden, 1988; Oliver, 1999). However, Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) offered another opinion that Sternberg's theory (1986) is not suitable to measure consumers' love for brands, since neither of the three components contained the meaning of self-concept, and if it is applied the Triangular theory (1986) in the consumer research means denying the facts that consumers maintain relationships to develop their identity. Consumers are

solely unaware of their love for their brands until researchers ask them (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2005, 2006), and the decision factor is not an appropriate component to define consumer brand love relationships.

5.2.2.1.3 Color of Love Theory (Emotional perspectives in interpersonal love)

Lee's (1977) theory is one of the psychological theories that researchers applied in brand love relationships, and researchers studied Lee's (1977) theory in the marketing field from emotional perspectives. Lee (1977) suggested six love styles: Eros love (physicality of love) refers to people are looking for their lover that fits their imagination, mostly physical appearance; Ludus love (game-playing love) that is short-term and focused on involvement; Storge (friendship love) is a long-term love that develops as a result of affection and companionship; Mania (dependent love) is the obsessive and intense love that needs the repeated reassurance of being loved; Agape (selfless love) is an altruistic love that people believe the love that is given is one's duty and they do not expect reciprocity.; Pragma ("shopping list" love) is the love that involves considering a potential lover's features and characteristics consciously.

Whang et al., (2004) applied Lee's (1977) theory to interpret bikers' love for their motorcycles. The love of bikers is categorised as three variables: 1) eros love that is where bikers pursue the physical beauty of the product, 2) mania love proposes that bikers' love for their motorcycles is possessive, and 3) agape love that bikers love their motorcycles without expecting any love being returned to them. The research by Whang et al., (2004) is the first study that has looked at consumers' love for products. Whang et al., (2004) suggested that the three components of consumers' love for their products express that consumers' passion and love have an impact on their loyalty.

Even though Lee's (1977) color of love theory categorised six love styles, the measurement scale of love type is only simple descriptions without the detailed characteristics of each love style. Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) noted that Lee's (1977) theory simply described six love types and included little theorising of the different types of love.

5.2.2.1.4 Compassionate love and passionate love theory (Cognition perspectives in interpersonal love)

Hatfield and Rapson (1993) defined passionate love as “a state of intense longing for union with another, which [is] mixed with appraisals, appreciations, and subjective feelings.” (p.5) and defined compassionate love as less intense and “the affection and tenderness we feel for those with whom our lives are deeply entwined” (p.9).

Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) applied part of Hatfield and Rapson’s research (1993) and defined brand love as passionate love in that consumers’ love of their brands comprises passion, excitement and a variety of other intense feelings. Meanwhile, Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) suggested that consumers’ love of their brands is analogous to romantic love instead of other types of love, and they defined the “love” in brand relationships as passion. Rossiter (2012) agreed with Carroll and Ahuvia’s (2006) research, and also applied the passionate love theory in Hatfield and Rapson’s research (1993). Rossiter (2012) defined consumers’ love for their brands as a combination of deep affection and separation anxiety.

Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and Rossiter (2012) both defined and measured brand love relationships from the cognition perspective of interpersonal love that consumers’ love of their brands is intense and belongs to passionate love. Meanwhile, separation anxiety happens to consumers if they are separated from their loved brands. However, neither theory involved the compassionate love, in which they did not include love features, such as intimacy, trust, commitment, and attachment in theories, and those features might exist in brand love relationships (Batra et al., 2014; Vlachos et al., 2012).

5.2.2.1.5 Close Relationship Theory (Motivational perspectives in interpersonal love)

Kelley’s (1983) Close relationship theory defined closeness as a process that exists in close relationships, and one that should be characterised as a strong positive attitude and high affective involvement. Close relationships involve two essential processes - “give” and “take”, and are in the process of interaction. Whether a relationship is close or not can be determined by the following four

features of the interaction: 1) frequent interaction, 2) diverse interaction, 3) strong interaction, and 4) long-term interaction.

Fournier (1998) applied Kelley's (1983) close relationship theory and illustrated that consumers are interdependent in their brand relationships because there is a mutual interaction that exists in relationships. Fournier (1998) suggested that the emotions in brand relationships between consumers and brands should be consistent if brands provided consumers with good qualities, services, functions, or other suitable features, and consumers should reciprocate by being loyal or show their trust in brands through consistent purchases and stable relationships. Fournier (1998) applied Kelley's (1983) theory and contributed to the brand relationships framework from the emotional (interdependent) perspective of the close relationship theory.

Kelley (1983) suggested people in their close relationships have a motive and a desire to consciously or unconsciously interact with each other, and the closeness of people's relationships depends on whether they have frequent, diverse, strong and long-term interactions with each other. Interactions between two parties are meaningful if two parties consciously or unconsciously engage in relationships to give and receive to increase the closeness of their relationships (Watzlawick et al., 1967; Schefflen, 1973).

This thesis applies Kelley's (1983) close relationships theory to brand love relationships since the concept of "love" in brand love relationships in this thesis is expressed through "closeness" in the close relationship theory. The reasons to apply the close relationship theory (interpersonal love relationship theory) in this study are: closeness is used to describe the sense of good interaction between two people. Closeness is a continuum and not a separate entity, and closeness is a term that describes not only romantic relationships, it also describes friendship, family relationships and other close relationships (Berscheid et al., 1989; Parks and Floyd, 1996).

Closeness in close relationships not only describes relationship partners' intense, continuous and long-term interaction it also illustrates relationship partners' inner thoughts, motives, and behaviour responses (Kelley, 1983; Berscheid et al., 1989). Developing and maintaining closeness in relationships

requires people to invest their time and energy, and closeness only happens in a few relationships because the input of money, time and energy are costly (Mende et al., 2013). DeVito (1980) suggested that “love is an activity of the whole person, in which body and mind are all actively involved” (p.48). The interaction between relationship partners is perceived by the loving involvement of relationship partners, and how people develop and maintain love in their close relationships can be measured through their interaction in their relationships (Kemper, 1978; Schachter and Singer, 1962; Seligman et al., 1980).

5.2.2.1.6 Self-Expansion Theory (Motivational perspectives in interpersonal love)

Aron and Aron (1991) defined love from the motivational perspectives of interpersonal love theory, and researchers have applied Aron and Aron’s (1995) theory to the marketing field from these motivational perspectives. Aron and Aron (1995) noted that love is a motivation that improves an individual as he/she enters and maintains a close relationship with a specific person. People are striving to expand themselves when they are in love relationships (Aron and Aron, 1995). People seek opportunities to expand themselves not only to satisfy their needs with tangible resources or their cognitive needs (e.g., knowledge, insight) or for their social identities needs, or to pursue the meaning of their life, or to understand their purpose in life.

Ahuvia (1993) applied Aron and Aron’s (1991) love theory to support part of his research that consumers’ love for their brands is closely related to themselves to complete their self-concept. Meanwhile, consumers love their brands in order to merge the brands’ identities with themselves, and love objects also reflect consumers’ different needs, desires, and values. Ahuvia (1993;2005) extends Belk’s (1984; 1988) research on self-concept in the marketing field, as consumers become involved in brand relationships not only to express their self-concept through their brand values, consumers are also engaged in brand love relationships because they love the identity of their favorite brands.

5.2.2.1.7 Limitations of existing research:

1. Attachment theory: the current research in the marketing field that applied the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1965) expressed the features of

brand relationships as long-lasting, commitment, and satisfaction. However, Bretherton (1985) suggested that the attachment that exists in close relationships is more of a one-party interaction with others to satisfy a partner's needs and improve a partner's welfare. More importantly, the interaction in an attachment relationship is that one party is encouraged to be supportive, sensitive and responsive to their partner's growth need (Fonagy, 2018), yet there is a lack of mutual investment to maintain the relationship.

2. The triangle theory (Sternberg, 1986) of love demonstrates the three components of love in close relationships, the feature of the decision is not suitable to apply in love relationships, and people normally fall in love unconsciously (Olive, 1999; Thompson et al., 2005).
3. Although the six different types of love styles characterize the colour of love theory (Lee, 1977), the description of the different love types is not deep enough to apply in consumer research (Rossiter, 2012; Thompson et al., 2005).
4. The compassionate and passionate love theory (Hatfield and Rapson, 1993): the current research only applies the passionate love theory to categorise brand love relationships as the combination of passion and separation anxiety (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2005). However, other compassionate features of love might exist in brand love relationships, such as intimacy, closeness, and commitment.
5. The close relationship theory (Kelley, 1983): the current research studies the quality of interactions in close relationships from the emotional perspective of love (Fournier, 1998) instead of studying the motives that cause consumers to maintain interactions with their brands.
6. The self-inclusion of love theory (Aron and Aron, 1995): even though the current research (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006) applies this theory to study the idea that consumers maintain their relationships with their favorite brands to expand their own identities, consumers might maintain their brand love relationships to expand their resources and perspectives. The researchers did not explore those two areas.

5.2.2.2 Concepts of brand love to analogies of spiritual relationships

Belk (1988) developed the 12 properties of sacredness and suggested that sacralisation consumption does exist in consumers' behaviour. Consumers believed that the sacred objects they purchased created transcendent meaning in their lives. Belk's (1988) research applied both Dukheim's (1975) and James's (1961) definition of religion that religion is a unified system of beliefs and values, which comes from a group of people's feelings, actions, and experience.

Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) suggested that consumers' devotion to their brands exists in consumer brand relationships and "devotion" is the highest form of consumers' love that consists of intimacy, passion, commitment, and "devotion" explains consumers' religious fervour for their loved brands. Pimentel and Reynolds (2004, 2007) noted that devoted consumers have a high degree of intimacy with brands, and they are willing to explore brands' uniqueness in their relationships. Consumers sacralized their brands as brands not only provide them with meaning in life, and help them express their identities. (Pichler and Hemetsberger, 2004). Rindfleisch et al., (2010) agreed with Pimentel and Reynolds' (2007) and demonstrated that consumers who sacralized their brands, and believe brands have religiosity are more likely to remain loyal to their brands.

Schachar et al., (2011) noted that consumers who believe brands have religiosity believe brands can provide values and meaning in life as religion does. Brand devotion and brand religiosity reflect religious fervour and the intense relationships between consumers and their brands (Pichler and Hemetsberger, 2007; Schachar et al., 2011).

Most of the research applied the concept of religion in brand relationships instead of the concept of spirituality. Carson et al., (1986) and Engebretson et al., (1991) suggested that religion includes beliefs, rites, and rituals that are adopted by a group of people. Pichler and Hemetsberger's research (2004, 2007) and the research by Schachar et al.'s (2011) all focus on brand devotion with reference to groups, fandom, and brand devotion in communities. Steiger and Lipson (1985) noted that religion involves a group of people searching for the meaning of life instead of an individual, and religion is a concept where

communities or a group engage in the same beliefs and practices. The theories or concept of religion are more suitable to apply in the marketing research of brand communities or brand fandom. Religiosity is closely connected with social communities and faith communities (Carson et al., 1986; O'Neill et al., 1985).

The concept of spirituality is more suitable to describe the relationship between an individual and others. Mayeroff (1971) mentioned that spirituality concerns an individual's need for love and trust. Spirituality is an individual's abilities that have to do with giving and receiving, such as, three human elements that include listening, touch, and commitment in relationships with others. Ross (1994) supported Mayeroff's research (1971) and suggested that spiritual need is a way of giving and receiving love and forgiveness from others, and an individual who is concentrating on their spirituality is as dependent on other people or their relationships. Spirituality is the way that an individual develops and maintains his/her relationships with other people (Jacobson, 1985; Mayeroff, 1971). Aponte (1998) suggested that spirituality includes meaning, purpose, and values in people's lives, and caring about the individual phenomenon and includes things or objects that are meaningful to the individual, how an individual understands his/her life, and the goals and purpose of his/her life (Spilka and McIntosh, 1996; Stoll, 1989).

In terms of current research that applied the concept of "spirituality" these studies are mainly focused on spirituality as a motivation for consumers to get involved in outdoor activities. Arnould and Price (1993) suggested that river drifting is one activity that makes consumers feel an inner sense of fulfillment. Celsi et al., (1993) mentioned that consumers who are going skydiving have the motive to transcend normal experience and engage in high-risk activities. Emmons (1999) suggested that consumers who pursue spiritual striving are more satisfied with their lives and spiritual striving helps them consumers seek meaning and purpose in their life. Dyson et al., (1997) and Golberg (1998) noted that spirituality is one of the primary motives that help consumers improve their behaviour. Spirituality is a multi-faceted phenomenon (Howden, 1992; Emmons and Palout, 2003) that not only can be expressed as motives, since spirituality could be interpreted as instilling purpose and meaning in consumers'

lives, as well as a sense of connection to their past experience, present experience, and to their future (Skousgaard, 2006).

Table 5.2 Consumer research applied religion and spirituality theories

Theories	Features	Research applied theories or concept of religion
Religion	Organisational; Ritual; Ideological; Devotional;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 properties of sacredness exist in consumption (Belk, 1988); • Devoted consumers express their religious fervour for their brands as highly committed, and passionate (Pichler and Hemetsberger , 2004, 2007); • Consumers believe brands have religiosity and they are likely to remain loyal to brands because of the religiosity of brands (Rindfleisch et al., 2010); • Brand religiosity reflects the values and beliefs of consumers (Schachar et al., 2011)
Spirituality	Motivation; Meaning of life; Connectedness; Transcendence; Inner strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirituality is a motive that improves us to take the activities and makes us feel fulfilled. (Arnould and Price, 1993); • Spirituality as a motive that improve consumers' behaviour (Dyson et al., 1997 and Golberg, 1998) • Spirituality is the motive that transcend high risk activities to normal experience(Celisi et al., 1993); • Consumers who have spiritual striving for their brands are seeking meaning in their life. (Emmons, 1999)

5.2.2.3 Conclusion of existing research of spiritual relationships in marketing

The current marketing research applied theories or concepts of religion, and studies consumers in brand relationships as communities instead of as individuals, such as brand devotion, brand religiosity, and fandoms (e.g., Pichler and Hemetsberger, 2004, 2007; Schachar et al., 2011). Since the current marketing research applied theories of spirituality only as motives for activities,

there is still room for marketing research to explore this further, especially in relation to motivational perspectives. Spirituality is defined as a motivation for an individual to search for his/her life meaning and purpose, inner strength, and transcendent experience (Howden, 1992; Spilka and McIntosh, 1996; Wulff, 1977). Love and relatedness are critical components of spirituality, and are essential elements for an individual (Fish and Shelly, 1988), because spirituality helps individuals to explain and understand their life meaning and purpose (Oldnall, 1996; Ley and Corless, 1988; Ross, 1994).

Researchers understand spirituality from different perspectives: Some researchers defined “spirituality” (Delaney, 2003; Reed, 1987), and some researchers discussed the measurement of spirituality (Hatch et al., 1998; Hungelmann et al., 1996). Howden’s (1992) spiritual relationships theory demonstrates the relational element of spirituality and the four aspects (1) unifying interconnectedness, 2) inner strength, 3) transcendence and 4) the meaning and purpose in life) of spirituality in this scale illustrate spirituality since it is concerned with relationships, that is, as relationships between people, people to nature, and people to cosmic reality (Caleb, 2003). Howden’s theory (1992) examines the four relational aspects of spirituality, to interpret and understand spirituality through relationships (Caleb, 2003; Kaku, 1995). Therefore, Howden’s (1992) theory is more suitable and appropriate to apply to the brand love relationships research compared with the other spirituality theories.

5.3 Brand, Brand Experience, and Connections between Brands and Consumers

This section considers brand meaning, consumers’ brand experience, and the connections between brands and consumers.

5.3.1 Brand and Brand Meaning

5.3.1.1 Definition of brands

From the managerial perspective, brands are defined as a legal statement of ownership, and as a legal mark to designate ownership (Broadbent and Cooper, 1987). A brand is an investment for a company’s legal ownership, company’s name, and protection for a company’s copyright, and it is also a logo that a

company uses to differentiate itself from other companies (Arnold, 1992; Melewar et al., 2004). Brands can deliver the nature of the product and are signals to employees, business partners, and consumers about who they are, and where they come from (Brown, 1992; Vick, 1993).

Brands to consumers involve both image and identity. Levy (1959) mentioned that people buy a brand not only for what it does, they also buy it for what it means to them. Consumers apply brands as a way of expressing themselves, or differentiating themselves from others, or connecting themselves with their families, friends, or to define their self-concept, or enhance their knowledge and insight (Ahuvia, 1993; Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998; Escalas and Bettman, 2003).

Consumers understand and interpret the meaning of brands' depending on their different values, background, and beliefs (Kates and Goh, 2003; Escalas, 2004), and brand meaning is delivered through continuous interactions between consumers and brands (Berthon et al., 2006). Consumers would like to develop and maintain interactions with brands as long as they believe brands deliver clear, reliable and stable brand meaning that satisfies their needs and requirements (Gardner and Levy, 1955; Campbell et al., 2003; Escalas, 2000).

Consumers purchase brands not only because the brands offer products or services, but also because the brands are a name, symbol, term, knowledge, and design (Aaker, 1996; Feldwick, 1996; Keller, 1993), Keeble (1991) and the aforementioned researchers suggested that a "brand becomes a brand as soon as it comes in contact with a consumer" (p. 170). While consumers interact with brands, brands are like message senders that deliver information to consumers, and consumers would like to receive the information or messages they have to understand from the brands (Keller, 2003). Consumers are willing to maintain interactions with brands because mutual understanding is established during the process of the interactions, as consumers comprehend and understand the meaning and values of the brands, and believe the brands could help them achieve their goals through the meaning they understand. Consumers understand the meaning of brands because they believe that the brands they choose reflect and enhance their personality, perspectives, and identities (Batra

et al., 2012; Kleine and Kernan, 1991; Levy, 1957; Pappalardo, 1999; Thompson et al., 1994).

5.3.1.2 Brand experience

While consumers are purchasing, they are not only paying attention to the utilitarian product attributes. They are also paying attention to the brand-related stimuli. The brand-related stimuli are consumers' internal responses and are consumers' brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009). Batra et al., (2012) suggested that consumers' brand love relationship is built on and related to their brand experience, consumers accept brands not only because they can benefit from them but also because the process of purchase and usage of brands enables them to construct their self-concept and maintain their brand relationships (Becerra et al., 2013; Doss, 2014).

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) illustrated that the consumer-brand experience includes symbolic, hedonic, and aesthetic experience, and consumers pursue fun and fantasies in their experiences. More specifically, the brand experience is composed of two parts: 1) one is consumers' internal response, such as sensations, feelings, and cognition and 2) the other one is consumers' behavioural response (Becerra et al., 2013). Consumers' brand experience happens during the process of consumption and after consumption, and also happens while consumers have direct or indirect interactions with their brands. Brand experience could occur consciously or unconsciously to consumers (Becerra et al., 2013; Bellizzi and Hite, 1992; Mandel and Johnson, 2002; Keller, 1987).

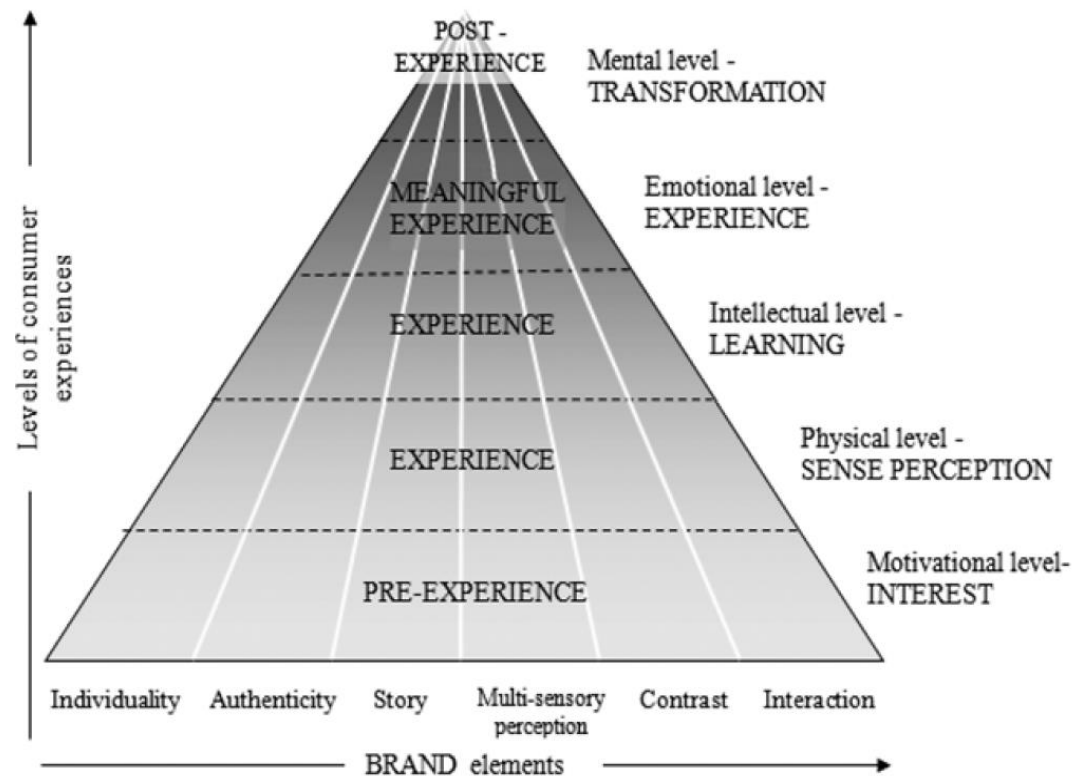
Because of their different experience and different backgrounds, consumers' experience brands differently, and even though they have to interact with hundreds of thousands of brands throughout their life, some of their brand experience are short, and some are positive, and long-term, and they are willing to maintain them. Consumers would like to develop and maintain memorable, meaningful, and positive brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009), and good brand experience extend brand relationships.

Tarssanen and Kylanden (2007) mentioned that brand experience includes five levels (Figure 5.1) according to the interaction time, process and intensity

as follows: 1) The first level is the motivational level that refers to consumers' first connection with brands, since their interest in brands are influenced by strong stimuli and their intense emotions related to brands. 2) The second level is the physical level where consumers interact with brands multiple times and have strong interactions with brands, and closeness exists between the consumer and the brand. The more consumers interact with brands, the better they understand whether brands can meet their need for resources, perspectives, and identities. 3) The third level is the intellectual level where consumers have opportunities to extend themselves, obtain new knowledge or insight, and gain new achievement from their good experience with brands. 4) The fourth level is the emotional level, where their memorable and meaningful interactions with brands would lead to positive emotions. 5) The fifth level is the mental level, at this stage, consumers' believe they have positive and meaningful interactions with brands, and the positive emotions not only stay with their physical state, the positive emotion also stay on their mind and become part of their lifestyle, and hence consumers would like to keep and maintain the interactions with brands.

In conclusion, good brand experience lead to good consumer brand relationships that consumers are willing to maintain. Consumers' memorable brand experience affect their behaviour. Consumers would like to have a long-term interaction with their brands if they have positive brand experience, and consumers would like to have reliable and diverse interactions with their brands if they have good brand experience.

Figure 5. 1 Consumer brand experience (Tarssanen and Kylanden, 2007)



5.3.1.3 Connections between consumers and their brands

Consumption is a significant and expressive process (Slater, 1997), in which consumers are not only purchasing brands, activities or services, they are also implementing self-creation activities and striving for 'being' (Gergen, 1991). Levy (1959) suggested that consumers purchase brands both for their needs and for what meaning those brands can deliver to them, and brand symbolism is created and developed as consumers connect with their brands. Consumers apply the symbolic meaning of brands to develop and express themselves to the people close to them, to communities, and social groups (Elliott and Cameron, 1994; Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998).

Elliott (1997) suggested that there are two ways to construct brand symbolism:

1. Social-symbolism, consumers construct their self-concept outward in society. People's self-concept depends on their social aspect of self

in terms of an individual's relationships with others in their social group (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). The social-symbolic meaning of brands suggests that culture is one of the constant and essential elements in social relationships, and the consumption process is an "unconscious expression of the existing social structure" (Baudrillard, 1988). Consumers' social context and desire for brands derive more from their cultural roles rather than from their basic human need (Douglas and Isherwood, 1978).

2. In regard to self-symbolism, wherein, consumers construct their self-concept inwards. James (1892) and Belk (1988) explained that people are what they eat, what they have, and every object people have is part of their extended self. In other words, while people communicate with others, they are expressing their identities, perspectives, and the resources they have through the brand's meaning. In addition, McCracken (1993) suggested that "without consumer brands, certain acts of self-concept and self-definition would be impossible" (p. xi). Consumers interact closely with brands because they believe that the brands they choose represent them (Escalas, 2004; Escalas and Bettman, 2003) and brands can help consumers to deliver information to others regarding who they are (Belk et al., 1982) and affirm consumers' perception of themselves (Solomon, 1983).

5.4 Culture and Brand Relationships

5.4.1 Theories of culture

Cross-cultural research is mainly focused on the comparisons between individualism and collectivism, and Bond (1986), Hofstede (1980), Markus and Kitayama (1991), and Triandis (1995) have all contributed to the study of differences and similarities between individualism and collectivism. These theories illustrated that the culture of individualism and collectivism are both shaped by a social group's history and experience, and culture also affects the way (cognitive, behaviour, and emotions) one social group of people interacts or communicates with another social group of people.

Hofstede (1980) suggested that individualists see themselves as more differentiated and separate from others in a social group, and collectivists regard themselves as more connected with those they regard as significant, and would like to avoid expressing their emotions to disrupt or destroy harmony, and are less persistent in pursuing their personal goals to avoid endangering their relationships with others (Bond, 1986). Baskerville (2003) has a different opinion as it relates to Hofstede's (1980) culture dimensions. He noted that Hofstede's (1980) theory is not about culture dimensions, it is more likely to "reflect mechanisms of social organisation, or strengths and the opportunism of different nations, which may be epiphenomenal to historical origins." (p. 10). Ralston et al., (1992) stated that Hofstede's (1993) culture dimensions are culture biased because his measurement tool of culture is based on Western values.

Triandis (1990) contributed a cross-culture theory from the cognitive perspective, since culture is organised by in-groups' attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, states, and personality qualities, and culture is not decided by other people in other groups.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed that culture and the individual self are closely connected, where individuals' cognition, emotion, and motivation are formed and influenced by their culture. The theory formed two definitions of self or self-construal in two cultures, specifically in independent cultures and in interdependent cultures, which individuals develop and form their self-concept which are the consequences of the interactions between the culture and themselves (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). The theory by Markus and Kitayama's (1991) focused on how the self is evaluated under social interactions and beliefs and discusses the differences between the independent culture "self" and interdependent culture "self".

5.4.2 Culture and Love

5.4.2.1 Love histories - Eastern

There are four main concepts about love in China, specifically: 1) the first one is *Yuan Fen* (predestined), and the other three are 2) *Qing* (love feelings), 3) *Jen*

(Humanism) and 4) Ai (long-term close relationship). Table 5.3 demonstrates the features of four types of love in China

Table 5.3 Four types of love in China

Main concept about love in Eastern (China)	Features
Yuan Fen (predestined)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhist doctrine of karma • Good deeds rewarded by a good consequence and bad deeds rewarded by a bad consequence • Related to people's attitudes and intentions regarding their close relationships with others.
Qing (love feelings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mythological domain by the Taoist saint and the Buddhist monk. • Desire, passion, and spirit
Jen (Humanism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocity • A life-giving and life-sustaining force
Ai (love)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term, obligatory interpersonal relationship • Love, faithfulness and loyalty

5.4.2.1.1 Yuan Fen

The concept of Yuan Fen originates from Buddhism, Gao and Su (2013) proposed that the origin of Yuan Fen can be traced to the secularisation of the Buddhist doctrine of karma. The main theme of this doctrine is that people's lives in the present are the consequences of deeds performed in previous lives. Yang and Ho (1988) mentioned that a good deed would be rewarded by a good consequence, and a bad deed would be punished. Yuan Fen explained that in Buddhism, all interpersonal relationships last as long as yuan exists and relationships would dissolve once yuan is extinguished.

Yuan Fen refers to destine or predestine relationships in the Chinese mind (Chang, 2011), and Yuan Fen comes from the unknown arrangement, such as the unknown universe, and the powerful invisible hands. Yuan Fen is understood as arrangements by an unknown universe, such as, meeting someone at some place or falling in love with someone or becoming friends with someone. These are all arranged by some unknown universe; you have to meet someone at that time because of an unknown fate. Whether people have met

someone or are in love with someone is pre-destined in their life (Goodwin and Findlay, 1997).

Xiaohe and Whyte (1990) explained that *yuan* describes people's attitudes and people's intentions regarding their relationships with others, and it helps people to recognise the relational depth and length of time spent with their different relational partners, and it helps to judge the quality of their relationships with others or with some objects. *Yuan Fen* is represented by precious opportunities to meet others and build relationships with others, so most people are likely to cherish their opportunities (Yang and Ho, 1988). The secret that people have *Yuan Fen* to keep their relationship ties could be the sense of mystery, charm, and wonder, which makes them feel satisfied with their relationships, and both parties fulfil their expectations in the relationship.

5.4.2.1.2 Qing (emotion of love)

Eifring (2004) suggested that there are two ways to express different *Qing*: One is represented in the mythological domain by the Taoist saint and the Buddhist monk. People become attached to this emotion and are able to look through the vanity of their attachment. The other way to express *Qing* originated in the late Ming dynasty literature (such as the Peony Pavilion) and the Ming dynasty, and the *Qing* has a narrow meaning of love, desire, passion, mood, and spirit.

5.4.2.1.3 Jen (Humanism)

One influential principle in Confucianism is *Jen* (humanism), which means warm human feelings between people (Yum 1988). *Jen* is closely related to the concept of reciprocity. Jiyu (1988) suggested that *Jen* is reciprocity, which in turn means to know how it would feel to be the other person, to become like-hearted, and to be able to empathise with others. *Jen* is a life-giving and life-sustaining force.

5.4.2.1.4 Ai (love)

The other principle in Confucianism is *Ai* meaning love, faithfulness, and loyalty. Yum (1987b) noted that *Ai* is described as a long-term, obligatory interpersonal relationship, and constitutes the social binding rules where both parties understand that *Ai* binds them for the common good.

5.4.2.1.5 Conclusion of Eastern (China) love

Those four main definitions of Chinese love are all originally from culture (spirituality, literature, religion). The four love definitions highlight the interdependency in relationships since people in close relationships are intertwined and interconnected with each other. The four definitions influence the wide range of variables that are important in close relational harmony. The four definitions of love encourage people to cherish their connections with close others and to protect themselves and others in their relationships.

5.4.2.2 Love history -Western

The Western concept of love developed in the twelfth century and the history of romantic love starts from Plato's study (385 BCE) two and a half thousand years ago (Ryff and Singer, 1996; Secomb, 2007). Plato (385 BCE) suggested that love is selfish and egotistical, that the love of another is only because of the benefits or advantages that might profit the lover. Love is conditional, in that we cannot love someone for himself/herself, but instead, we love the features of goodness and beauty that the person represents which is an embodiment of what we want. Another influential Western love theory is from Freud (1910), who suggested that the love process is narcissistic, which binds the state of loving to one of narcissism. Kristeva (1986) noted that Freud's love theory suggests that the human love relationship is not built on Eros, instead, it is one's narcissistic primacy that stimulates and dominates one's inner, mental, and psychic life. Table 5.4 illustrates different types of love in Western

Table 5.4 different types of love in Western

Main concept of love in Western	Features
Plato (385 BCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Love is selfish and egotistical• Love is conditional
Freud (1910)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Love is narcissistic• Narcissistic stimulates and dominates people's inner, mental and psychic life.
Christian love	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-love is basic human emotion• Love is the balance between self-regard and other-regard

Courtly love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devotion, courage, humility and willingness to protect weak and helpless • Represent the certain liberation of individual
--------------	--

5.4.2.2.1 Love influenced by Christianity

Christianity has been one of the main religions in Western society for about 2,000 years ago, and it has been tied up with Europe and European-derived civilisation overseas (European Christian civilisation), and it is also prevalent in North America. Stoeffler (1973) noted that Christianity is idealistic because it embraces the whole society and people, and Christianity is a human product that is a mere part of human culture.

Hallett (1995) suggested Christianity as influencing love from three perspectives: 1) self-regard; 2) parity; and 3) other-regard. Based on the three elements of Christian love, the balance between self-regard and other-regard are required. Christian love requires the individual to balance the love of themselves, their relatives and reciprocal altruism relationships, and to treat other nonfamily groups with equal regard to their own loved ones (Janssens, 1977; Browning, 1992). Since the basis of Christian love is self-regard or self-love, the self-love is explained as “man must be instructed in a way of loving: he must be taught how to love himself to advantage.” (O’Donovan, 2006, pg.26). Nygren (1937) noted that even though self-love is specified as a fundamental human emotion, self-love is a natural love, and it serves as a basic instinct for self-protection. Self-love equates to self-fulfillment, and self-love has the duty of independence.

5.4.2.2.2 Love influenced by courtly love

The love in the Western world is not only influenced by Christianity it is also influenced by courtly love, a European literary conception of love that focused on nobility and chivalry.

Tristan and Iseult and *Romeo and Juliet*, are two stories that are representative of courtly love. They are preoccupied with treachery, suffering, and there is death at the end. Courtly love maintains the traditional virtues of devotion and courage and added more other features, for example, courtesy,

humility, and a willingness to protect the weak and helpless (Denis de Rougemont, 1956). Medieval literature is filled with examples of knights setting out on adventures and performing various services for ladies because of their courtly love. Courtly love was a transferred service and highlighted the devotion of a noble lord to the service and devotion to the lady, and the knightly virtue of courage in battle was transmuted into a display of heroism and moral worth in the quest for love (Smelser, 1998). Schultz (2006) suggested that courtly love has influenced European's love model for centuries and was a love pattern of fascination to contemporaries. Courtly love is a milestone in European thinking about the idolatrous passions of the heart and the pleasure of the body, and it represents the certain liberation of the individual to choose his or her lovers and to pursue pleasure for, in an important sense, courtly love is the love of courtliness.

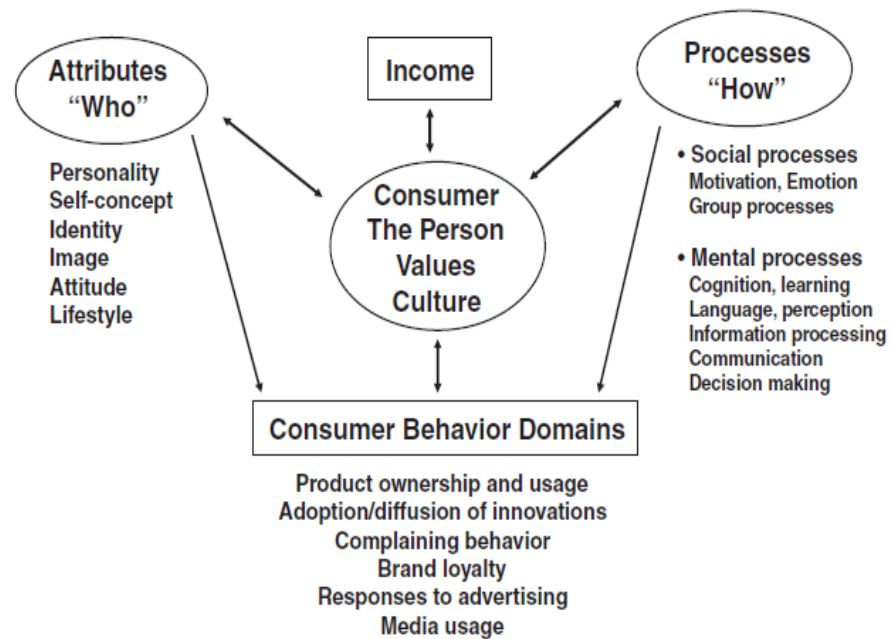
5.4.2.3 Conclusion of Western love

Western love theories and concepts suggest that people are independent and unique. Western love theories encourage people to have their sense of personal identity in close relationships and to clearly understand their goals and values as individuals and in close relationships. Western love theories and concepts encourage people to take responsibility for their happiness and sorrow.

5.4.3 Culture and Consumer Behaviour

Manrai and Manrai (1996) proposed a framework of cross-cultural consumer behaviour (Figure 5.2 cross-cultural consumer behaviour framework). They mentioned that the "attributes" component of the framework (Figure 5.2) is related to an individual's traits and self-concept about the kind of person the person is, and the "process" component of the framework is related to an individual's motivation, cognition, and emotions about how they can achieve their goals. The attributes and process are influenced by culture, and consumers' attributes and goals that are influenced by culture have an impact on their consumption.

Figure 5. 2 Cross-cultural consumer behaviour (Manrai and Manrai, 1996)



Markus and Kitayama (1991) compared the independent and interdependent self in relation to others. Individuals' self-concept is obtained from their relationships with close others and their social groups, and they individually define themselves according to their relationships with their cultures. Neisser (1998) noticed that the concept of self is the individual interpreting, understanding what they are now, what they are motivated to do, what their goals are, and whom they want to be. The concept of self is not a particular part of the individual. It is the entire person that behaves, thinks, and acts from some points of view. How individual acts and thinks is affected by his/her sociocultural circumstances. Higgins (1997) suggested that an individual's development and extension tends to achieve two goals: one is to fulfill the need for growth and nurturing, and the other is to fulfill the need for safety and security. Markus and Kitayama's (1991) culture and self theory demonstrates two culture models that fit the individual's need, as the interdependent culture of self is mainly seeking safety and security among their social-group, while the independent culture of self is mainly seeking the individual's growth and nurturing (Figure 5.3 conceptual representations of the self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).

Figure 5.3 Conceptual representations of the self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991)

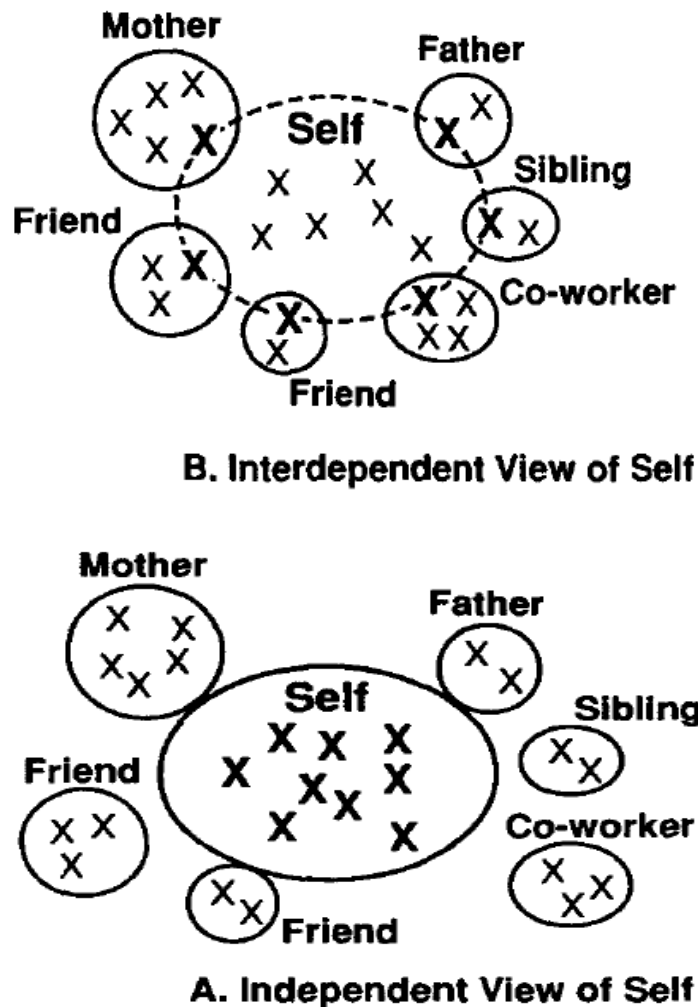


Figure 5.3 demonstrates that both the independent self and the interdependent self-constructed self-concept is influenced by this social group and an individual's beliefs and values are both influenced by the social-cultural factor. Independent people self-construct themselves according to their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour rather than being dependent on others' thoughts and feelings. More importantly, independent culture accepts, supports, and cultivates the individual to behave and think independently (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Interdependent people self-construct themselves according to their cultural code to be responsive to their social-group (Fiske and Tylor, 2013). The interdependent self is encouraged to fit in with others, and fulfill their responsibilities and develop their obligations. An individual is not complete if

they are separated from the social group and cannot be fully understood (Schwede et al., 1984).

Both the independent culture self and interdependent culture self are cultivated and influenced by the social-cultural factor. Individuals define themselves as supported and influenced by their social environment. Taylor and Kim (2007) suggested that the way individuals treat relationships between themselves and others reflect whether or not they apply social support to deal with stress. In terms of the independent view of self, a person behaves in relation to one's internal thoughts and action, and he/she is motivated by the environment that can develop and express their internal attributes and he/she self-defining. The interdependent view of self is firmly connected and intertwined with others, and the interdependent self is responsive to the needs of his/her social-group as an objective moral obligation they have to fulfill (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Miller, 2002).

The way that individuals accept and define themselves is influenced by how others identify them, what their perspectives are, and what their empathic concerns for others are (Reynolds, 1984). An individual's behaviour, acts, and feelings is closely related to their social influences, social acceptance, responsibilities, and obligations (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Thoits, 1995; Said, 2012; Tuner, 1991; Wentzel, 1994). Social influence is an essential factor because an individual's behaviour and feelings are shaped by their in-groups (Schneider, 1989). Rashotte (2007) defined social influence as a "change in an individual's attitude or behaviour that results from the interactions with others or social group." (p.10). Consumers' consumption behaviour and attitudes are affected by their social groups, and social influence is one of the main factors. Carpenter and Moore (2002) noted that consumers' intense and continuous intergenerational impacts on brand consumption are because of their behaviour and attitudes, which are influenced by others through their social interconnections.

Two dimensions organise social influence: firstly, individuals act and behave by interpreting others' behaviour and acts (Bikhchandani et al., 1998), and individuals would like to follow their social groups as their model or standard of personal values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms (Park and Lessing, 1977).

Secondly, an individual's behaviour, values, and attitudes are affected by their social observational learning, and their cognitive learning, through their interactions with others and observations of others, and making their own decisions (Brandura, 1977; Foster and Rosenzweig, 1995).

Social groups encourage individuals to share and receive both intangible and tangible resources, perspectives, and identities with others in the same group so that individuals could have others to share their burdens and happiness with (Leary and Baumeister, 1995; DeWall and Bushman, 2011). Social acceptance means that others have the desire to include individuals in their groups and relationships, because of their behaviour, or acts, or attitude or values, which are accepted by social groups (Leary, 2010). Social acceptance is the need to belong in social groups or relationships, and it exists in all cultures. Individuals' behaviour, values, and attitudes are cultivated by the interaction between individuals and their social groups, and this is not only a way to be recognised and understood by others in the same groups, it's also a way to differentiate oneself from the others in other groups (Epstein, 1992; Ryan, 1991; Trope and Liberman, 2000).

Responsibility sharing is intrinsic motivation and reciprocity that includes both giving and receiving (Radin, 1996; Belk, 2007). Individuals' responsibility are influenced by their sense of belongingness to their social groups and relationships, and responsibility is derived from the social connections of individuals' culture (Taylor and Brown, 1991, Young, 2006), individuals' achievement motivation are closely linked to their sense of belongingness (Goodenow, 1993). Individuals' responsibility are intertwined with their achievement motives (Engel et al., 1997). Consumers' pursuit of their responsibilities represents their desire, and they perceive their ability to meet the formal social demand (Wentzel, 1991). Individuals whom are influenced by an independent culture are responsible for their behaviour and attitudes first and would make comparisons with the way others do things. Individuals whom are influenced by interdependent culture are likely to share responsibilities with others in the same social groups (Fiske, 1989; Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Moreover, individuals all have responsibilities by virtue of their social roles or positions, whether they are from independent or interdependent cultures

(Osterman, 2000; Young, 2006). Individuals' responsibilities are acquired from their sense of belonging to social groups that individuals can obtain benefits from (Young, 2006).

An obligation involves duties and commitments to close others or social groups (Deci, 1985). Obligation reflects individuals' interpretations and expression of what they need to do and what they are expected to do in their social group (Gellatly et al., 2006). Individuals are motivated to positively respond to their commitments and duties, the ones that their social groups require them to do (Gillbert, 1992). Obligation is binding and serves as a kind of "glue" in relationships, this exists in all social groups and relationships (Williams, 2004). With respect to the interdependent culture of self, individuals more naturally experience a sense of obligation to remain and contribute to the well-being of the social groups than the independent culture of self does (Felfe et al., 2006). Triandis (1995) noted that obligation is an essential and vital social behaviour in both independent and interdependent cultures.

5.4.4 Conclusion of culture and consumer behaviour

This section demonstrates the mainstreams of cross-cultural theories applied in consumer behaviour.

The independent culture of self is focused on personal autonomy and self-fulfillment, and their identity, which is based on their accomplishments (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). In the independent culture, the social acceptance, influences, expectations, and obligations are centralised on personal uniqueness, personal control, responsibility for their behaviour and attitudes, and their unique personal attitudes (Hsu, 1983; Markus and Kitayama, 1991, Triandis, 1995). Independent self take relationships serve as essential sources of well-being and life satisfaction, and independent self-needs relationships are able to achieve their self-relevant goals (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman, 1993). The interdependent culture of self is focused on common goals and shared values, as mutual obligations and expectations are anticipated and required (Schwartz, 1990; Triandis, 1995). An individual in an interdependent culture is a part of the social group (Kim, 1994; Triandis, 1995).

Reed (2004) mentioned that consumers are attracted to brands that are connected to their actual and desired social perspectives and identities. Consumers form brand relationships by verifying their self-definition, and the brand relationships they formed normally represent their thoughts and feelings about themselves (Rosenberg et al., 1995). Individuals construct their brand relationships and assess the meanings of the brands from their cultural perspectives in terms of meaning (McCracken, 1993). Fournier (1998) suggested that individuals value utilitarian, symbolic and psychological benefits of brands not only because brands fulfill their needs in life but also because brands cultivate and express their self-concept. Self-expression is an important motive to help consumers construct their brands' relationships (Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998). Independent culture of self and interdependent culture of self are both affected by their different social-cultural norms, values, and attitudes (Aaker, 1999), and individuals in different cultures would like to organise their brand relationships to follow their cultural norms, fulfill their obligations, responsibilities, and be accepted by their cultures (Fournier, 1998; Josiassen, 2011; McQuarrie and Mick, 1996).

5.5 Research Model

This thesis applies the constructivist model to interpret consumer's experience in order to understand their brand love relationships. As constructivism is about how people construct their understanding and knowledge of the world, through their experiences and are reflected on their experiences. Consumers are motivated to engage in different forms of brand love relationships because their different experience influence them.

Literature review chapters (chapter 2, chapter3, chapter4, and chapter 5) provide the theoretical background of this thesis and support the research model from four theoretical perspectives. Following chapter addresses the conclusions of the literature review and theoretical framework of this thesis.

Chapter 6 Conclusions of the Literature Review

6.1 Introduction

Previous chapter commences by examining the cultural factor as the influential factor through the concept of brand and consumer brand relationship. This chapter concludes four chapters of literature review of this research and proposed the potential theoretical framework of this research. Four main theoretical concepts construct the potential theoretical framework for this thesis. This section reveals the four theoretical concepts and joins them together as the theoretical framework. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the potential theoretical framework of this thesis.

6.1.1 Conceptualisation of Interpersonal Love Relationship

The current literature examines brand love as analogous to interpersonal love from three perspectives:

1. Behaviour perspectives of love: Thompson et al., (2005) applied the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1965);
2. Emotional perspectives of love: Shimp and Madden (1986) applied Sternberg's theory (1986); and Whang et al., (2004) applied Lee's theory (1977)
3. Cognition perspectives of love: Fournier (1998); Ahuvia (1993; 2005) applied Hatfield and Rapson's (1993) compassionate and passionate love theory.

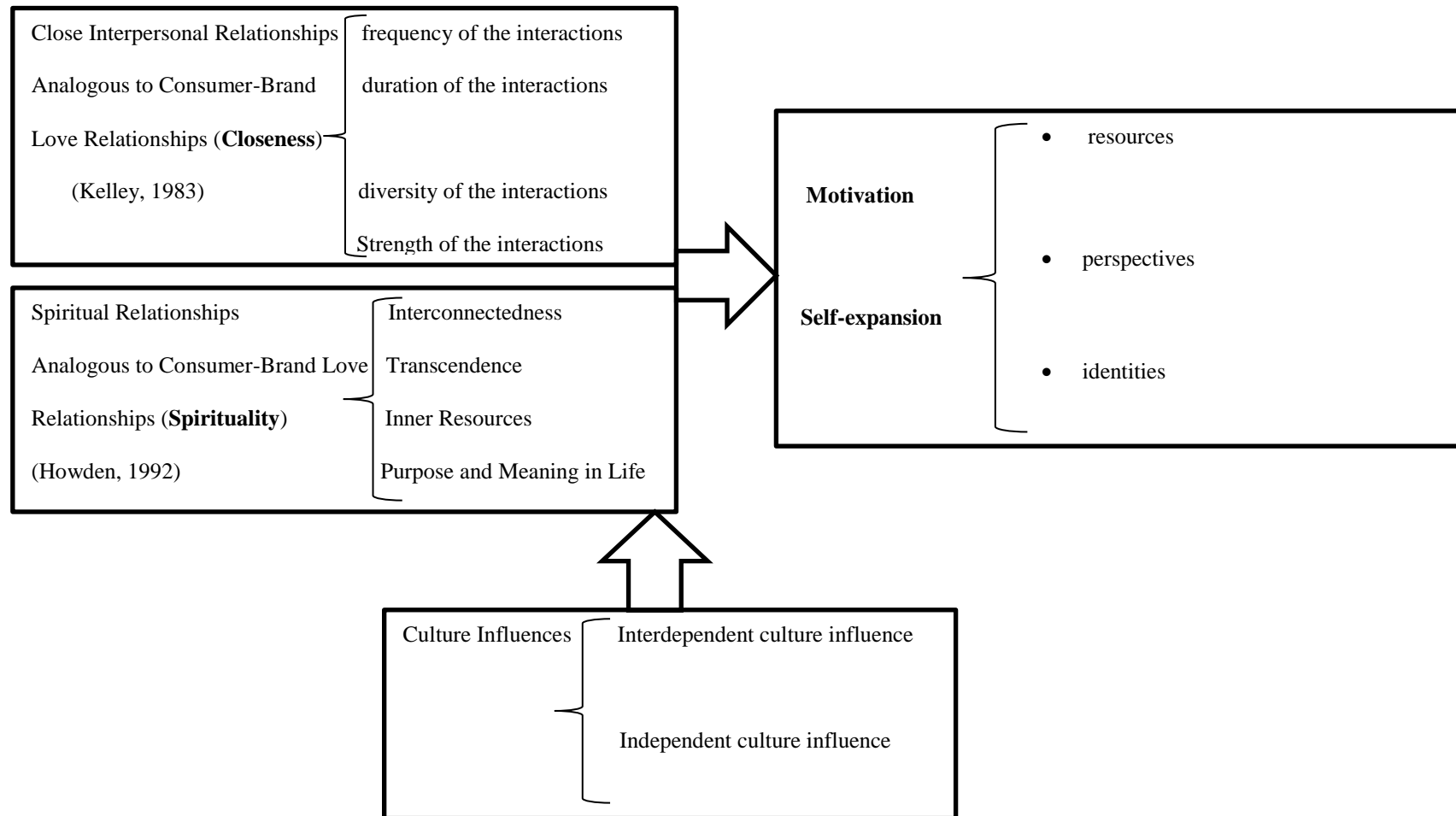
There is a lack of research on brand love from motivational perspectives. Aron and Aron (1991) suggested that love is a motive since individuals develop and maintain closeness with specific people. Concurrently, the researcher applies Kelley's (1983) close relationship theory to this study. Kelley's (1983) close relationship theory is the one that described love as closeness through the qualities of the interactions. The four features of the interactions in interpersonal love relationships, specifically, 1) the frequency of the interactions, 2) the duration of the interactions, 3) the diversity of the interactions, and 4) The strength of the interactions (Kelley, 1983) reveal the closeness of the relationship.

James (2013) mentioned that in close relationships, people differentiate self and others psychologically, mentally, and physically throughout their interactions, and their interactions are the essential ways that people develop and maintain their close relationships (Kelley, 1983). Individuals understand and interpret their self-concept through their interactions with others, and they engage in close relationships because their close others enhance their sense of personal growth (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). Individuals' self-enhancement is improved and developed by their interaction with their close others, and interactions between individuals in close relationships are the way that they understand themselves as their positive self (Swann et al., 1987).

In close relationships, people consciously or unconsciously give and receive in order to maintain their relationships, Hinde (1979) and Kelley (1983) mentioned the giving and receiving in close relationships have to be processed through interactions. McClintock (1983) noted the "closeness" is suitable for all close relationships, such as friendship, parents and children, colleagues, and romance. Meanwhile, frequent, diverse, long-term, and strong interactions in relationships enhance the "closeness" between individuals and their relationship partners (Kelley, 1983; McClintock, 1983).

This thesis applies Kelley's (1983) close relationships theory to brand love relationships, since the concept of "love" in brand love relationships in this thesis is expressed through "closeness" in relation to the close relationship theory. Meanwhile, individuals express their closeness with their relationship partners through four features of interactions. The conceptualisation of close relationships in this thesis is shown in *Figure 6.1*.

Figure 6. 1 Potential theoretical framework of consumer-brand love relationships



6.1.2 Conceptualisation of Spiritual Relationship

The current literature applied the concept of religion to brand love relationships and suggested that the brand love relationship is analogous to the religious relationship. The theories of religion are defined and identified as social institutional phenomena which are managed by unique beliefs, norms, and practices, and have a particular model and requirement for people in their social group (Thoresen, 1998). Therefore, researchers studied consumers in brand relationships as communities or groups, such as brand devotion (Pichler and Hemetsberger, 2007, 2012), brand sacralisation (Sarkar and Sarkar, 2012), and brand cult (Belk and Tumbat, 2005; Cova and Pace, 2006).

According to the literature review, there is a lack of research on brand love relationships which are analogous to spiritual relationships. At any rate, based on the literature review, spirituality might exist in brand love relationships. Caleb (2003) suggested that spirituality concerns relationships, the relationships between people, or people and nature, or people and the environment, or people and conditions or objects. Spirituality is concerned with circumstances or conditions that relate to an individual's transcendent experience, life meaning, and innerness (Harris and Thoresen, 2002; Howden, 1992). Meanwhile, a spiritual relationship is the process of acquiring insight about a relationship between the individuals' self and others, such as how individuals connect to nature, the environment, or objects with themselves, and their inner self.

This thesis applies Howden's theory (1983) to brand love relationships. Howden's theory (1992) suggested that there are four relational aspects of spirituality, to interpret and understand spirituality through relationships. First, *unifying interconnectedness* expresses the terms of harmony, as harmony with the individual self, harmony with related close others (Bukhardt, 1989). Second, *purpose and meaning in life* is an essential feature in everyone's life, it is a positive personal attitude and people would feel despair and stress if situations or objects lack meaning in their lives. Third, *inner strength* includes love, honesty, and trust and is built on the individual's abilities to give and receive love and forgiveness from others (Liehr, 1989; Stoll, 1979). Fourth, *transcendence* is beyond the presence of reality and helps an individual to be concerned about their future (Reed, 1991).

Howden's (1992) theory is the one that can most clearly elaborate on the features of spirituality in spiritual relationships, and consumers' brand love relationship might be analogous to their spiritual relationship. The conceptualisation of spiritual relationships in this thesis is shown in **Figure 6.1**.

6.1.3 Conceptualisation of Motivation

People are interested to know the cause of human behaviour and want to get the answers to the "why" behind every action and behaviour (Deci, 1975). In close relationships and spiritual relationships, obtaining and maintaining the relationships are the key themes of the human motivation, and are similar to the consumer-brand love relationships. (Leary and Baumeister, 2000; Deci, 1975; Kelley, 1983; Howden, 1992).

Deci and Ryan (2000) suggested that individuals who have an intrinsic motivation to do an activity for pleasure and satisfaction, are motivated to perform, to extend, to learn, and strive for the internal feeling of satisfaction. Individuals are motivated to engage in relationships or activities not only to satisfy their self-need but also to get rewards (tangible and intangible). Cameron et al., (2001) suggested that rewards intensify individuals' motivation and performance. Individuals would like to maintain and keep their relationships as long as they are challenging or fun, or if the satisfaction they receive is continuously or gradually provided (Hwang, 2005).

Love is regarded as a universal experience that is associated with motivation and behaviour (Jankowiak and Fischer, 1992; Tennov, 1979), and love is primarily a motivational system that guides to various behaviour. Love in every relationship involves self-expansion so that an individual might consciously or unconsciously obtain, appreciate and benefit from others' resources, perspectives, and other conditions or situations in their relationships (Aron and Aron, 1991; Shave et al., 1987). Self-expansion is one of the intrinsic motivation for people to explore, extend, learn, and grow, and is associated with pleasure and challenging activities, often with close friends, relatives, or families (Aron and Aron, 1996).

The motives people have, or the reason they are willing to develop and maintain relationships with others is that they are seeking meaning in their life.

In terms of seeking meaning in one's life, the biological motive is to satisfy the basic needs in life to survive, the social motive of finding meaning in life is to communicate and interact with others to acquire one's social and personal identity, and the psychological motive of finding meaning in one's life is to interact with others and with the world to enhance one's knowledge and insight (Berlyne, 1971; Maddi, 1970). The conceptualisation of motivation in this thesis is shown in *Figure 6.1*.

6.1.4 Conceptualisation of Culture and Consumer-Brand Love Relationships

McCracken (1990) suggested that culture is the lens that shapes how phenomena can be understood and comprehended, and culture is the phenomenon that conducts distinct different ways of life. Consumers' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour are cultivated and influenced by one's social environment and close others (Weiss, 1974; Wright, 1974). This thesis applies the theory of culture and self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991) to a cross-cultural comparisons study. The participants include young New Zealand consumers from the University of Otago (New Zealand) and young Chinese consumers from the Yunnan University of Finance and Economics (China). New Zealand culture represents an independent culture in which people consider themselves as unique, and they believe people should be responsible for their behaviour and thoughts first, and then consider others. Chinese culture represents an interdependent culture, and people in this culture group consider themselves as a part of a social group, and they consider that they are intertwined and bonded with a social group. An individual's behaviour, acts, feelings and motives are closely related to social influences, social acceptances, responsibilities, and obligations (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Thoits, 1995; Tuner, 1991; Wentzel, 1994).

The concepts of love in China are defined and influenced by Chinese culture (religion, spirit, and literature). There are four concepts that influence Chinese love. First of all, there is *Jen* (from Confucianism, which suggested that in close relationships, people have to hold the spirit of reciprocity, to feel what others feel and to care about others). Second, there is *Ai* (from Confucianism, which suggested people have to follow bond rules in close relationships and for their

common good). Third, there is *YuanFen* (from Buddhism, which not only means people can become friends, lovers, parents, and children are their destiny, and some unknown universe arrange their destiny, it also illustrates that people should cherish their precious opportunities to know their close ones and should cherish their relationships with close ones). Fourth, there is *Qing* (originates from Chinese literature, and the meaning is attachment, passion, and desire in close relationships). The Chinese concepts of love stress interdependency in relationships and individuals in relationships are intertwined and interconnected with each other.

The concepts of love in the Western world are influenced by culture (literature, religion, and spirit). First, love in the Western world is influenced by Christianity that requires an individual to balance his/her self-regard and regard for the other in his/her relationships, so an individual has to learn how to love himself/herself first and then to love others. Secondly, love in the Western world is influenced by courtly love and originates from European literature's conception of love, which represents the certain liberation of an individual to choose his / her lovers and to pursue pleasure. Love in the Western world encourages individuals to be independent in their relationships. So, individuals are encouraged to love themselves first, and everyone should be responsible for their behaviour, acts, and thoughts in their relationships. The conceptualisation of culture in this thesis is shown in *Figure 6.1*.

6.2 Statement of Proportions

This research formed five propositions based on five chapters of literature review. The five propositions have been organised (based on the three correlated relationships) in this research as follows: brand relationships (chapter 2, chapter 3, chapter 4, and chapter 5), close relationships (Chapter 2), and spiritual relationships (Chapter 3); and one influential factor of relationships, namely, culture (Chapter 5).

The first proposition addresses whether the motives of consumer engaged in brand relationships is analogous to the motives of people engaged in close relationships. Brand love relationship's correlation or parallel to close relationships has received much attention in the literature. Similar to

relationships between people, consumers construct their self- concepts through their brand relationships. Consumers seek to expand themselves to accomplish their goals and life purpose, and the ways that consumers connect with brands might determine whether they are satisfied with their relationships with their favourite brands. The theory of close relationships has been applied in their proposition because if people are willing to maintain their close relationships, they would like to develop the qualities of their interaction (frequent, diverse, strong, and long-lasting interactions) with their loved brands.

Research proposition I: Consumers' engagement in relationship with brands is positively related to the close relationship dimensions of the frequency of interaction; the duration of interaction; the diversity of interaction; the strength of the interaction.

The second proposition address whether the motives of consumers engaged in brand relationships is analogous to the motive of people engaged in spiritual relationships. This is since spiritual relationships can provide a source of comfort, healing energy and strength to people, and the motives that people ascribe to spiritual relationships because their motives are in alignment with their values, and beliefs, hence they contribute meaning to their lives. This proposition proposes that consumers perceive brand love relationships as equivalent to spiritual relationships that can provide desirable resources, desirable perspectives, and desirable identities to them and help them accomplish self-expansion.

Research proposition II: Consumers engaged in relationships with brands are positively related to the spiritual relationship dimension of Unifying interconnectedness; transcendence experience; innerness or inner resources; purpose and meaning in life

The third proposition investigates whether consumer brand love relationship is analogous to both close interpersonal relationships and spiritual relationships, except they deliver different features to fulfill consumers' needs. The features of consumer brand love relationship as they relate to a close relationship can be identified and are distinct from the features of consumer brand love relationship and spiritual relationship, in Western culture.

Research proposition III: Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Western culture.

The fourth proposition address whether consumer brand love relationship is analogous to both close interpersonal relationships and spiritual relationships, except they deliver different features to fulfill consumers' needs. The features of consumer brand love relationships compared with close relationships can be identified and are distinct from the features of consumer brand love relationship and spiritual relationships, in Eastern culture.

Research proposition IV: Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Eastern culture.

The fifth proposition has compared brand love relationships in New Zealand culture and Chinese culture, The reason to compare consumers' brand love relationships in the two-culture context is the existing research on the consumer-brand love relationship was merely focused on America (for example, regarding the study by Fournier, 1998, her research samples were collected from American families); Ahuvia (2005; 2006) his research samples were collected from American adults; Whang et al., (2004) their samples were collected from American male bikers and so forth, and with respect to the research on a few cross-culture brand relationships, it seems they compared the same culture (independent culture) with two or three countries (e.g. Albert et al., 2007 compared the American samples and French samples). This proposition applied the culture and self theory (Markus and Kitayama, 1991), as this theory concentrates on the relationship between self and others in two different cultural contexts, the interdependent culture, and independent culture.

After China's open-door policy was introduced in 1978, Chinese consumption has become so great that the country has become one of the most important markets in the world. Chinese consumer's brand love relationships are of high significance and need to be developed. It is worth conducting more research on cross-cultural comparisons comparing an independent culture and

an interdependent culture, or an independent and an interdependent culture with a two or more countries comparison.

Merton and Kitt (1950) defined that individuals' behaviour, value, and belief are cultivated and influenced by his/ her group. Individuals would like to behave in reference to the group he/she can be accepted over a life-long tie period. An individual's attitudes, values, and norms are formed by his or her in-group (Kelley, 1947; 1991). Meanwhile, family influences are essential to individuals, especially during their childhood and youth. Nuclear families and extended families are two types of families that influence individuals differently. The nuclear family includes the husband and wife and their kids, and the extended family includes the grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, and kids if they all live together (Childers and Rao, 1992). The influences and interactions in the nuclear family are only between the parents and their children, so the children are interacting with their parents directly and frequently. For the individual who grew up in a nuclear family, most of his or her consumption values and behaviour were inherited from his or her family. For the individual who grew up in an extended family, he or she would be influenced by multiple sources, and interact with and interpret more information than the individual who grew up in a nuclear family.

Research proposition V: Young New Zealand consumers and young Chinese consumers are have different experiences in their brand love relationships could thus be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter summarises the literature review from four theoretical perspectives and conceptualises the critical terms in the theoretical framework. According to the literature review, the closeness of love relationships can be examined from the perspective of motivation in terms of four features. These features include 1) Frequency of the interactions, 2) Duration of the interactions, 3) Diversity of the interactions, and 4) Strength of the interactions. The four features can also be found in consumer- brand love relationships. According to the literature review, there is a lack of study on brand love relationships analogous to spiritual

relationships. Spirituality of brand love relationships can be examined from the perspective of motivation in terms of four features. These features include: 1) unifying interconnectedness, 2) inner strength, 3) Purpose and meaning in life, 4) transcendence. Culture is one influential factor that might influence consumers in different cultures. This chapter provides the theoretical framework of this thesis and supports the research questions proposed in Chapter 1. The following chapter addresses the methodology for this thesis.

Chapter 7 Research Methodology

7.1 The context: New Zealand and China

This chapter outlines the research philosophy adopted and the methodological choices made in this thesis. The participants for this thesis included university students from two universities, –the University of Otago in New Zealand and Yunnan University of Finance and Economics in China. These two universities offered opportunities for the researcher to collect data from the students. This thesis has conducted a cross-cultural comparisons study with respondents' between 18 and 25 years of age. The researcher collected data from students attending the University of Otago (New Zealand) first, and then from students attending the Yunnan University of Finance and Economics (China). The context of Dunedin and Kunming are delineated as part of the research background.

The reason to choose New Zealand consumers and Chinese consumers for this study is because New Zealand and China are both located in the Asian-Pacific region, and so the people in the two countries have frequent and long-term business relationships. New Zealand is known as Western culture (Shi, 2001) - New Zealand was colonised by Britain during the middle of the nineteenth century, and Britain has influenced New Zealand's culture since then. China is known as Eastern culture, and Eastern culture can be distinguished from Western culture from the perspective of personal values and social values (Naisbitt, 1996).

7.2 Paradigm

Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals and organisations and how they select and use products, brands, or services, and it is mainly concerned with motivation, psychology, and behaviour. The process to interpret consumer behaviour is to understand how consumers think and feel about different alternatives, the behaviour of consumers while researching and shopping, how environment influences consumers' behaviour, and how consumers reason and select between different alternatives. In general, researches of consumer behaviour are mainly considered three factors: personal factors (an individual's interests and opinions), psychological factors (an individual's perceptions and

attitudes), and social factors (an individual's social class, income, and education level).

According to Kuhn (1970), Reichardt and Cook (1979), Lincoln and Guba (2000), and Neuman (2011) there are two major theoretical perspectives have dominated the social science: one is the quantitative paradigm that has a positivistic, objective, and natural science worldview. Another one is the qualitative paradigm that is a phenomenological, inductive, holistic, subjective, and social anthropological worldview. *Table 7.1 Characteristics of Positivist and interpretivist Paradigms* (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002 pp.44-45) shows the differences between two research paradigms.

Table 7.1 Characteristics of positivist and interpretivist paradigms

Positivist	Paradigm	Interpretivist
Reality is independent of human perception	Ontology	Multiple realities and multiple truths/reality are socially constructed and constantly changing
Investigator and investigated are independent entities	Epistemology	Researcher and object are interactively linked/findings are mutually created within the context of the situation, which shapes the inquiry.
Quantitative	Method	Qualitative
To measure and analyse causal relationships between variables within a value-free framework	Goal	Stress is on process and meaning
Randomizations, blinding, highly structured protocols, and written or orally administered questionnaires with a limited range of predetermined responses.	Techniques	In depth and focus group interviews and participants observation
Larger than qualitative sample/representative	Sample Size	Small/purposeful/respondents with important information/not meant to be representative

The paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guide the action. Each of the paradigms is structured and organised by three dimensions, *ontology*, or the

nature of reality that researchers investigate; *epistemology*, or the way that researchers acquire knowledge; *methodology*, the processes or the techniques that researchers apply and is helpful in answering the research questions and objectives of the current study (Creswell, 2007; Guba and Lincoln (1994; Healy and Perry, 2000).

This research applies the interpretivist paradigm, the intention of interpretivist is to understand the human experience, and interpret that “the reality is socially constructed” (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Merten, 2005). Interpretivist paradigm assists researchers studying the world by interpreting the understanding of individuals. Researchers apply interpretive paradigm to approach the reality from subjects and collect data from respondents own experience and are of a particular group or culture.

The focus of this thesis is on the phenomena of how consumers form and maintain their love relationships with brands based on respondents’ experience. The interpretivist paradigm is to interpret an individual’s experience, so the issues or concerns of an individual’s experience have to access through the ‘dialectic’ of the interaction, analysis, and reiteration in order to get the results, findings or outcomes.

The structure of the interpretive paradigm of this thesis is listed in Table 7.2

Table 7.2 Research Paradigm of this thesis

Interpretive Paradigm	Features	Descriptions
	Ontology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret consumers’ brand love relationships through their interactions with close ones in close relationships, and their meaningful actions in their relationships. • Understand how consumers’ relationships through their life experience, by including their knowledge, values, and the interpretations of their live.
	Epistemology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers’ behaviour are constructed by their experiences of real life or natural setting. • In-depth interviews are an effective interactive way to acquire knowledge from consumers.

	Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the reasons for the phenomena, that consumers maintain their brand love relationships through their life experience. • The phenomenology not only analyses the object itself, it also examines the presence of the object for the experience, and it usually contains many of the phenomenal meanings that are related to the one object.
	The purpose to apply the interpretive paradigm in this thesis is to understand and interpret consumers' behaviour related to the reasons and the motive for them to maintain their brand love relationships.	

7.2.1 Ontology

Ontology is the study of being and is concerned about the nature of reality. Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggested that it is all about understanding the real world and its existence and action. For qualitative research approach, discussions and propositions are concerned about the meaning of concepts and the definition of concepts. For the quantitative research approach, discussions and hypotheses are concerned about the issues of data and measurement, and researchers care more about the 'operationalisation' and 'measurement' of the concept (Gary and James, 2012).

Consumer brand love relationship has been constructed from different perspectives since the 1990s from interpersonal relationships, from the antecedents and consequences of brand love, and is based on the measurement scale of the brand love relationship. This thesis investigates whether the interpersonal relationship and the spiritual relationship could be two forms of brand love relationships that exist in or under some special conditions or some influential factors, and looks into the reasons that consumers maintain relationships with their favourite brands. The nature of interpretivist seeks the meaning that can be attributed to the experience of different people. This thesis intends to collect the different young consumers' brand experience, to understand their brand relationships.

7.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned about the way knowledge is acquired, and the relationships between researchers and things they studied, and how the researchers perceive the reality (Creswell, 2007; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The reasons to find out the relationship between the researcher and the respondents is because people are easily influenced by the process of being studied and the relationships with the researcher, which will cause the researcher, not to be able to be objective in terms of their research (Ritchie et al., 2013).

For the qualitative research approach, researchers more likely ground their decision in the literature or their specialised knowledge. For the quantitative research approach, researchers focus on the causality and generalisations data and facts, and they would like to reduce phenomena to the simplest elements. (Goodson and Philimore 2004; Ritchie et al., 2013).

This research applies the qualitative approach since it is focused on the details of the situation, a reality behind the details, and to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of consumer-brand relationships (Creswell, 2007; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). This thesis chose young consumers as the respondents, and the goal of this thesis is to understand the reasons that consumers maintain in their brand love relationships, through the respondents' life experience.

7.2.3 Methodology

This thesis applies phenomenology because respondents' feelings, perceptions, and life experience are paramount to this study, and this helps the researcher understand the respondents' brand love relationships. This study tends to understand consumers' brand love relationships through their life experience, and the reasons that consumer develop and maintain their brand love relationships. The inquiry questions of this thesis are constructs as 'what are the experience like' or 'which experience give you the feeling that you would like to maintain' as this approach attempts to understand and interpret the meanings of human experience as it is lived. This thesis applies phenomenology because the close relationships that are involved in human experience that includes values, attitudes, and perspectives that combine. Spiritual relationships involve

human experience with situations, conditions, or objects that give meaning to peoples' lives, and spiritual relationships and experience include beliefs, facilitate the meaning of life, values, and rituals combined.

There are two types of phenomenology, and the differences between the two phenomenologies are: Husserl's phenomenology is focused on understanding beings or the phenomena of human experience in the world and is looking for a valid interpretation of the texts or the truth of things, as foundationalism. Lavery (2003, pg. 22) "Hermeneutic phenomenology is focused on 'Dasein' that is the mode of being human or the situated meaning of a human in the world and is focused on the meaning that arises from the interpretive interaction between historically produced texts and the reader, as non-foundationalism".

This thesis applies Husserl's (1970) phenomenology instead of the hermeneutic phenomenology since Husserl's phenomenology refers to the wholeness of lived experience that belongs to the individual, and are composed of the phenomenon of consciousness (Giorgi, 1975). An individual's lived experience requires them to have awareness and consciousness to notice, and it is concluded as phenomena. As consumers describe their experiences with their loved brands, it then makes them aware of their love for their favourite brands, since nothing can be referred to without consciousness.

Secondly, Husserl (1970) suggested that the main characteristic of consciousness is intuition, which is the awareness of 'real objects' in daily life. Relationships between people, or people and situations or conditions, or brands and consumers are results from the accumulation of experience. Fournier (1998) mentioned that consumer's experience could reinforce their relationships with brands. Consumer's daily life experience with brands allows consumers to bond with brands. Collecting consumers' intuitions of their favourite brands in relation to their daily experience is the way to understand the consumer-brand relationships.

Thirdly, Husserl (1970) noted that phenomenology is not only to deliver the meaning of phenomenal it is also the meaning of the object precisely as given the focus. Consumer's experience are events that occur in response to stimulation and result from their participation in events (Schmitt, 1999).

Consumer's relationships included rational activities, emotional responses, and behavioural intentions, which all come from their daily experience. The phenomena that analysis is not only the object itself, but also the presence of the object for the experience, and it usually contains many phenomenal meanings with one object.

Fourthly, the in-depth interview was applied in this thesis, and respondents were allowed to talk about their own experience in their close relationships, spiritual relationships, and brand relationship in their own words. The respondents talked, and the responses were guided and inspired by the researcher as they related to the themes of this thesis.

7.3 Description of Research Sample

This section focuses on information about the respondents, as this thesis involves a cross-cultural study, and the respondents are from two different countries. The respondents might have different life experience, study experience, different understanding about relationships because of the influence of the different culture. Meanwhile, the respondents might have different motives to engage in their relationships because of the influence of the different culture.

This study adopted the life-history interview approach, and the quality of the respondents influences the quality of the data. Since the life history interview involves inviting respondents to portray their life story, life experience, and study experience, it always functioned with one opening question.

The reason to apply the life-history approach is to obtain the descriptions of their life and their world from the perspective of each of the respondents and to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena.

7.3.1 The process to acquire research data

The reason to understand the respondents' relationships through their life experience is the main concern of this thesis. The life-history interview approach focuses on individuals' experience and how they are applied within their relationships. In this thesis, the respondents provided oral evidence, written evidence, and/or material objects to verify their experiences. The

respondents' life experience are included both those completed and ongoing. The interview questions are comprised of semi-structured and open-ended questions. In total, 60 respondents were chosen among two universities students, who were between 18 years and 25 years of age. The interview time was between 25 minutes and 90 minutes.

The interview approach (life-history) of this thesis involves both the realist and the constructionist approach. The realist approach considered experience processes, such as their interactions with others, their mobility, and their self-related experience in their relationships. The constructionist approach focused on the respondents' ideas, identities, and narrative configurations in their relationships.

The researcher acquired data and information in connection with the respondents' behaviour, their attitudes, experience, and the values of their life story. While the respondents interpreted their everyday life and study subjectively, they concurrently generated their life and study situation directly by their thinking and behaviour. The interviews about the respondents' lives and study have deepened the understanding of how respondents develop and explore themselves in their relationships, how they extend their way of thinking in relationships, and how relationships complete their self-expansions.

7.3.2 The interview method

The in-depth interview is an effective qualitative approach to talk with people about their feelings, opinions, and experience. It is an excellent way to understand how an individual interprets the questions they have been asked. In this thesis, the respondents were able to choose the interview place they liked and felt comfortable with, and there were no potential distractions or pressure to talk about people or whom they had relationships with.

The in-depth interview is intended to combine the interview structure, so it is more flexible. This interview approach allows respondents to fully explore the questions based on the key topics and themes.

The researcher not only audio recorded the interview, the researcher also took field-notes after each interview. Both the transcripts and field-notes were helpful to the researcher to gain insights into how the respondents interpreted

and ordered their different relationships. The researcher asked the respondents to provide what they have experienced and what they believe, and the researcher was actively probing them about the connections and relationships they see between events, phenomena, and beliefs.

7.3.3 Characteristics of Respondents

A description of the characteristics of New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents is essential for the interpretation of the findings presented in the chapter.

7.3.3.1 Respondents' characters

In total, in the final analysis, the research includes the data from 60 respondents' (New Zealand: 23 respondents, Chinese: 37 respondents). The respondents were between 18 and 25 years of age, with a mean of 21.5 years of age.

The researcher realised that the data became repetitive after 60 respondents, and the data of 60 respondents were generally following the concept of saturation. The new data does not shed any further light for this thesis. Green and Thorogood (2009) mentioned that 'the experience of most qualitative researchers is that in interview studies little that is 'new' comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed 20 or so people'. Bertaux (1981) suggested that for all qualitative research, fifteen is the smallest acceptable sample, and Creswell (1998) mentioned that for the phenomenology method, five to twenty-five is the proper number. In this thesis, 23 New Zealand respondents and 37 Chinese respondents were included, and the sample size fits the requirements.

Gender: in regard to the Chinese 37 respondents, there were 26 female respondents and 11 male respondents. For the 23 New Zealand respondents, there were 19 female respondents and four male respondents.

Ethnicity: there were 4 Maori respondents and 19 Caucasian respondents with the New Zealand respondent group. In regard to the 37 Chinese respondents, there were all Han—Chinese. The respondents represented a broad range of academic majors, including commerce, engineering, information science, farming, arts, and humanities. The interview time ranged between 25minutes (minimum) and 90 minutes (maximum).

Education background: The sample of New Zealand students included 19 undergraduate students and four postgraduate students. The sample of Chinese students included 34 undergraduate students and three postgraduate students.

As all basic respondents' characters are listed in **Table7.3**

Table 7.3 Characteristics of respondents (New Zealand and Chinese)

	Number of respondents	Gender of respondents	Age of respondents	Education background
New Zealand respondents	23 Respondents	Female: 19 Male: 4	Age 18-25	Postgraduate students: 4 Undergraduate students: 19
Chinese respondents	37 Respondents	Female: 26 Male: 11	Age 18-25	Postgraduate students: 3 Undergraduate students: 34
Total	60 Respondents	Female: 45 Male: 15	Mean: 21.5	Postgraduate students: 7 Undergraduate students: 53

7.3.3.2 Interview Place and interview time

The interview place was chosen as an environment that respondents were familiar with, such as their classroom, dorm, university grounds, library, and cafeteria. The reasons for choosing these places as the interview place, was because either the respondents were surrounded by their favorite things, or where locations that helped the respondents to feel comfortable to talk about their life experience. This strategy follows Fournier's (1998) interview strategy: she went to respondents' homes to collect their life history experience, in order to obtain an understanding of the behavioural phenomena at the level of the lived experience, and with the forms of the phenomenological interview. Since one of the research questions explores how consumers understand their brand love relationships, the respondents' life attitude and life experience, and how they may have been influenced by initial decisions made at these times or places represented essential input commentary and observations.

Whether the interview places were at the library, or in a classroom, dorm, cafeteria, or playground, the interviews were designed to deliver up to two complementary types of information as follows:

1. Respondents' life experience related to their relationships (including past experience, current situations, and future plans).
2. Respondents' brand usage experience and history.

The brands in this thesis refer to durable goods, nondurable goods, packaged goods, unpackaged goods, food, clothing, stores, and services, which respondents believe they have attachments to and have close relationships with.

With respect to the interview time, the New Zealand interview process was undertaken in Dunedin, from April 2017 to July 2017. The researcher interviewed 23 respondents from the University of Otago over three months, and the data from 23 respondents were included in the final analysis.

The respondents were recruited from Otago University Library, or the café, or the classroom. The researcher approached potential respondents and asked if they are university students and if they would be willing to take part in the research, and respondents who were willing to join the interview were notified that it would take around 25 to 90 minutes of their time (depending upon the different people's responses).

After completing the data collection and the transcription at the University of Otago, Dunedin, the researcher traveled to China on July 2017, and collected data from the Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, from July 2017 to September 2017. The researcher interviewed 37 respondents from Yunnan University of Finance and Economics over three months, and the data from the 37 respondents were included in the final analysis.

At the point, whereas the data had been collected from the 23 New Zealand respondents and the 37 respondents from China, in the final analysis, the new data was no longer bringing additional insights to the research questions. There was no 'new' information that came to light, to support the research after the researcher had interviewed 20 New Zealand respondents and 30 Chinese respondents. So, all in all, interviewing the 23 New Zealand respondents and 37 Chinese respondents for this thesis achieved the concept of saturation.

7.3.3.3 Number of respondents

This thesis applied the in-depth interview with 60 university students, including 23 New Zealand respondents and 37 Chinese respondents. The reasons to have a large number of respondents in this thesis are as follows: 1) Griffin and Hauser (1993) noted 20 to 30 in-depth interviews are necessary to uncover 90 to 95% of all customer needs. 2) 60 respondents would provide a reasonable starting point. 3). Since this thesis involves cross-cultural comparisons, respondents might have varied perceptions or decisions or opinions about their relationships.

7.3.3.4 Reasons to interview young respondents

The age of the respondents who participated in this study was between 18 and 25 years of age. The interview subject was about the relationships that surrounded the respondents all most every day, such as, people and possessions that the respondents loved including circumstances, and situations they were involved with that gave meaning to their lives. Before each interview, the researcher explained the primary purpose of this study to the respondents, and the researcher explained the interview questions, in order to make sure each of the respondents understood how to answer the questions clearly and distinctly.

The reason the researcher choose young consumers (university students) as respondents is because young consumers are an emerging age group who have both economic autonomy and the power to make independent decisions. All of the respondents for this thesis are full-time students, and some of them (3 Chinese respondents and 7 New Zealand respondents claimed they had part-time jobs) are had a part-time jobs.

Young consumers have become an emerging critical consumer segment for various brands, not only because of their significant purchasing power but also because of their future purchasing power. University students have been characterised as trendsetters since they are media and internet savvy, and because they have the potential to become lifetime consumers. Young consumers are demanding and tend to make more purchases, compared with their parents. Young consumers have unique values and attitudes towards brands, their strong brand consciousness, and marketing know-how have been cultivated by a marketing and brand saturated environment (Novak et al., 2006).

Furthermore, most young consumers consider their brand relationships as self-extension opportunities. (Novak et al., 2006).

The research data was collected from two different cultures. The young New Zealand consumers are influenced by their independent culture, and the young Chinese consumers are influenced by their interdependent culture. They have different values, beliefs, and behaviour because of the influence of their different cultures. Meriac et al., (2010) mentioned that people of the same age from the culture would like to share life experience that cause them to develop similar attitudes, values, and beliefs. An individual's self-concept is influenced by his/her culture and noticeable events they have experienced during their formative years, and they have also been influenced and shaped by their friends and by their parents.

Young New Zealand consumers (or Millennials) are, in general, conscious about the market and their consumption choices. Young New Zealand adults, in general, are not easily influenced by others in their consumption choices. New Zealand consumers have been brought up in an individualistic culture, and they tend to have an internal focus of control, and in terms of their relationships, they would like to expand their personal preferences and personal attitude first.

Young Chinese consumers (or Millennials) have grown up in a different economic environment compared with their parents. After the economic reform that took place in 1978, the structure of all of the Chinese consumer markets changed rapidly, so the uniform market and the limited choice of brands and products have all changed. The consumption culture and people's lifestyles had rapidly changed since the economic reform in 1978. Three sets of value influence Chinese consumers: 1) one is the collectivistic value that addresses the common benefits or even personal sacrifice; 2) the other is Confucian values that mandates saving up for long-term needs, and 3). personal value that is represented by the search for life meaning. Young Chinese consumers are able to engage more with mass media to research information and knowledge, so they understand how to look for what they want and what they consider is good and will work well for them.

7.4 Data Collection

This section demonstrates the research data collection process. The purpose and aims of this thesis are stated, and as well as the ethical considerations of the research. The second part of this section includes information about the recording of the data and the field notes, to interpret how the field notes for this thesis were organised and one example of the field notes is given in the text.

7.4.1 Stated Purpose of the Research

At the beginning of each interview, the respondents were told that the researcher is a Ph.D. student at the University of Otago, conducting the research for her Ph.D. study that seeks the answers about how young consumers maintain their brand love relationships. The respondents were notified that the interview would be divided into three parts as follows: 1) the first part is relevant to the respondent's close relationships, 2) the second part is related to the respondent's spiritual relationships, and 3). the last part is about the respondent's brand relationships.

The researcher aims involved 1) comparing whether respondents' brand love relationships are analogous to their close relationships and their spiritual relationships, and 2) understanding the reasons that respondents maintain their brand love relationships. Furthermore, 3). the researcher aimed to find out whether culture is one of the influential factors in brand love relationships.

7.4.2 Ethical Considerations

In compliance with University of Otago's research policy ethical approval for this thesis, it was obtained through the Department of Marketing, University of Otago, ethical approval level A. The ethical approval confirming letter is attached as **Appendix I**. The respondents were notified that their participation was completely voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the interview at any stage if they wished to do so. The respondents were provided with the consent and signed the consent before the interview. The consent was to inform the respondents about the purpose and aims of this thesis, and the respondents were freely given the decision about whether or not to attend the interview, where and when to participate in the interview. The respondents were notified and fully understood at the time the appointment of the interview was scheduled,

that the questions involved their close relationships, their spiritual relationships, and that there would be questions about their brand relationships. The privacy and anonymity of each respondent were assured, and each respondent signed the consent before the interview, and agreed to attend the interview and participate in the research under the terms that they fully understood.

7.4.3 Interview Questions

The interview questions were prepared as semi-structured interview questions. This thesis applied phenomenology to investigate consumers' life experience and brand usage experience in order to find out how they maintain their relationships through their experiences. Consumers might have different life experience because of their different environment, backgrounds, and cultures. The semi-structured questions approach is suitable for this thesis because it left the room and an opportunity for the respondents to explore and discuss the questions. The semi-structured questions approach allowed the respondents the freedom to express their views in their terms and raise issues or themes that the researcher might not have considered. The list of semi-structured questions that were asked is shown in *Table 7.3*

All of the interview questions were delivered to the respondents by the researcher verbally during the interview, and the interview questions were not shown to or read by respondents. Table 7.4 lists the interview questions that were applied and includes the reasons for asking each question, and the propositions that were tested by the question.

Table 7.4 Interview questions

Purpose of asking the question	Interview questions	Proposition(s) tested by the question
Make sure respondents understood the research purpose and were willing to attend the research	Question 1. The researcher introduces herself and the research objects to respondents and explained the research ethical to respondents. (The researcher required affirmative confirmations from the respondents to show that they were willing to attend their interview for this study and to ensure they understood their duties,	

	rights , and responsibilities in this study)	
Gain a deep understanding of how respondents experience and maintain their close relationships.	<p>Question 2. Can you please describe your close relationships? for example, your relationship with your family members, or your relationship with your relatives, or your relationship with your friends, or your relationship with your roommates</p> <p>Question 3. What things or experience makes you believe that a relationship(s) is important to you? Can you please give me some examples?</p> <p>(What comfort do you find in your close relationships? What are the main factors that comprise your close relationships) Those questions only came up if the respondents had no idea what to talk about.</p>	Proposition 1, proposition 3, proposition 4, and proposition 5
Gain a deep understanding of how respondents experience and maintain their spiritual relationships.	<p>Question 4. Can you please describe your spiritual relationships, could be anything, or activities, or objects that give you meaning in life?</p> <p>Question 5. What comfort do you find in your spiritual relationships?</p> <p>(Do you have the feeling that something, or some activities, or some events, can give you meaning in your life? can assist you to pursue your life goals or purpose? What are the main factors that comprise your spiritual relationships?) Those questions only came up if the respondents had no idea what to talk about.</p>	Proposition 2, proposition 3, proposition 4, and proposition 5
Gain a deep understanding of how respondents experience and maintain their brand relationships?	<p>Question 6. Do you have any brand/brands which are important to you? (What is it about the brand that makes it important to you? Are there instances where you enjoyed using them or being with them?) Those questions only came up if the respondents did not understand what to talk about.</p>	Proposition 1, proposition 2, proposition 3, proposition 4, and proposition 5

7.4.4 Data Recording

The respondents chose the time and place that they felt was comfortable for them to have a conversation. In Dunedin, New Zealand, the interviews took place at the university library and café, two places where the respondents liked to go. In Kunming, China, the interviews took place at the university playground, classroom, and dorm, three places where the respondents liked to go. The researcher and the respondents established a conversation involving the respondents' personal experience, stories, thoughts, and feelings. The open-ended questions were framed as: *Can you please tell me your.....; Can you please give me an example.....; How do you think about.....*

Since this thesis follows a phenomenological approach, and the interview questions were organised by the Protocol of Research into three topics as follows: 1) the close relationships, 2) the spiritual relationships, and 3). brand relationships. Even though the anticipated issues and questions for each topic were listed under each topic, they were only there for the researcher to check, and the researcher did not use those questions to guide the respondents. The questions that were listed under each topic were used as a pre-interview guide for ten respondents in Otago University, and the data from those ten respondents' data was not included in the final analysis. The pre-test interview allowed the researcher to become more confident and familiar with the interview process. The whole interview procedure became fluent after the pre-test interview with 10 of the respondents.

7.4.5 Interview and Observation Notes

Observation notes (field notes) were taken immediately after each interview. Notes were recorded as MSWord documents after each interview and were indexed by interview time and length, record the time and length of each interview help the researcher reconstruct interview afterward.

The researcher applies field notes to record the descriptive information in the interview, and the in-formation assisted the researcher to precisely record the data and the settings of the interview, and record the non-verbal behaviour of the respondents. The recorded descriptive information included the physical

setting of the interview, the respondents and their roles in the setting, and any impact that the researcher might have observed during the interview.

The field notes documented the reflective information, which helped the researcher to focus on the thoughts, questions, ideas, observations, and concerns that arose as the researcher conducted the interview. The purpose of taking field notes in this thesis was to remember and record the respondents' behaviour, the respondents' non-verbal expressions, facial expressions, events, activities, and other features that occurred during the interview. The researcher created the field notes. The recorded reflective information included the researcher's thoughts, ideas, impressions, about the interview and the respondents' responses; any possible misunderstanding of the communications or points that might have been caused due to a failure to understand the conversations; insights about what the researcher observed from the conversations; and any ideas or thoughts that the researcher had regarding the next or a future interview.

One field note is given below as an example of a completed field research note from an interview with an Otago University respondent

Field Notes

Respondent: Male (Chris)

Age:25

PhD student (Computer science)

Interview location: Central Library

Interview time: 25 mins

Date: 14/4/ 2017

Personal relationships:

This respondent choose the word 'close' to describe his relationship with his family members, so, for us, the quality of a close relationship determines how good we feel about ourselves, and about life in general. As Susan Krauss (2012) mentioned the quality of interdependence characterises a close relationship.

'What I mean by close with my family, I mean we get along very well, we look forward to see each other, and spend holidays together, yeah. My dad and I have lots of interests that we share, and I get along with my sister too'

They make family decisions together (their family moved from the southern part of America to the north, and then they moved from America to New Zealand),

and they talk with each other almost every day *“I talk to my dad a couple times a day, and I talk to my sister probably once or twice a day too. And I talk with my mum once a week or something like that”*,

and he experience different activities with different family members, with his father they watch sports games together, his father taught him how to play with different kinds of sports games;

“my love for sports might not have happened without him, because I grew up at a time when kids met in the parks and played pick-up games on our own without our parents. Because of my father he shared his love and knowledge of sports, I was en, given the greatest gift”

Regarding his relationship with his sister *“it took me a good several years before I developed actual personal bonds with her”* this relationship makes him understand how to share things with others, and how to unit with others.

So, in general, the core of the respondent’s family relationship is ‘intimate’ and “closeness”: 1) cognitive---emotional closeness, that is involved in perceiving, attending to, remembering, thinking about, and making sense of the people in our social world (Moskowitz, 2004); 2) emotional or attachment—from the psychological part of human beings; and 3). behaviourally—from the physiological part of human beings.

The friendship of this respondent: he divided his friendship as situational friends and good friends.

“Situational friends drift in and out of your life as your circumstances change, and good friends remain your friends regardless of your current situation and how it changes over time”

Bolton et al., (2013) suggested personal closeness and social performance required an ongoing input of time and energy.

The duration of interaction is another important factor that has an influence on social relationships. Shared communications or shared responsibilities with others, attitudes about others in social relationships (liking attitudes, love and so on.), and individual beliefs about relationships e.g. the uniqueness of the relationship or the importance of relationships.

“I sorted them as friends that, one point in time, had been there for me when I was down in the past, friends or people who had never once judged me,

criticized me, nor been negative to me, these people had supported and encouraged me before in my life, and people whom I got to know better before our friendship progressed, due to the presence of a common space, such as: school, a project, and so on.”

Spiritual relationship:

This respondent has his own understanding about spirituality.

One feature of spirituality is the self-realization, that ‘fulfilment by oneself of the possibilities of one’s character or personality’, since self-realization is the knowledge of the true self, that is the actual situation the individual finds themselves in. the factor of knowing yourself is the key that lead to enlightenment.

“If your mind is open, you can start discovering your hidden natural talents, which do not always come from the mind, but involve creativity, or inspiration.”

The self-actualisation helps an individual understand themselves consciously, and it is also the ‘power within man’ giving meaning, purpose and fulfilment to life and self.

“It’s kind of like the higher power gifted you as some sort of the inner peace while you are doing something you like, and en, the out of nowhere help at the time of crisis”

Brand relationship:

The idea that passion drives behaviour is one of the factors of the brand relationship, with the following:

1. Attitude valence, always hold a positive attitude related to one’s favourite brands.
2. Long term relationship, respondent will be using it for a long time—*“if something goes wrong with that brand, I will probably wait for it, and I will probably look it again.” “but compared with other sports brands I like Nike more. So, if there are couple of options to choose from I will choose the Nike one”*

Emotional connection— 1. Fits consumers' tastes—“ *I like the people they paid to represent them, so like Tiger Woods, the golf player, and they had some other different athletes I like, and en, the other thing is I like is their slogan, with ‘just do it’, and like their symbol’*”

2. Emotional attachment—“ *so and for Apple, I guess it’s different , I am kind of attached to it, with all the Apple stuff, from computer, ipad, iwatch, iphone, en, almost everything*”—emotional connection, and respondent feel a bond.

3. Involvement—“ *with Apple, my dad used Apple for work, so it’s kind of that I grew up with them, and just always have Apple stuff around me. En, with Nike, en, en, I guess it’s a lot of ads there.*” –respondent have interact a lot with it since he was child.

4. Positive affect—exceptional, excellent marketing, works well to pluck the emotional strings of early adopters.

Physical side-familiarity with the brands' qualities, functions, histories, reliability “I like brands just because I like those things that I can touch, feel, its quality and functions. For example, I also like some Japanese cats, like Honda and Nissan, but it’s just because of their reliability”

7.5 Analytical approach

This thesis applies the inductive analytical approach to interpret the respondents' life experience and structure the meanings that can be derived from the data. The advantages of applying the inductive analytical approach in this thesis include the following:

1. The inductive approach compresses the varied and extensive data into a brief and summary format, so it categorizes the themes of this thesis that emerged from the data.
2. It makes a connection with this study's objective and the summary findings from the data
3. Compared with the deductive approach, the inductive approach is to allow the results of the research to appear from the themes or categories that are ingrained in the data

4. The inductive approach is a systematic procedure to analyse the qualitative data, and the evaluation objectives guide the analysis.

The data analysis of this thesis is not only focused on the patterns and commonalities within the human experience, but more importantly, it is to discover the essence of the respondents' experience or feelings through the intensive research of the individuals who participated in the interviews.

7.5.1 Data Analysis Process

Verbatim transcripts of the audio interviews were prepared by the researcher and served as the database for this study. Over 650 single-spaced pages of text were generated by the 60 respondents (23 New Zealand respondents, and 37 Chinese respondents).

The qualitative method has been applied in this thesis to investigate the respondents' relevant life experience, culture differences, and other phenomena that influence their brand relationships. An understanding of consumer brand love relationships is at the level of the felt-experience (phenomenology) of interpretation. This thesis applies thematic analysis, and this analytical approach has been accepted as a useful means of large sets of existing written or visual analysis.

The purpose of the applied thematic analysis in this thesis is to reduce the volume of data by systematic coding and categorizing, and the goal of the applied thematic analysis is the comprehensive interpretation of consumer brand love relationships from the point of view of the intrinsic motives within the life of the respondents.

The process of analysis is to, 1) Acquire an impression of the entire interviews after reading the interview transcripts many times; 2) Code the transcript into three categories according to three relationships---close relationships, spiritual relationships, and brand relationships; 3). Group all three analytic categories to provide the key patterns which explain the phenomenon of this thesis.

The literature on close relationships, spiritual relationships, and brand relationships informed the establishment of the coding scheme. The main themes that were coded consists of the levels of the close relationships

(preliminary(beginning), interim(middle stage), stable, and damping (decline)--meaning the different levels of close relationships:), the status of relationships (the frequency of the interaction, the duration of the relationships, the length of the relationships, the diversity of the interaction), the meaning of the relationships (interconnectedness, innerness or inner resources, transcendence, meaning in life), the purpose of the relationships (supportive, interests, relatives and families related), the involvement of the relationships (low, medium, high). The words and sentences that were used to describe the close relationships and spiritual relationships, which were applied to describe the brand relationships were noted, such as, “this brand is reliable”, “I love this brand”, “this brand accompanied me since I was a child”, “I’ve gotten attached to this brand.....”, “the brand that I associated with is.....”, “it (brand name) is beautiful, elegant and pleasant.....”

7.5.2 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was applied in this thesis as a way of emphasising the themes, and opinions and arguments expressed by the respondents. Thematic analysis is used to analyse the classification and present the themes that are related to the raw data. Thematic analysis demonstrates the research data in great detail, and it deals with diverse subjects via interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998). The results of thematic analysis demand more involvement and interpretation from the researcher. Listening, writing up, reading, and rereading the data, looking for keywords, trends, ideas, and themes in the data helps the researcher outline the analysis. Furthermore, this thesis applied Husserl’s phenomenology to focus on the consumers’ experience, and the thematic analysis helped the researcher interpret the data with rigorous and systematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is focused on describing, identifying, and interpreting both the implicit and explicit thoughts and ideas within the data, which is the theme. ‘Theme’ in the research is something important that is captured from the data in relation to the research question, and it represents some level of response or meaning within the data. The display of themes in the analysis offers a deeper description of the data, and the thematic analysis provides a systematic way of doing this (Boyatzis, 1998). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that thematic analysis is the most useful approach in capturing the complexities of meaning

within the textual data. This is since all of the data of this thesis comes from the in-depth interviews, and from the transcripts of the data collections ranging from 8-15 pages per individual. Thematic analysis offers a systematic way to arrange the findings of this thesis into the most useful reporting format.

7.5.3 Phases of analysis

There are six phases of analysis for this thesis, the process starts when the analyst begins to notice, and look for, the patterns of meaning and the issues of potential interest in the data (Bernard et al., 2016). Thematic analysis of this thesis involves a constant moving forward and back between the entire data set, the coded extracts of the data, and the analysis of the data. Transcription is the first phase of the analysis in this thesis. The data for this thesis was fully transcribed as the first step. Coding is the second phase, and collate the codes into different themes was the third step, and then this followed with the review themes, defining and naming the themes, and producing the result report was the last phases. All six phases are summarised in **Table 7.5**. The analysis of the research is not simply moving from one phase to the other phase, and it is a necessary process that develops over time (Baptiste, 2001).

Table 7.5 Phases of analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Transcription	Transcribe full data information (60 respondents), all transcripts attached as Appendix III.
2. Coding	Generate initial codes, collect the data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes	Collate the codes into potential themes, gather all the data that is relevant to each of the potential themes
4. Checking and rechecking themes	Check if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts, and recheck the entire data set
5. Define and name themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each of the themes, generating clear definitions and names for each theme

6. Producing the results report	Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of the selected extracts, relating back to the analysis of the research questions and literature, preparing and presenting the research results.
---------------------------------	--

7.5.3.1 Transcription

Since the data for this thesis is verbal data, so it was necessary to transcribe the data into written form in order to conduct the thematic analysis. Transcription is the beginning stage of analysis, and it is an essential stage to help the researcher to become familiar with the data. The researcher spent one month to transcribe all of the data, and the time spent in transcription was not wasted, it helped the researcher to develop a far more thorough understanding of the research data.

Transcription in this thesis was divided into three steps: 1) how the transcription of this thesis is defined and understood; 2) how the transcription was conducted, and 3) how the transcription was reported in the research.

How transcription of this thesis is defined and understood: 60 respondents' recordings have been fully transcribed. Since the interview questions for this thesis were set up as semi-structured and open-ended, the different respondents would have different experience and feelings even in response to the same question, not to mention when respondents answered the semi-structured and open-ended questions. The other reason for fully transcribing the interview recordings was because, during the interview, the pauses, laughter, fillers, sign, or tone might have different meanings according to the different environments and the different cultures. Even if the different respondents said the same words or sentences, there might have been different meanings.

For example:

Some of the respondents liked to insert repeated words or phrases into their conversations, unconsciously, such as, 'you know', or 'so', or 'like' and so on. All of those fillers were all included in the transcripts. This is one way that the respondents showed that they were considering the question or thinking about it during the interview.

Pause—in this thesis the pause happens only for two reasons: 1) the respondents were thinking about their answers, and normally their answers would come after 10 seconds (the longest pause). 2) the other reason was that the respondents did not know how to respond to the question, and the pause might seem as if the respondent was completely silent. This only happened in four of the respondents' interviews, and after waiting for 1-2mins, the respondents were checking the questions with the researcher, and the researcher explained the questions to them, and then they replied the question.

Laughter—in this thesis, laughter was noted differently, such as a 'giggle' or 'hahahaha', or laughter for more than 10 seconds.

Assent and dissent words: there are words like 'en-heng', or 'mm-hmm', or 'uh-uh' and these were all included in the transcripts. As those were represented, it means that respondents understood the questions, and they were either agreeing, or they were disagreeing and they possibly had different opinions. The words 'um' or 'er' were all included in since those words were indicated as uncertainty or hesitation.

How transcription is conducted: All of the interviews were recorded by both digital recorder and cell phones, and then were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The researcher had listened to each respondent's recorded interview for three times, including before transcription, during the transcription, and after the transcription. On the one hand, while it was necessary to conduct a close observation of the data through repeated listening. On the other hand, repeated listening helped the researcher to become familiar with the data and concentrate on what was there rather than what was expected in terms of facilitating the ideas or thoughts that emerged during the analysis.

Since this thesis involves cross-cultural research, the interview process used two languages—both Chinese and English. Although Chinese university students could use English in their interview, since Chinese is their mother language, and it was easier for them to speak in Chinese to express their experiences and feelings. For the Chinese respondents' data, the process of translations is intertwined with the process of transcription. The researcher was both the translator and the researcher of this thesis data. The advantages of this are 1) since the language is influenced by culture, power relations, and social

interactions, so the similar cultural background with the Chinese respondents made the conversations more understandable, 2) the researcher was able to gain access to the ideas and expressions of respondents through the translation process. The translation of the data is part of the data analysis, and it is not restricted to the analysis of the interview transcripts. Furthermore, 3) translation involves interpretative activities beyond language exchange.

How transcription is reported in the research: Transcription was completed by the researcher and entered into MSWord to facilitate the analysis. The transcribed length of each interview was between 8-25 pages. The transcribed interviews were read and rechecked for accuracy, elaboration, and comprehension.

The written language is quite different from the voice or audible speech, and it represents the researcher's interpretations of the data. For example, a sigh in the interview could be transcribed to mean a 'memory of a happy moment' or a 'memory of hard times' or 'we have no answers for the question' and those transcriptions should be closely related to the interview context. Laughter in the conversations could be transcribed as 'giggling' or 'weird laughter' or 'laughter for (10 seconds-happy laughter)' or just transcribe it directly as 'ha ha ha' or 'he he he' as the laughter was all delivering the different meanings of the respondents. However, data such as repetitions, or coughs, or interruptions, or heavy breathing, or hesitations were not transcribed in this thesis, because those might clutter the text.

The researcher has sorted all of the transcriptions into a spreadsheet in the form of questions and answers, and divided it as the New Zealand respondents' data spreadsheet and the Chinese respondents' data spreadsheet. The data was sorted into a spreadsheet for further analysis.

Transcriptions is involved with the primary interpretation of this thesis, and the comments from the transcriptions were the key phrases of this thesis. Those key phrases belong to the coding results and the meanings behind the data. After finishing all 60 respondents' interview transcriptions, the researcher read through each transcript twice or three times as it was expected that a number of comments would emerge. The researcher was noting each of the comments

on the transcripts, and if some comments emerged for many times those comments would be highlighted. Those comments would be marked as how many times that comment appeared in the transcripts. As the most frequent comments were pointed out, they would be applied as supporting comments and, they would be added to explain the relevant emerging themes.

The results of the analysis of the responses of the questions will be demonstrated in the following sections.

All of the transcriptions are attached to Appendix III.

7.5.3.2 Coding

Coding is the second stage of the analysis in this thesis. This stage involves the production of the initial codes based on the data. The ideas were generated after reading and rereading the data and becoming familiar with the data. The codes are the most basic segment and element of the raw data, and the codes can be assessed in a meaningful way as they relate to the phenomena. Tuckett (2005) suggested that coding is part of the analysis, and it is the way to organise the data into meaningful groups.

There are two ways to code the research data: manually or through software (Kelly, 2004). The researcher manually coded the interviews based on the transcripts, and the words and phrases that were identified that appeared frequently in the transcripts. The literature on the three types of relationships informed the construction of the coding scheme. The main themes that were coded consists of the levels of the love relationships (preliminary, interim, stable, and damping), the status of the love relationships (frequency of interaction, duration of relationships, length of relationships, diversity of interaction), the meaning of the love relationships (interconnectedness, innerness or inner resources, transcendence, meaning in life), the purpose of the relationships (supportive, interests, relatives and families related), the involvement of the love relationships (low, medium, high). The words and sentences that were used to describe the close relationships and the spiritual relationships, which applied to describe brand relationships were noted, such as: “this brand is reliable”, “I love this brand” “this brand accompanied me since I

was a child”, “I’ve gotten attached to this brand...”, “this is the brand that I associate with”, “it’s beautiful, elegant and pleasant.....”

Pattern within codes is a way to identify the themes and forms of the research and classify the different codes into a small number of themes. Pattern coding is essential to this thesis, since this thesis has 60 respondents and almost 650 pages of transcripts, and pattern coding reduces large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units. Pattern coding supported and organised a detailed cognitive map based on the research themes. The coding pattern is concerned with the similarity codes (things happen in the same way), dissimilarity (things happens differently), frequency (how often), correspondence (the relationships with others, or influences), causation (does it appear that this thing may cause something else). In this thesis, the patterns are concerned with the life experience, the consumer process, the brand experience, environments (grow up, study, and consume), self-consciousness, relationships expectations, motivation and relationships maintenance. Any reference to proximity and how it enhances and motivates relationships was identified and analysed.

In this thesis the data analysis was guided by an inductive approach, and open coding analysis was adopted. The purpose of the applied inductive approach in this thesis was to interpret the phenomena reflected in the data.

The inductive analysis of this thesis applied was divided into five steps:

1. Preparation of the raw data: The raw data was formatted within a spreadsheet, and all of the raw data (60 respondents) was sorted into two spreadsheets, specifically, the Chinese respondents and the New Zealand respondents. A copy and paste operation was applied to transfer the data from MSWord to the spreadsheet. The step of transferring the data involved simply copying the word processor documents and pasting them onto the spreadsheet, and the questions and answers were pasted into different columns.

However, the raw data was not transferred into the spreadsheet since in terms of the full transcripts, the data was transformed onto the spreadsheet according to the emergent themes and field notes.

The first column of the spreadsheet was labeled as ‘respondents ID’ (e.g. the Chinese respondents No.1), and the second column of the spreadsheet was labeled as the ‘educational background of the respondents’, and the third column of the spreadsheet was labeled as the ‘coding sentences selected from transcripts’, and the forth column of the spreadsheet was labeled as the ‘emergent themes of research’.

2. The text from the coding of the sentences was read and reread many times, in order to make sure that every selected sentences was matched with the emergent themes.
3. Creation of categories: the categories of the themes were created from the actual meanings and phases in the transcribed text and notes. The similar codes were all gathered into the same categories, and the different categories were linked if they had any interrelationships among them.

The specific themes were developed in the creation of the categories and the core phases were captured as reported by the respondents. An example of a specific theme that emerged was labeled as the ‘frequency of interaction’. Many of the respondents mentioned the frequency of the interaction with their family members, or with their close friends, or with their brands.

The following quotations are from the transcription that was coded into the category of ‘frequency of interaction’ and is organised by four sub-themes: ‘frequency influenced by interests’; ‘frequency influenced by pleasure’; ‘frequency influenced by self-identity’ and ‘frequency influenced by estimated risk’.

An example of frequency influenced by interests:

“If I felt a brand is suitable for me, I would like to stick to that brand. I believe I have brand preferences and attachment”—

Chinese respondent 1

An example of frequency influenced by pleasure:

“YouTube¹ is a kind of brand that I like, cause it’s not only a video, it’s also sell products, like whole number of sales. Brand refers to the way that you promote yourself or your company and can help define who you are and what you do”—NZ respondent 21

An example of frequency influenced by self-identity:

“I love Apple, it’s not because of the functions or something, it’s just because it’s Apple. I feel so stupid to say it out aloud, but like I feel like that’s why.”---Chinese student respondent 10

An example of frequency influenced by potential risk:

“Apple hasn’t got anything wrong yet, I firmly believe that nothing will go wrong with Apple. Since they are good quality, with many functions, and a good support team.”—NZ respondent 16

That is an example of the emergent theme of the frequency of the interaction, and the sub-theme: frequency influenced by interests, frequency influenced by pleasure, frequency influenced by self-identity and frequency influenced by estimated risks.

4. Data reduction: This is an essential part of the data analysis process. Data reduction not only happens in coding and summarising, it also involved in conceptualising and modeling. The main purpose of the data reduction are to reduce the redundancies of the data, without losing any significant information for the research. The researcher compares, sorts and orders the data according to the literature and the main themes of this thesis, in order to classify the concepts in themes as similarities, and capture the dissimilarities. The researcher has sorted the similar sub-themes into one main category, and sorted the similar sub-categories into one main category. In the end, the construct of this thesis was formed into two main categories: the motives of consumers maintaining brand relationships because close interactions enhance their expansions,

¹ YouTube is an American video-sharing website brand, which allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to favorites, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users

and the motives of consumers maintaining brand relationships because relationships help them define the purpose and meaning in their lives.

5. Created a model that incorporates the most important categories. The data display process helped the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the research with regard to its objectives and propositions. This thesis involves not only the similarities and dissimilarities of three relationships: close relationships, spiritual relationships, and brand love relationships, it also involves comparing and contrasting consumer brand love relationships within two cultures. The data displayed in Excel was easier to compare, organise, summarise, and it was easier to import the data to the thesis. The interpretation occurred throughout the process of the analysis.

The emergent themes/categories of this thesis were grouped from the same phenomenon. This is the step that displays/reveals the data, and it is a significant and essential step to validate the qualitative data analysis. For this thesis, the data was organised in an Excel spreadsheet, for the convenience of manipulating the organised data and summarizing the data. In this thesis, the researcher created matrices with defined rows and columns to display the data. Since the data is displayed it makes it easy to understand the context of the data, and building a matrix allows the data to be matched to the research questions. The researcher created a matrix for each of the main themes (close relationships, spiritual relationships), and each of the main themes has sub-themes, so all in all 12 matrices were created on this basis. Similar matrices were categorised into the same categories, and the final construct of this thesis had two main categories as follows: the motives that involved the close-brand love relationships, and the motives that involve the spiritual-brand love relationships.

7.5.3.3 Searching for themes

This stage begins after all of the data has been initially coded and collected, and many different codes were identified through a review of the data. At this stage, the different codes were categorised into the potential themes based on their different meanings. In other words, at this phrase, the different codes were analysed and sorted into the potential themes based on the different meaning the codes delivered. Saldana (2015) defined that a theme could be a phrase or

sentence that establishes a different unit of data, and expresses a different meaning of the data.

In this thesis, the themes were identified following Ryan and Bernard's approaches (2003):

1. Repetition: repetition is one of the common and easy ways to locate the themes. The more the same concept or sentences appears in the text, the more likely it is a theme. For example, in this thesis, if the respondents were asked about their close relationships with others or about their spiritual relationships or brand relationships, most of the respondents talked about the frequency of their interactions with their close ones, in order to prove the quality of relationship, such as, '*I met my best friend from kindergarten.....*' or 'I knew this brand six years ago...' The theme of the 'frequency of interactions' was taken as the potential theme for this thesis. Not all of the repeated themes were potential themes, all of the potential themes should be considered in terms of their relevance to the research objectives.
2. Indigenous categories: this refers to collecting local terms that may sound unfamiliar or are used in unfamiliar ways. However, this was not used in this thesis.
3. Metaphors and analogies: Lakoff and Johnson (2003) summarised that people like to describe their thoughts, experience, and behaviour using analogies and metaphors. For example: in this thesis, some respondents described themselves as '*Apple girl*' or '*Apple boy*' or '*I-sheep*' to express their interests and love of the brand. Respondents use these metaphors because they assumed the researcher knew that 'I-sheep' or 'Apple-girl' refers to people who love the brand.
4. Linguistic connectors: sentences or phrases that contain words, such as, 'because', or 'since', or 'as a result' or 'rather than', or any other terms connoting a causal relation. Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggested that those words in the text are to indicate the respondent's system of logic is revealed. For example the respondents mentioned that '*since my girlfriend and I both know that distance and time could fade*

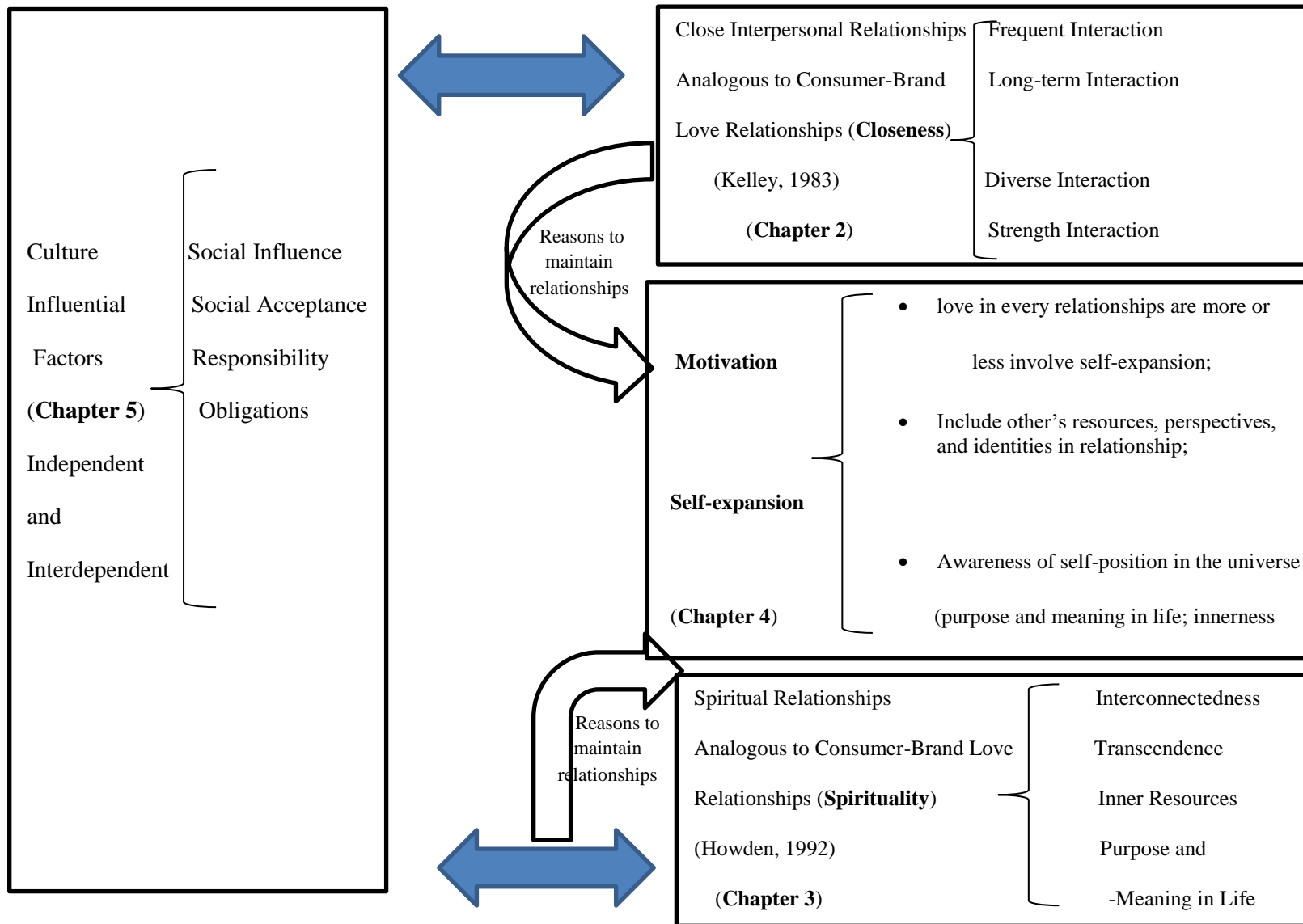
everything, ...once we have time or vacation we fly to visit each other' and another respondent mentioned *'I love the brand because of the design and the aesthetics of both the hardware and software...I don't mind spending money on that.'* Both respondents applied 'since' and 'because' to express their relationships with things or with people. The respondents would like to invest money, or time, or energy into desirable relationships, in order to maintain their relationships. Those sentences and phrases were categorised as 'willing to invest resources.'

7.5.3.4 Reviewing themes

There are two parts involved in this phrase. One is reviewing the coded data extracts, and the other one is refining the themes. At this stage, the researcher had read all the collated coded data and considered whether those coding appeared to form a coherent pattern. The themes that appeared to form a coherent pattern were moved to the next part of this phrase. The themes that did not fit were moved to reconsider them, to check if the theme itself was problematic, or whether some of the data extracts within it did not fit the research.

The next level of this phrase had to do with checking the validity and reliability of the themes in relation to the data set. More specifically, the researcher ascertained whether the themes fit in with the research question and the propositions. Then it was necessary to code any additional data within the themes that had been missed in the earlier coding stages. Since this thesis applied thematic analysis, the themes and subthemes were organised after the refinement of the research themes, **Table 7.4** Thematic map of consumer brand love relationship since it is the thematic map for this thesis.

Figure 7. 1 Thematic map



7.5.3.5 Defining and naming themes

At this stage, the researcher identified the essence of what each theme is about and determined which aspect of the data each theme captured. Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggested that at this stage, ‘define and refine’ is essential, to help the researcher identify the ‘essence’ of what each theme is about, and help the researcher determine which aspect of the data each theme captures.

The researcher refers back to the collated data extracts for each theme and organising them in a coherent and internally consistent way. ‘Define’ the themes of this thesis not only involves interpreting the content of the data extracts presented, it also distinguishes what is of interest about the data and why it is of interest. Consumers develop and maintain relationships with their loved brands in two forms, and the two forms are the two main themes of this thesis: one is that the close-brand relationships refer to the qualities of the interactions between consumers and brands as influenced by the closeness of their brand relationships, the other is the spiritual-brand love relationships that consumers’ loved brands provide them with meaning for their life, or inner strength, or transcendence as features of spirituality that exist in brand love relationships. Consumers develop and maintain two forms of brand love relationships for their self-expansion, as consumers not only expand to fulfill their need for their favorite possessions, but also to enhance their insight, or expand their social or bodily identities, or expand to find meaning or find their purpose in life. Culture differences are one of the influential factors in brand love relationships, which influences consumers’ brand love relationships. For each theme that was identified depended upon the research data, in relation to the research questions and propositions.

‘Refine’ the theme of this thesis has to do with verifying that the themes of this thesis are not too diverse or complex. The researcher must go back to the data transcripts to recheck each theme, not only to organise the data into a coherent and internally consistent theme, but also to identify the reasons to define them as a theme, or as a subtheme. Refinement for themes and sub-themes are useful to construct the framework of the research and demonstrate the hierarchy of meaning within the data. In this thesis as the **Figure 7.1** thematic map shows, there are four main themes as follows: 1) spiritual-brand love relationships, 2) close-brand love relationships, 3) cultural and self, and 4)

motivation of self-expansion. Within each theme, three or four sub-themes were identified.

This stage helps the researcher to clearly define which kinds of data belongs to the research themes and which did not. The different themes have different scopes and content, and sub-themes were categorised based on the scope of the different themes.

7.5.3.6 Producing the report

This stage is the summary of analysis, is to organise the complicated story of the research data, in a way to express the merit and validity of the data analysis. Ryan and Bernard (2003) concluded that the critical part of writing the report of analysis, is to present a concise, coherent, and non-repetitive outline of the story that the research data provides, which is within and across the themes.

In this thesis, each of the themes was provided evidence within the data to support the theme. The results report is not only structured and supported by research data, but the results report was also inserted within the analytic narrative to demonstrate the story about the research data. Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggested the analytic reports of the research needs to go beyond the description of the data and make an argument in relation to the research questions and propositions.

7.6 Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Control of Biases

Kirk and Miller (1986) suggested that the qualitative research has to follow the rules of “trustworthiness” since in the qualitative research, the validity and reliability is the way to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the research (Campbell and Stanley, 2015; Silverman, 2015; Steinbeck, 1941). Validity is normally composed of three main categories: internal validity, external validity, and the construct validity (Erickson, 1989; Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). Reliability is broken down into three main categories: the stability, the consistency, and the equivalence (Brink, 1991). **Table 7.6** shows how the methods for this thesis were conducted following the suggestions by the current qualitative method literature (Brink, 1991; Hall and Stevens, 1991; Robson, 1993).

Table 7.6 Research method to enhance validity and reliability

Validity and Reliability	Tactic suggested	Phase of research in which the tactic occurred	The method this thesis applied
Construct Validity	Extended field work	Data collection	General understanding about respondents; interview protocols; interview transcriptions; field notes
	Triangulating the data collection	Data collection	The researcher applied multiple-data collection methods including interview, and field notes.
Internal Validity	Researcher examine the data to check	Data analysis	The researcher examine the data, code the data manually, and check and recheck data analysis match pattern, logic model
External Validity	Random selection of respondents	Data collection	Select respondents randomly
Reliability	Stability	Data collection	Interview protocol
	Consistency	Data collection	keeps the concordant
	Equivalence	Data collection	Same interview questions asked in different ways to maintain equivalence

Construct validity refers to “the validity of the concepts themselves as they are applied to the phenomena, and the validity of the postulated relationships among the concepts.” (Kirk and Miller, 1986, p. 291). Construct validity is related to the quality of the theory of the concept that the researcher applied in the study. Construct validity is mainly used during the data collection stage and construct validity is supported by the extended filed work because the researcher spends a great amount of time to study the respondents’ life experience and their

personal relationships, and the researcher constructs a clear chain of evidence about the research data. The other ways that support the construct validity are triangulating the data to examine the data from different perspectives (Denzin, 1989; Kirk and Miller, 1986).

Extended field word: This thesis applied a phenomenology method to interview the respondents. The meaning and interpretation of the respondents' life experience and personal relationship, and brand relationships are the main concern of this thesis. The validity of the research data refers to the believability and trustworthiness of the findings and results. It is important that audiences believe that the findings and results of the research are accurate and credible.

Firstly, regarding the interaction with the respondents. Before each interview, the researcher has a general understanding about every respondent, since all of the respondents are university students, between 18 and 25 years of age, and most of them were not fully financially independent. After each interview, the respondents were asked to contribute ideas or thinking that they believed it might enrich the research data. Even after all of the interviews were conducted, suggestions or comments were accepted from the respondents. For example, at the beginning stage of the interview, one respondent suggested that since university students were respondents, campus life or study experience might enrich the data. The contributions from the standpoint of the respondents were combined with the theoretically based interview questions to add richness to the research, and to improve the credibility of the data.

Secondly, the interview records were checked with the respondents immediately after the interview to verify that the respondents did not miss anything, they wanted to talk about and if they had something to clarify. All of the interview transcriptions were checked and rechecked by the researcher, to make sure the research data captured precisely, and transferred and coded the data faultlessly and authoritatively.

Triangulating the data collection: the researcher collected the data applied during both the interview and observation and the field notes and the interview transcript were able to examine the validity of the data. The researcher was collecting the data by herself through interactive means. The researcher is familiar with the depth and breadth of the content through the data collection process, the transcription of data, and the repeated reading of the data. The

process of the data collection gave the researcher some prior knowledge of the data, and some initial analytic interests and thoughts. The researcher took field notes after every interview, to make sure not to miss some non-verbal communication and thoughts.

Internal validity: this is referred to the researcher examining the data and describing how the phenomena operate and it refers to developing and testing the preliminary casual theories (Campbell, 1979; Johnson, 1994; Strauss and Corbin, 1994). For this part, the researcher coded the data manually, while coding at the beginning stage, the main focus is about ‘what does this text mean to me?’ Some text was noted and tagged, such as, the text that is relevant to the research questions, and some unexpected and intriguing text. If the researcher found that the coding is messy, the sources of the messiness were considered, and the codes or themes were refined if they were the cause of the messiness, and then back to the coding again. After finishing all of the codings, the researcher observed all of the patterns related to the discourse and checked if the analysis provides evidence to support the research.

External validity: for one thing, external validity can be set through generalizing from a sample to a population (Cook and Campbell, 1979). For this thesis, the respondents were selected randomly and were selected from the University of Otago campus and the Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, as “random selection is the best way to generalise from a sample to a population” (Cook and Campbell, 1979, p. 290).

Reliability is defined in terms of other observers, or other researchers can get the same results, or if there is some degree of consistency (Hammersley, 1992). Reliability supported by the *stability* of the data, if the same interview questions were asked of each of the respondents would the researcher get consistent results. During the interview, the researcher would have confirmed the interview results with each respondent immediately, and field notes were taken immediately after each interview. *Consistency* refers to the interview questions so that every respondent was asked almost the same questions to keeps the concordance of the research data. *Equivalence* refers to some of the interview questions that the researcher asked in two or three different ways, to maintain the equivalence of the research data.

7.7 Summary

This chapter concludes with the details of the research method, the data analysis process, the research samples information, and the data collection process that have been utilised in this research. The researcher's interpretive worldview has strongly influenced the research design and the consideration of the research methods that are appropriate to the phenomenon that is investigated.

The following chapter presents the results of each of the main five research propositions by applying inductive analysis.

Chapter 8 Results

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented. That data was collected and then processed in response to the problems posed in Chapter Six of this thesis. The two fundamental goals that served to drive the collection of the data and the subsequent data analysis included: 1) looking for the essential factors that drive consumers into brand love relationships and keep them in the relationships, and 2) evaluating whether consumers experienced consumer-brand relationships in the same way in New Zealand and in China. The results presented in this chapter demonstrate the potential for the merging theory and the practice.

The respondents' experience, attitudes, and thoughts as they relate to their brand relationships are categorised in response to five propositions in this thesis, based on the meanings the respondents delivered. The comments selected from the interviews of respondents were also included where they give a deeper insight into how the respondents responded to the questions posed. The full interview transcripts are included in **Appendix III**.

The results presented in this chapter are organised in response to the five propositions of this thesis. The five propositions have been organised (based on the three correlated relationships) in this thesis as follows: brand relationships (Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Chapter 5); close relationships (Chapter 2), and spiritual relationships (Chapter 3); and one influential factor of relationships, namely, culture (Chapter 5).

8.2 Results by Research Proposition

The results are presented in the order in which the research propositions were developed. The results are listed under five different research propositions and lead to a cumulative picture of the results with respect to the topics raised.

8.2.1 Research proposition I: Consumers' engagement in relationship with brands is positively related to the close relationship dimensions of:

- The frequency of the interactions
- The duration of the interactions
- The diversity of the interactions

- The strength of the interactions

The responses sorted in four themes were arranged as one close relationship example and one brand relationship example under each sub-theme and come with the results of the sub-theme, to demonstrate that consumers' brand relationship have a resemblance to their close relationships. Table 8.1 demonstrates four themes exists in both close relationships and brand relationships.

Table 8.1 Four themes

Theme	Sub-theme	NZ	CN
The frequency of interaction	Frequency influenced by interests	23/23 Respondents	28/37 Respondents
	Frequency influenced by pleasure	16/23 Respondents	29/37 Respondents
	Frequency influenced by self-identity	21/23 Respondents	36/37 Respondents
	Frequency influenced by estimated risk	18/23 Respondents	32/37 Respondents
Duration of interaction	Past time	23/23 Respondents	37/37 Respondents
	Present time	23/23 Respondents	37/37 Respondents
	Future time	23/23 Respondents	37/37 Respondents
Diversity of interaction		19/23 Respondents	37/37 Respondents
Strength of interaction		21/23 Respondents	37/37 Respondents

8.2.1.1 The Frequency of Interactions

Table 8.2 The frequency of interactions

Main Focus	Sub-themes			
Meaningful and the number of interactions time	Frequency influenced by interests	Frequency influenced by pleasure	Frequency influenced by self-identity	Frequency influenced by estimated risk
	NZ: 23/ 23 Respondents	NZ: 16/23 Respondents	NZ: 21/23 Respondents	NZ: 18/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 28/37 Respondents	Chinese: 29/37 Respondents	Chinese: 36/ 37 Respondents	Chinese: 32/37 Respondents
	Total: 51/60 Respondents	Total: 45/60 Respondents	Total: 57/60 Respondents	Total: 50/60 Respondents

Interaction frequency in relationships depends on whether people are interested in their current relationships, whether people believe they can find themselves or expand themselves in their current relationships, whether they have estimated the risk to invest in their current relationships. The frequency of the interaction in the relationships is a good predictor of their present and future relationships, and the effect of the interaction frequency is positive. The frequency of interactions in the relationship is demonstrates and predicts the importance of the relationships. The frequency of the interaction in the relationships is closely related to a person's life experience.

According to the respondents, the frequency of the interactions is influenced by the following factors:

8.2.1.1.1 Interests: (Table 8.1 Column 1) Frequency represents the level of interest in the object, or in the activity, or the relationship, and it is a motivational state of how people react to things or activities around them. If people found that the situation or activities are existing or enjoyable, and draw their attention, they would like to be involved in those situations, circumstances or activities frequently.

“Best friends are maybe someone, that’s got more in common with me, they are very similar to me. I can get along with them easily. When I said, in common with, it is in terms of our personality, we have something in common, and we also have the same interests or likes”--

NZ student, respondent 14

If people found out that they can learn from other people how to do their favorite things, or they found other people who have the same interests as they have, in terms of doing similar activities, they would like to increase the frequency of doing whatever it is that they find interesting.

As long as people realised that their existing relationships provide fun for them and they find that they are interested in them, they would like to stick to the relationships, and invest resources in maintaining those relationships.

“I like La Chapelle² most. All my dorm mates and friends also like La Chapelle, and maybe because of their influence, I like La Chapelle, too. Normally, when we go shopping, we like to go together, and the La Chapelle shop is the one that we would go to together, every time we go shopping.” --Chinese student, respondent 38

Respondents’ interests in their relationships influence their relationships interactions because:

Firstly, self-interest, respondent (Chinese respondent 38) was benefitting from her brand relationship, which supports her interests. This is motivated by personal gain with little or no consideration of others’ benefit. Secondly, shared interests, the respondent (NZ respondent 14) and his close friends were both positive and supportive of each other, and each other’s interests in brand relationships. Thirdly, common interest, respondent (Chinese respondent 38) found that other people had the same interests by doing similar things, so they would like to increase the frequency of doing the activities they found interesting.

In this thesis, the term of interest is collected based on key terms and key definitions of interests, because whether respondents expressed their interests,

² La Chapelle is a Chinese fashion brand that focuses on ladies’ casual wear. Items include tops, skirts, slacks, dresses, and accessories.

was based on whether their expressions included any key terms of interests. For example, “*to engage or excite the attention or curiosity*”, or “*something they were concerned about*”, or “*something that had an influence on them that was of importance to him personally or it had to do with their capabilities*”.

8.2.1.1.2 Pleasure: (Table 8.1 Column 2) Pleasure is one of the motives that increases the frequency of interactions in relationships. Pleasure is the basic human motivation that drives people to pursue what it is that they need and are satisfied with, whatever it is that can give them positive feelings. The more pleasure and happiness the relationship is from the person, the more likely the person will be to increase their interaction with the brands.

“When I achieved the goal, I felt pretty happy, and it’s kind of like it motivates me to want to grow better. As long as you had it, then there is always the possibility to grow better. An individual’s life is influenced by hundreds of people we met along the journey.... You like something or someone, why among so many do you like only that particular one?”
--NZ student, respondent 20

People would like to stay in the relationship, as long as the relationship keeps providing the pleasure that satisfies people, for example, as respondent (NZ, 20) said, “*when I achieved the goal, I felt pretty happy, and it’s kind of motivated me to want to grow better*” so if people find a relationship helps them find the best of themselves, or they find the relationship expands themselves, they would like to maintain the relationship.

“YouTube³ is a kind of brand I love, cause it’s not only a video, it’s also a place that sells products, like a whole number of sales. Brand refers to the way that you promote yourself or your company and can help define who you are and what you do. Attractive graphics can bring people back to channels, and help users remember you or your company, which is very important to becoming successful on YouTube..... You Tubers are usually happy about what they do because they are just free

³ YouTube is an American video-sharing website brand, which allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to favorites, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users.

to be creative and it is open to just do whatever they want to do.”--NZ student, respondent 4

Positive feeling in the interaction is one factor that helps to maintain a relationship, respondents gain happiness, and positive feelings from their brand relationship, and those positive feelings are the reasons that keep them in the relationship. Positive interaction happens in all relationships, and it involves both parties in the relationship to gain benefits from the interactions (for example, respondents NZ, 20; NZ, 4).

Respondents expressed that they have experienced positive, enjoyable, happiness, and entertainment from their relationships. Pleasure is the mechanism that connects to an individual psychologically and physiologically (for example, *“my family and best friends are the people that I am closest to, I share my life with them, and I enjoy their company”*—NZ respondent 7). Pleasure is the connection with immediate fulfillment that is linked to actions or thoughts (for example, *“I love ASICS, especially their jogging shoes, since I love jogging, and I like to make friends with others who love jogging too, and I recommend this brand to them”*—Chinese respondent 11). It is a necessary aspect of life that allows respondents to continue their activities and maintain the relationships that please them. Experiencing frequent positive interactions is related to long-term levels of positive interactions. The pleasure of the relationship attracts the respondents, and they would like to maintain their relationships as long as they find the pleasure in the relationship exists.

In this thesis, the term pleasure is collected based on the key terms and the key definitions of pleasure, for example, *“happiness”*, or *“enjoyment”*, or *“entertainment”* or *“joy”*, or *“fun, amusement”*. These phrases or words expressed respondents’ happiness and enjoyment in their brand relationships.

8.2.1.1.3 Self-identity: (Table 8.1, Column 3) People would find many roles for themselves in different situations or different structures. Different roles in different situations help people to define themselves from different perspectives.

“I always prefer Apple⁴. Maybe it’s the brand itself. And to see if they can do the job it supposed to do. I love Apple, it’s not because of the functions or something, it’s just because it’s Apple and the brand represents my value and attitude. I feel so stupid to say it out loud, but like I feel like that’s why.” --NZ student, respondent 10

Self-identity is represented by a person’s beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviour combined, as respondent (NZ, 10) expressed that she loves Apple because it is Apple, which she expressed her attitude and value about the brand. People develop and maintain different relationships with different objects and with different people because those relationships help them define their roles.

“I am still young, and expensive clothes are not suitable for me because I update my clothes quickly. I adore fast fashion brands like HM⁵ and Uniqlo⁶, they are both fast fashion brands, Fast fashion brands stimulate big brands, such as Gucci or LV, they don’t copy big brands. They’ve linked themselves to some big brands, at the same time, they have a cheaper price.”—Chinese student, respondent 34

Respondents (NZ, 10; Chinese, 34) expressed that they were aware of their skills and abilities, or they were aware of their attributes, or they were aware of their physical attributes because of the influence of their close relationships and their brand relationships. Self-identity is an important determinant of behaviour, and self-identity is a predictor of intention. The respondents accepted the concept of ‘self-identity’ not only as a distinct psychological entity but also as a social construct.

In this thesis, the term self-identity is collected based on key terms and the key definitions of self-identity, such as, “consumers’ personalities” or “consumers’ characteristics” or “consumers’ recognition of themselves or their self-definition”.

⁴ Apple is an American multinational technology company, which designs, develops, and sells consumer electronics, computer software, and online services.

⁵ HM is a Swedish clothing brand and known for its fast-fashion clothing for men, women, and children.

⁶ Uniqlo is a Japanese clothing brand and is known for its fast-fashion clothing for men, women, and children.

8.2.1.1.4 Potential risk: (Table 8.1, Column 4) Risk performance or the risk probability has to do with the influential factors that people might consider in the relationship. Risk is defined as the possibility of experiencing negative consequences. This includes potential losses, the uncertainty of losses, and the significance of losses. Risks exist in our daily life, and it is based on very unexceptional experience.

“If my favorite brands made some bad decisions—like La Chapelle, or Dove⁷, I still support them. I believe if something bad happened to them, or if they have made some bad decisions in the market, I believe that they would have a good explanation for their mistake, and they would definitely do something to make it up.”--- Chinese student, respondent 38

Respondent (Chinese, 38) fully trusts the brand, and she is prepared to take a risk to maintain a relationship with the brand, and she believes her favorite brands would not do anything wrong that might break her heart.

“I Love Huawei⁸, but if they made some bad decisions like Samsung⁹ did, I would still stick with my choice and believe in Huawei. I believe they are a good brand and would never do anything wrong.” Chinese student, respondent 33

Respondent (Chinese, 33) considered the consequences of risk-taking in his brand relationship. Expectancy and incentive are two reasons that people in a relationship improve and whether people are willing to take risks and engage in the relationship is decided by the ‘essentially and inputs’, which are expectancy and the incentive of risk probability.

Expectancy is a cognitive prediction, and people are willing to get involved in a relationship, either because they ignore the potential risk or because they have high expectancy in their relationships.

⁷ Dove is a British personal care brand. Products include: body washes, anti-perspirants, beauty bars, lotions, hair care, and facial care products.

⁸ Huawei is a Chinese multinational networking, telecommunications equipment, and services company, and products include electronic communication devices, and chips.

⁹ Samsung, a South Korean multinational company, comprises numerous affiliated businesses. Including telecommunications equipment, home appliance, and automotive and so forth.

“I was always wondering what if someday something bad were to happen to Apple, it would depend on how bad it is, but even if something bad were to happen, I think I will still follow them. It’s because I’ve got a strong bond with them, I said it’s a strong bond, because I’ve already built a relationship with them, this is my third Apple laptop.”-- NZ student, respondent 20

Respondent (NZ, 20) expressed that he had leveraged the rewards and risks in the relationship. If consumers are willing to get involved in the relationship in the event that there might be a potential risk, that means they believe they can still find more rewards in the relationship, and they are willing to maintain the relationship.

Meanwhile, incentives include the attractiveness and pleasing process or consequences from the relationship that people are looking for. Incentives motivate and guide people to accomplish their goals or be received by others, or it gives the feeling of being in control.

“I love NIKE shoes. I love their spirit and their products. This year Nike basketball shoes found their limited edition did not incorporate the patented zoom air cushion. Nike Company made a risk however they were able to manage the issue, they’ve recalled all the shoes that had that problem and they have compensated the customer for 4,000 RMB for a pair of shoes. I appreciate their attitude. This is important to a company.”-- Chinese student, respondent 13

Tangible incentives in the relationship might be a gift, or money, or other material things that come from the other party in the relationship, for example, a respondent (Chinese, 13) mentioned the tangible incentives from his loved brand. Intangible incentives in the relationship could be knowledge, services, or information that accompanies the purchase that enhances people’s self-esteem and social status, similar to what respondent (NZ, 13) expressed.

“I love Samsung¹⁰, this brand has treated me well. I expected that the new one would be similar, even though one did not have a good

¹⁰ Samsung, a South Korean multinational company, comprises numerous affiliated businesses. Including telecommunications equipment, home appliance, and automotive and so forth.

reputation, the next one will. They will probably learn from their mistakes.”-- NZ student, respondent 13

Tangible and intangible incentives increase the loyalty and attachment in relationships and stimulate the potential advantages in the relationships, and this helps consumers develop and maintain their long-term relationships.

Respondents (NZ, 20; Chinese, 13; NZ, 13 and others) expressed that they commit to the relationship even though there might be risks, respondents expressed that they have a high expectancy of relationships that makes them ignore the risk. Respondents understood that risks might exist in the relationship, and they may not be able to control them. However, they believed their loved brands’ companies have risk management control. Respondents understood that risks and incentives could co-exist in the relationship. Based on the idea that incentives (tangible and intangible) serve as the motivation that guides people to accomplish their goals and experience different things, respondents were willing to take risks and engage in the relationship.

In this thesis, the term estimated risk is collected based on the key terms and key definitions of estimated risk, such as, “*uncertainty*”, or “*unpredictability*” or “*instability*” or “*insecurity*”.

8.2.1.2 Duration of Interactions

Respondents would like to maintain their brand relationships if they are happy with both their past and current brand relationships.

Table 8.3 Duration of interactions

Main Focus	Sub-Themes		
Duration	Past Time	Present Time	Future Time
	NZ: 23/23 Respondents	NZ: 23/23 Respondents	NZ: 23/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents
	Total: 60/60 Respondents	Total:60/60 Respondents	Total: 60/60 Respondents

The duration of the interaction in the relationship allows for a variety of things. The length of time in the relationship includes the way the two parties in the relationship affect each other (from the beginning) and until the two parties no longer affect each other (the end of the relationship):

“We’ve been friends for so long, and we tell each other everything and we have passed the friendship point where you don’t know whether it’s ok to be nice to each other or not. I have known her since middle school, and my brother is her best friend too, now we are family and friends.” -NZ student, respondent 5

Respondent (NZ, 5) believes that time is essential in a relationship since it serves to form a foundation and strengthen a bond. The relationship is built on memories, as happiness, sadness, and enjoyment help strengthen a relationship. The more time a person stays in the relationship with someone or with something, the more of a chance he/she can get to know the other person on a deeper level.

“I have used Yunnan Baiyao¹¹ toothpaste since I was a child. Toothpaste was their first of the daily necessities they offered, and now they extended their products to shampoo, bath gel, and conditioner. As a consumer, I used all of their products.” --Chinese student, respondent 3

The duration of time is one influential factor that influences the quality of relationships. The respondent’s (Chinese, 3) current firm relationships were built on past time experience. The present and future relationships are shaped by the past, which extends across a variety of social and cultural perspectives. A person’s current and future interactions in relationships are decided by the past experience and interactions with the other parties in the relationships. If people realise that they have experienced something or have received something they have never had before, they would like to maintain the relationship in the future. Alternatively, if people have received or experienced something positive that they expected to receive in their current relationship, they would like to continue the relationship.

¹¹ Yunnan Baiyao is a Chinese traditional medicine brand, and the products include traditional medicine, toothpaste, shampoos, soaps, and a conditioner with herbs mixed into it.

The three parts that define the duration of relationships include the past, the present, and the future.

8.2.1.2.1 Past Time: (Table 8.3, Column 1 People are unable to memorize everything and every detail in relationships, so they only record those selected experience in relationships.

“I love Nike¹², because my ex-boyfriend has an uncle who works for Nike, which is one of the most important reasons I like Nike so much, and I also like their designs, and their products are really cool.”-- NZ student, respondent 1

The past moment or events or activities stay in people’s memories and become their experiences, and people interpret those events and moments in relation to their needs and want in the present and future, (for example, NZ respondent 1), she builds the relationship with Nike, she loves Nike because of her ex-boyfriend (past), and she loves the brand, not only because of her relationship with ex-boyfriend, but also because she loves the design, quality, and the meaning of the brand. Due to Nike’s good quality and company culture, she maintains the brand relationship even though she is no longer in a relationship with her boyfriend (present, future).

There could be different implications that are based on a person’s past experience, due to a variety of different influential factors, such as, their social or cultural environment, or their situation.

“The reason that I chose Apple was that everybody has it, it’s like a trend. But, now, that I do have it, I personally love this brand. It’s just like it is very easy to get used to using. Apple stuff simply works, and it looks great. The quality, that’s what spread the word in the first place and that first place was many years ago. Apple makes good quality products that last and they are supported by the stores that don’t operate on commissions and thus they give good advice and cheerfully fix anything that does go wrong. The products work well together. Things

¹² Nike is an American brand that is engaged in the design, development, manufacturing, and worldwide marketing and sales of footwear, apparel, equipment, accessories, and services.

communicate so well with each other, and it makes life easier.” NZ student, respondent 19

The reason that motivates people involved in the relationship might change because of other influential factors in the relationship. However, as long as people want to maintain the relationship that means there are still some moments or events that people find precious in their relationships, just as respondent (NZ,19) explained as follows:

“We may read thousands of words or hundreds of paragraphs on the internet, but one photo or video can grab our attention like heck! Youtube¹³ engages that weakness of ours. You suddenly remember a song from the 60s, you can watch it on Youtube. Guess the best part- while you watch this song, out of the blue, you come across that totally forgotten favourite melody of yours which you hummed as a kid. Youtube suggests that you watch similar videos while you are actually searching for a particular video.”-- NZ student, respondent 15

The memorised past experience are perceived and impacted upon by the present and possess the potential for interactions in the future. The present is the interpretation of the past, and the present involves learning from the past. The present behaviour is intentional, and it includes an expectation of the future just as respondent (NZ, 15) explained as follows:

Respondents’ (for example, NZ, 1; NZ, 19; N, 15) historical experience can provide additional explanatory power to predict intention positively. Respondents’ experience in the past time can serve as a strong predictor of their subsequent intentions and behaviour and are central determinants of their intention to perform various consumer behaviour.

In this thesis, the term of past time is collected based on key terms and key definitions of past time, such as, *“I have used this brand for XX years”* or *“this brand has never disappointed me”* or *“my parents/ friends recommended this to me XX years ago”*.

¹³ YouTube, an American video-sharing website brand, allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to favorites, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users.

8.2.1.2.2 Present time: (Table 8.3, Column 2)

“Whenever you complain about Android, people say ‘yeah, well... you just didn’t buy the right phone.’ Very rarely does the iPhone not meet customer expectations -- you usually know what you're getting yourself into if you buy one. And one bad experience can completely ruin the brand for people.” NZ student, respondent 9

The respondent (NZ, 9) believes that he currently has a good brand relationship, and he is satisfied with his brand relationship, because of his past and current brand experience. Consumers’ experience in the past and in the present are constructed while the respondent uses the brand, seeks out the brand information, and talks to others about the brand.

“I would go to their (Apple) website almost every day. I would like to check their news online and check if they have any new systems or new products. I would like to know the new products’ new functions, new changes, and to check if anything differs from the last generation.”
Chinese student, respondent 4

According to the respondent (Chinese, 4), the current situation or event, is the outcome or reflection of his past experience. People’s present behaviour are indicative of their past experience and can point to their potential future actions.

People’s behaviour might differ from their past behaviour based on the expansion of their needs and wants. The present time in relationships is composed of interaction, perception and cognition, and these three factors can switch and influence the present according to the different environments, or cultures.

“My first Tupperware¹⁴ bottle was a gift from one of my mother’s friends. She brought my first Tupperware and gave it to me as a gift. I still remember it was a red bottle with a nice appearance and it was good quality. After that, it seems it became a tradition, that aunt—the friend of my mother, would always bring Tupperware bottles for me, sometimes it was monthly, sometimes it was every half year. Then I got used to this

¹⁴ Tupperware is an American brand and their products include preparation, storage, and serving products for the kitchen and home.

brand, and I love this brand very much, and now I've only used this brand of bottle." Chinese student, respondent 27

The respondent's (Chinese, 27) brand experience influenced her current brand relationship. The respondent used the brand for many years and had a good impression of the brand. The brand provided the respondent with happy memories for life. The respondent was feeling supported and encouraged from her past relationship with her loved brand, and so she wanted to maintain the relationship. In relationships, the interactions between the respondent and the brand happen in the present, yet the willingness to interact was constructed based on past experience.

According to the respondents (**Table 8.3**, Column 2), their current experiences are understood as a feeling of being there in the present, the here and now of the physical and psychological world. The respondents who expressed that their relationships were influenced by their experiences in the past, they liked to talk about their past experience and their history in terms of their relationships.

In this thesis, the term present time is collected based on the key terms and key definitions of the present, such as, *"I go to their website every day..."* or *"this brand accompanies me almost every day"* or *"this brand supports my study and my life, so I am kind of attached to it"* and so forth. Phrases or words that express respondents' feelings and interaction with brands in the present are used.

8.2.1.2.3 Future time: (**Table 8.3**, Column 3) the continuous present interactions are relevant to one's future behaviour, because of the potential commitment and capability that exists.

"I believe time or distance would influence our friendship. If we don't have contact with each other, the relationship tie would not be as close as before. I would communicate and talk with some friends since I believe our friendship is worth maintaining, during our vacations, when we all go back to hometown. We talk about our university life, our dreams, our future plans and our lives, all sorts of things we would like to talk about..." Chinese student, respondent 4

Respondent (Chinese, 4) believed her friends helped her to have positive experience, and she believes the positive relationship in the future with her friend will continue. Individuals who are willing to maintain their future relationships do so because they are motivated or inspired by their relationships.

“Apple is open in the best sense: it's your music/movies/apps/device. Do what you want with it because you bought it and it's yours now. But if you are totally tech clueless, know that Apple has thought out the best course for you to follow that will usually delight you. Consumers don't know what they want, and Apple created products that people now can't live without that weren't even on their radar before Apple showed them the way. Apple showed us that design and aesthetics matter, in both hardware and software. People are willing to pay a premium for it. They are thus able to command a very strong brand premium and avoid the commoditization trap that befalls most hardware makers.” --
NZ student, respondent 19

Expectations of future interaction are the motive that drives people to enhance their sense of personal worth. People are willing to have future interactions in relationships because they would like to maintain or elevate their positive perspectives in their future relationships. People's present thinking and actions in relationships reflect their expectations about the future in their relationships, similar to the respondent (NZ, 19).

In this thesis, the term future is collected based on key terms and key definitions of future, such as, *“I would like to use this brand forever”* or *“I would like to follow this brand”* or *“I would like to recommend this brand to all my friends and relatives who do not know about it”* and so forth, in other words, they will use phrases or words that contain potential commitment in the future or future behaviour.

8.2.1.3 Diversity of Interaction

According to the respondents, the more different situations or circumstances they have experienced with their brands, the more likely it is that they would want to maintain their brand relationships. The diversity of interactions in the same relationship could help respondents understand the relationship from different perspectives (**Table 8.4**).

Consumers' daily events or activities can be divided into three themes according to their different roles and goals in life: 1) role theme: an individual has different goals and roles in their social environment; 2) Interpersonal theme: an individual in their different close relationships has different roles and responsibilities to undertake; 3) Life theme: this relates to an individual's life goals and purpose.

Table 8.4 Diversity of interaction

Main Focus	Response rate
Different aspects or ways that people interact in their relationships	NZ: 19/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents
	Total: 56 Respondents

The number of different kinds of events that people experienced had an influence on the quality of their relationships. People in a close relationship may affect each other more in a number of diverse ways.

“One of my best friends, I have known her since we were in kindergarten. We were in the same class in kindergarten, the same class at primary school, the same class at middle school, and the same class at high school. So, we have spent almost 15-16 years as classmates, and as good friends. From my understanding, a good friendship is built over time. This means that you and your friends have experienced lots of things and are very familiar with each other.” --Chinese student, respondent 35

In a relationship, the more different things people experienced together, the deeper they understand each other from different perspectives. A diversity of interactions in relationships provides more ways and opportunities to self-expansion. Since the respondent (Chinese, 35) maintained a friendship with her friend for 16 years, they have experienced many different things together, and they both believe they can rely on their friendship. Chinese respondent 35's interaction in his close relationships fit in with the interpersonal theme that his best friend becomes part of his life in his close relationships.

“I would stick to like Microsoft stuff, like HP’s, I think this has served me very well for the last six years, I love this brand, just because it works really well, and I don’t think I know anyone who has had any problems with HP’s. I use them wherever I go, when I am here studying and when I go home. So, I am very comfortable with it.”-- NZ student, respondent 19

“Apple is selling their products almost like appliances, where you push a few buttons, and it does what you want to do, but all of the complex tasks are invisibly done below the surface. Everything I have on my Mac (in terms of music, reminders, mail, notes, calendar events, and so on) are synced across all my devices and the Internet and I would also like to note the iCloud ecosystem.”--NZ student, respondent 21

According to respondents (Chinese 19, NZ 21, and NZ 19 and others), the more they experienced situations together in their relationships, the better they understood the other parties in the relationships. For interpersonal relationships, the more the two parties communicate and experience together, the better they fit. Both Chinese respondent 19 and NZ respondent 21 were in the role with the theme where they liked to interact with their loved brands. People’s personalities, behaviour, and ways of thinking are influenced by different environments, different cultures, and different backgrounds. People would understand whether the other party or parties can give what they need during the communications, or whether the other parties in the relationships can accomplish the expansion.

“I became familiar with La Chapelle from the beginning of university life and it was influenced by my dorm-mates. I used to like Semir¹⁵ when I was in high school, but then, I found it wasn’t suitable for me, from their styles or colors; now La Chapelle is more suitable for my age and my style, they produce different styles to fit different needs. They have office lady style, girl’s style, casual style, and cutie style, so I think I will love this brand forever.”-- Chinese student, respondent 38

¹⁵ Semir is a Chinese clothing brand and their products range from T-shirts, jeans, wash pants, shirts, quilted jackets, woollen clothes, sweaters, belts, shoes, hats, scarves, socks and bags.

“I’ve heard that some people refer to us as I-sheep, it’s quite interesting. This name is for some Apple fans who love Apple so much that they love every product Apple makes and every decision Apple makes, and follow Apple like sheep. I love Apple products because they suit my needs better than other products for the most part. Apple is still the shortest distance between you and what you want to do to. They maximize digital experience - in the Swiss Army Knife sense.” --NZ student, respondent 16

People would be introspective and examine their inner self and feelings from the perspective of different environments, so they understand what they need and want, in order to accomplish their goals. Both Chinese (respondent 38) and NZ (respondent 16) in their interactions with their loved brands fit the life theme that assisted them to pursue their life goals and purpose. The diverse experience people have increased their self-awareness from the outside so that people have an awareness of their appearance and the impression they make on others. From an inside perspective, self-consciousness involves people focusing on their inner self and which aspects they have to improve for themselves. People would know themselves better after they experience different situations, and as a result they will increase their self-awareness. The diversity of interaction in relationships not only increases the self-awareness of people, it also assists people to understand whether this relationship benefits them or others.

In this thesis, the term of diverse interaction is collected based on the key terms and key definitions of diverse interaction, such as *“this brand accompanies me wherever I go”* or *“this brand fits my different needs”* or *“this brand maximizes my life and study experience”* and so forth, in other words, phrases or words that expressed respondents’ awareness of the usefulness of their favourite brands.

8.2.1.4 Strength of Interaction

According to the respondents, the strength of the interaction in the relationship is closely related to the *time, distance and environment* in the relationship. The more time the respondents spend on the relationship partner the stronger the tie they have in their relationships. If they have shared memories, shared happiness

and sadness, and solve problems together this would strengthen their relationship (Table 8.5).

Table 8.5 Strength of interaction

Main Focus	Response Rate
It involves psychological and physiological dependence on the relationship	NZ: 21/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents
	Total: 58/60 Respondents

The strength of the interactions in relationships is indicated by the efficiency of the interactions and the dependency of the interactions in the relationship. According to the research results, the respondents' positive life experience and brand experience affected their dependency and their efficiency interactions in their relationships. Respondents' dependency and efficiency interactions with people or objects affect their motives to develop and maintain their relationships.

“In the friendship hierarchy, a best friend gains the highest position in comparison to a friend. Even in difficult situations, best friends are always there, comforting their friend and would do anything to make their friend happy. Best friends are like family to us. Best friends share a very deep understanding and know almost everything about their friends. They accept and respect their friend. The love of a best friend is unconditional and can be considered as a bond that is truly invaluable.”

NZ student, respondent 8

According to the respondent (NZ, 8), he divided his relationships as strong-tie relationships—with close friends, and shared personal information and contact frequently, and experienced situations and circumstances and solved problems together. He has a high level of emotional intimacy with his best friends and higher feelings of reciprocity. A relationship that has a weaker tie relationship, a ‘normal friend’, involves less frequent interactions, and lower levels of emotional intensity and intimacy.

“I love NIKE, because I have been overweight since I was a middle school student, and their sports outfits suit me and they have different styles and I love everything about them, from their hats, to their bags,

clothing, and shoes. I have connected with this brand since my middle school years until now, and I think this relationship will last.”-- Chinese student, respondent 16

People like to maintain the intense interactions they have in relationships, and they like to rely on their relationships, once they have found out that the interactions in a relationship are efficient and dependent (Chinese respondent, 16). According to the respondents (NZ,8; Chinese, 16) they are tightly bonded with their parents or friends because they consider the other parties in relationships as their haven and secure base, which can provide them with the comfort, support, and assurance they seek in relationships. Consumers like to bond with brands so that they not only have a physical dependence on brands they have a psychological dependence on brands.

The strength of the interaction is also related to time, distance, and environment in the relationships. Time and distance might be important in relationships, especially at the beginning of the relationship. People become familiar with other parties in relationships and have more interaction with other parties at the beginning of the relationship (for example, NZ, 7).

“I think what builds a relationship has to do with sharing experience, for example, if you tell a person about your experience, and they tell you about their experiences, over the course of time, I think it is possible that we can create a level of intimacy with our best friend, quite quickly, depending on the person. I think if you are far from each other, time definitely matters, cause then you have to make an effort to share the memories, and build intimacy, I think like you can make friends with a pen pal, who could become like a best friend to you, but I think it would take a long time.”-- NZ student, respondent 7

Time, distance, or environment influences the intensity of interactions in relationships according to these respondents. Because the intimacy or efficiency of relationships cannot build if people are located at a distance to each other, and information or memories cannot be shared immediately. The strong bonding in relationships should have a consistent interaction to improve the quality of the relationships so that the secure base can be built.

In this thesis, the term strength of interaction is based on the key terms and key definitions of the strength of the interaction, such as “*I’ve connected with this brand since I was a kid in middle school*” or “*I use this brand all the time, and I would like to know everything about this brand*” and so on. Phrases and words that expressed respondents’ feelings about time, distance, or environment-related to brands are closely connected to the strength of the interaction.

In conclusion, the way that consumers maintain their brand relationships can be understood through the time they invested in brand relationships, different events and occasions that consumers experienced and spent time with their favourite brands, times that consumers think about brands and the time consumers applied their brands, and consumers’ physical and psychological dependence on brands. This is because those four features of consumers with their loved brands reflect their cognitive, motive, and behaviour in relation to their brand relationships. Those four features also reflect whether consumers adore intense, frequent, and multiple interactions with their brands, are the same or similar compared to their interactions with close others in close relationships.

The qualitative aspect of the interactions between consumers and their close (people or brands) in close /brand relationships are their motives, to develop and maintain their close/brand relationships. The four features of consumers’ interactions with their loved brands stimulate the formation of familiarity, dependences, and routines that insert their loved brands in consumer’s behavioural system, which plays a role in cooperation or in association with consumers maintaining their brand relationships.

8.2.2 Research proposition II: Consumers engaged in relationship with brands are positively related to the spiritual relationship dimensions of:

- Unifying interconnectedness
- Transcendence experience
- Innerness or inner resources
- Purpose and meaning in life

The responses were sorted into four themes that were arranged as one spiritual relationship example and one brand relationship example under each sub-theme and were attached to the results for each sub-theme, to demonstrate the consumers' brand relationship analogies in relation to their spiritual relationship. The four themes of spiritual relationships are characterised by the inner experience of people's lives, which are driven by the deeper motivation and emotion of people's lives. People's inner needs and inner resources are included in their spiritual relationships. The four themes that relate to spirituality features can be found in the brand love relationship. Consumers believe spirituality features stimulate and explore their inner self, their inner needs, and their inner resources as they relate to their loved brands. Table 8.6 demonstrates the four themes that exist in both spiritual relationships and brand relationships

Table 8.6 Four themes

Theme	NZ	CN
Unifying Interconnectedness	20/23 Respondents	32/37 Respondents
Transcendence Experience	20/23 Respondents	31/37 Respondents
Innerness Strength	16/23 Respondents	18/37 Respondents
Purpose and Meaning in life	17/23 Respondents	37/37 Respondents

8.2.2.1 Unifying interconnectedness

According to the respondents, they considered unifying interconnectedness as a feeling of harmony within themselves and with close others or their possessions. While respondents recognised their feelings in the relationship, they would feel as if they were connected with other living beings, or objects within the environment via the relationship (**Table 8.7**).

Table 8.7 Unifying interconnectedness

Main Focus	Response Rate
Feeling of harmony with self and with others	NZ: 20/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 32/37 Respondents
	Total: 52/60 Respondents

“I think that the energy of nature is one of the most magnificent aspects of life in the entire universe, because it is full of wonder and magic. Nature is able to create such beauty because it takes into account the importance of balance and harmony. Being in a state of balance and harmony is essential for inner peace. I found this because I travelled with my family a lot, and I found that whenever I went to forest, seaside, or lakeside, I would feel inner peace.” -- NZ student, respondent 22

Respondent (NZ, 22) sensed the harmony through nature as she observed nature to help her to express her self-worth. Nature helps her become aware of her inner self and feelings.

“I really love XIAOMI, I have used it for four years, and this brand delivered the brand culture of simple, fashion, and fast which represents my values” --Chinese student, respondent 36

“The brand refers to the way that you promote yourself or your company and can help define who you are and what you do. Attractive graphics can bring people back to channels, and help users remember you or your company, which is very important to becoming successful on YouTube.”
--NZ student, respondent 4

People consider brands as their self-reflection to express their self-worth, which helps individuals maintain a certain consistency of their inner side and their outside world (for example, Chinese, 36; NZ, 4). The exploration of purpose and inner resources in life is the way of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is the propensity to be introspective and to examine one's inner self and feelings.

In this thesis, the term interconnectedness is based on the key terms and key definitions of interconnectedness, such as, *“I feel connected with others through this brand”* or *“I feel harmony or balance by using this brand”* and so on. Phrases or words that expressed respondents' feelings about being connected with others, or with their environment, or situations through their brand relationships are associated with their interconnectedness.

8.2.2.2 Transcendence experience

According to the respondents, transcendent experience in relationships either involve a profound experience of pleasure or uniqueness, and this type of experience is normally characterised as long-lasting or occurs repeatedly throughout the respondent's life (Table 8.8).

Table 8.8 Transcendence experience

Main Focus	Response Rate
allow people to observe their life from a different perspectives	NZ: 20/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 31/37 Respondents
	Total: 51/60 Respondents

For individuals, transcendent experience may be demonstrated in conjunction or along the same lines as they experience nature, beauty, love and other qualities that people can appreciate and tend to cheer them up, for example:

“I love items that are original, it's not like I could find it anywhere, for example, I love Nike, not only because it's long-lasting, I've got some Nike tennis shoes, it's just the Nike tennis shoes I have, as far as I know, I am the only person I know who owns that particular type of Nike shoes, I've got them even though they were quite expensive, but I bought them, specifically because I needed them and. no one else had them, so I like the idea that they have certain unique factors as well. That makes me happy and I feel as if I am special and different from others, in a good way.” --NZ student, respondent 7

The respondent's (NZ, 7) attitudes and behaviour were shaped by the transcendent experience of Nike. The respondent takes the transcendent experience as a motivation and a reward to maintain the relationship with the brand, because transcendence retains and influences the inner life of people. The transcendent experience in the brand relationship strengthen the consumer's relationships with their loved brands, and with other people. Objects and items that are experienced transcendently help people to gain skills and help them perform better, and give them hope for the future:

“For me the peaceful scenery makes me relax because it’s beautiful, the wonderful visual and the calm surroundings allow my mind to be swept away in a stress-free moment. Especially spending the holiday with my family out of the city, the breeze, the pure wind all those things can give me a tingling sensation of energy and happiness. I felt peaceful, and I wasn’t worried about anything at that moment, I felt the exhilarating feeling of warmth and cold at same time. And I quite like that feeling, because just like the tastiest food in the world is the one my mother prepared, it is quite similar to the idea that only nature can give us the peace we want.”-- NZ student, respondent 21

The respondent (NZ, 21) built up mental and spiritual connections with objects or nature or other aspects that they have transcendent experience with. Transcendent experience facilitates people’s relationships with nature, with objects, or with other people. The transcendent experience of objects or items enhance people’s self-awareness, and allows people to observe their life from a broader, and more objective perspective.

In this thesis, the term transcendence is based on key terms, and the key definitions of transcendence, such as, *“this brand gives me different experience”* or *“this brand motivated me internally”* or *“this brand gives me hope for the future”* and so on. These are phrases or words that express respondents’ self-awareness of their life and study, that brand relationships give them, from different perspectives.

8.2.2.3 Innerness or inner resources

According to the respondents, the inner resources they developed in their relationships provided them with resilience, self-protection, and endurance (Table 8.9).

Table 8.9*Innerness or inner resources*

Main Focus	Response Rate
Inner supportive power, protections and endurance	NZ: 16/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 18/37 Respondents
	Total: 34/60 Respondents

Inner resources have been described as one of the essential human resources that provide inner supportive power, protection, and endurance. Inner resources increase people's awareness, resilience, trust, and sense of coherence.

"As I travel to the countryside and surround myself with the energy of nature, I would start to see all the little details in nature that I fail to see on an everyday basis. I notice that my mind is more clear and I don't feel as stressed out as I am in the city. Many people who spend a lot of time out in nature often experience a sense of inner calmness that they can never find in the city. This inner calmness is what we often seek whenever we feel lost and depressed." -- NZ student, respondent 22

For this respondent (NZ, 22), his spirituality comes from nature. Nature makes him feel inner calmness and less stressed out. Nature is the intrinsic motivation that gives people psychological freedom. Compared to extrinsic motivation that focuses on the results and the rewards of the activities, intrinsic motivation is focused on whether the action is existing or gifts inner strength to people.

"I decided to buy this laptop (HP¹⁶), mostly the specifications were describing it, and it explained that to some degree it was sort of different. It's not what everyone is using (MAC), which is also my decision." --NZ student, respondent 13

The respondent (NZ, 13) has her enriched inner power—self-determination. She knew what she needs and wants, and other people's voices did not influence her. Self-determination is influenced by intrinsic motivation, attitudes, and values, which were triggered by intrinsic motivation. Self-determination is not only constructed of goal-oriented motives, it is also derived from psychological needs, which assumes an essential and fundamental lifelong psychological growth in terms of one's needs related to intrinsic motivation.

¹⁶ HP is an American brand, and products include personal computing devices, enterprise and industry standard servers, related storage devices, networking products, software, printers, and other imaging products.

“I have known about Pilot¹⁷ since I was high school student, I like to choose something I like. My parents used to make decisions for me, I had no requirements about that. I’ve bought things for myself since I was at high school, for example, stationary. That’s why I have known about Pilot since then, and I love this brand very much.” --Chinese student, respondent 23

The respondent (Chinese, 23) has the inner requirements of letting others know him, and his interests. Therefore, the intrinsic motivation of the respondent is to make people understand who he is and what interests him. The respondent’s needs have been satisfied by the brands he has chosen, he makes his own decision, and he uses the brands he likes, so the respondent considers all these aspects into account as his intrinsic motivation.

People’s innerness is also influenced by their experiences. If people’s experience are identified as intrinsically rewarding, people will feel more enjoyment, more positive, and more self-fulfilled.

“This price (of her Apple laptop) really blows my mind. But is easy to use and it is lighter than the others. Even though this is the most expensive brand that I have bought, so it has been a kind of joyful buying experience and it has the after sales care, since the laptop is designed to be a user-friendly experience, I don’t use a ton of software on my computer, and the fact that there is more software for a PC doesn’t impact me much because of the things that I need, I have it on my Mac and they work.” --NZ student, respondent 15

The joyful brand experience of the respondent (NZ, 15) tended to increase his intrinsic motives to maintain his brand relationship with Apple. Apple brand provides consistent satisfaction “*joyful buying experience...after-sales care*” and a “*user-friendly experience*” according to NZ student, respondent 15, which represent intrinsic rewards, so the respondent likes to make a commitment to the brand and maintain a relationship with the brand.

According to the respondents, inner motives are not only limited to reading, exploring nature or playing ball, for example, “*Whenever I felt sad or upset, I*

¹⁷ Pilot is a Japanese brand and their products include writing instruments, stationery and jewelry, but it is best known for its pens.

would like to do some painting or make some hand-made things to help me find some inner peace.” Chinese student, respondent, 35, explained, but possessions or belongings that were representative of the interaction between people and activities, those motives provided an optimal level of stimulation to the respondents (for example, “*The other reason that I love Apple is because they make me feel as if I am better person for having the brand. The story that Apple conveys throughout their marketing is a powerful one. It represents a lifestyle, innovation, passion and style*” --NZ student, respondent 14)

In this thesis, the term of innerness is based on the key terms and key definitions of innerness, such as, “*surround myself with the energy of nature*” or “*the brand cheers me up whenever I felt sad*” and so on. These are phrases or words that expressed respondents’ positive feelings and intrinsic motivation.

8.2.2.4 Purpose and meaning in life

According to the respondents, as long as their spiritual/ brand relationship provided purpose and meaning to them, they would have feelings of happiness, satisfaction, self-esteem, all of which would have a positive effect on them and lower their distress and depression (**Table 8.10**).

Table 8.10 Purpose and meaning in life

Main Focus	Response Rate
Involves a sense of coherence and a general sense of relationships among things and people	NZ: 17/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents
	Total: 54/60 Respondents

In terms of the purpose and meaning in one’s life, it involves a sense of coherence and a general sense of the relationships among people and between them and their possessions. According to the respondents, the purpose and meaning of life is “...ones’ life purpose does not mean just your mainstream work, its different factors that are connected and have a tendency to affect one or another aspect of your life, it's the system that defines you and the way you live your life” NZ student respondent 8 and “*I think that everyone wants to look for truth and the purpose of life, and whatever that truth is will eventually*

become his or her set of rules, beliefs, and in totality, his or her way of life.”--
NZ student, respondent 10

“My favorite brand is MUJI¹⁸ ... I think this is related to my hobby since I quite like painting and designing stuff. So, I would like to check if they design the stuff that fits me... All I like is something simple, fresh, and relaxing. I pay more attention to whether the design is suitable for my idea.”-- Chinese student, respondent 35

According to the respondent (Chinese 35), a brand with a design element makes sense to her, and her life. Consumers comprehend their experiences and interests in such a way, to construct the cognitive components of meaning in life. Furthermore, situations, happenstances, activities, experience help people to understand what the world is like, and how people develop as what they want to be.

Individuals understand themselves and the world not only by themselves, they also based their understanding of the social contexts, such as different people, different cultures, and different environments:

“I was influenced by my family that we would never buy Apple or Samsung, and we would never consider Apple or Samsung....I was influenced by my friends, all my friends are using Huawei¹⁹, it’s quite popular among students. And all my relatives are using Huawei...”
Chinese student, respondent 22

According to this respondent (Chinese, 22), she accepted and gained much information from her family and close friends. She liked to rely on the experience of those close to her, and she made her decisions since she believes she can rely upon family and close friends’ experience. From her perspective, close relations’ experience provide satisfaction to make any decisions.

“My mum works for a university as a professor, she only uses Chengguang²⁰ (pen and pencil). I was influenced by her since I was at

¹⁸ Muji is a Japanese brand, their products include stationary, and clothing for men, women and children, food items, and kitchen appliances.

¹⁹ Huawei is a Chinese multinational networking, telecommunications equipment, and services company, and the products include electronic communication devices, and chips.

²⁰ Chengguang is a Chinese stationery brand.

primary school.....I have only used Chengguang for the past 15 years.....” --Chinese student, respondent 26

According to the respondents, their brand relationships are influenced by their families or friends, and brands connect them closely with other people. One's purpose and meaning in life derive from their connection with other people, an understanding of activities or objects, and their interpretations of life that can help them perceive what it is they experienced and prepare a schedule to achieve an enthusiastic future.

In this thesis, the term meaning in life is based on the key terms and key definitions of meaning in life, such as, “*this brand provided me with help achieving my purpose and it has also added meaning to my life*” or “*this brand influenced my values*” and so on. Therefore, this has to do with the phrases or words that respondents used to express their feelings about the positive effect their brands provided them with.

In conclusion, the term spirituality gives people a sense of worth and a reason for living. People in spiritual relationships have experience caring for and expressing themselves as it relates to the enhancement of their inner resources, and this helps them expand their inner strength. People in spiritual relationships experience their relationships with others in the context of their caring connections with others. Spirituality exists in the brand love relationship as a high motivation concept, which helps consumers cope with the complexity of life, and it gives consumers hope for the future.

8.2.3 Research proposition III: Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Western culture.

In regard to the comparing the features of spiritual relationships as they relate to consumers' inner experience, inner self, and inner motives and the features of close relationships, they were more concerned with consumers' daily, frequent and regular interaction experience with their favourite brands. Both close relationships and spiritual relationships provided motives for consumers' self-expansion, and they each have their characteristics in terms of how they serve to assist consumers to maintain their relationships.

Examples of spirituality features and close relationship features for New Zealand respondents are arranged as one spiritual relationship example/close relationship example, and one brand relationship example under each sub-theme and this is followed by the results of the sub-theme. Table 8.11 demonstrates the motivation of New Zealand respondents to maintain their brand relationships in two forms (spiritual relationships and close relationships).

Table 8.11 Motivation to maintain brand relationships (NZ)

Motives to maintain brand relationships (NZ)		
Spiritual Relationship	Close Relationship	
Source of inspiration 18/23 Respondents	Self-enhancement 20/23 Respondents	
Sense of belonging 18/23 Respondents	Willingness to invest 18/23 Respondents	
Material dimensions 19/23 Respondents	Eagerness to use	
Emotional alignment from inside world to outside world 21/23 Respondents	Cognitive	19/23 Respondents
	Behaviour	16/23 Respondents
	Emotional	18/23 Respondents
Transcendental factors 20/23 Respondents		

8.2.3.1 Spiritual Relationships-New Zealand respondents

8.2.3.1.1 Sources of inspiration to maintain relationships

---New Zealand respondents

According to the respondents, both their spiritual relationships and their brand relationships inspired the respondents to seek to achieve and to accomplish their goals, and they helped them bring out the best in themselves and others in the relationship (**Table 8.12**).

Table 8.12 Source of inspiration

Main Focus	Response Rate
Items or objects that conveys enthusiasm and taking action in pursuit of spiritualities.	NZ: 18/23 Respondents

Consumers' spiritual relationships are one of the human experiences that include consumer's attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values. For our New

Zealand respondents, they are more concerned about their uniqueness, and the meaning of life.

“Purpose is something that a sentient being can have, I think maybe the purpose of life is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, and to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well. Everything that happens in our life is a random process and nothing is fixed forever which discards the very notion of 'finding that special thing which you are meant to do' because there isn't any". Life will throw a hell of a lot of things at you, some you may like, some you may hate and some you will find worth dying for.” --NZ student, respondent 8

This respondent (NZ, 8) indicated that life purpose to her is something that can help guide her life decisions, influence her behaviour, offer her a sense of direction, and create meaning in her life. Different people have their different life purpose. In spiritual relationships, life purpose could be closeness and connectedness, and it could also mean to all other living things in the world that are interrelated. For the respondent, she believed that all things in this world were created so we could develop ourselves well and find something worth loving and fighting for. The respondent's intrinsic motivation inspired her to pursue things she believes could give meaning to her life.

“When I put Adidas on, it was like I was walking on a cloud, it had a perfect fit, proper arch support, it didn't rub anywhere, it was just heaven. This brand perfectly supports and inspires me from different perspectives. Just love it.” --NZ student, respondent 12

Spiritual relationships can inspire and motivate people by providing them with a strong sense of orientation toward an ideal or a perspective toward an ideal. The inspiration of spirituality not only derives from the particular discipline by nature or the universe, or countries it also derives from the unique brand experience of individuals. NZ respondent, 12

In this thesis, the term source of inspiration is based on the key terms and key definitions of the source of inspiration, such as, it *“inspired me”* or *“guided me”* or *“supported me”* and so on. These are phrases or words that expressed

respondents' feelings that brands motivated or inspired them to be the best version of themselves.

8.2.3.1.2 Sense of belonging

---NZ respondents

According to the respondents, they found that a sense of belonging as it relates to a spiritual relationship and a brand relationship were the experience that gave them feelings of being valued, needed, or accepted (**Table 8.13**).

Table 8.13 Sense of belonging

Theme	Main Focus	Response Rate
Sense of belonging	Items or objects provides sense of belonging that helps people understand their identity and understand which part they need develop to expand themselves.	NZ: 18/23 Respondents

“Like my Mac, what I am attached to is the knowledge it can provide to me, my thesis, my degree, it’s not just an electronic thing that I can replace. It helps me not only from the functions it also enhances my knowledge, insight, and intrinsically, it provides meaning in my life.”

NZ student, respondent 6

Spiritual relationships provide a sense of belonging that helps respondents understand their identities and understand which part or place they can develop further on their own. To build a sense of belonging requires active effort and practice, and as the respondent (NZ, 6) increased her sense of belonging, she looked for the value of the brand. She called the loved brands as “*my Mac*” as the brand assisted her with her sense of belonging. She believes the value of the brand could help her achieve her self-expansion, not only from the brands’ functions, but also from the perspective of the other aspects of the brand. In Western culture, individuals concentrate and consider their needs themselves first, and then they look for a relationship to expand themselves. Spiritual relationships not only help individuals accomplish expansion they also help them find where they belong.

In this thesis, the term source of sense of belonging is based on the key terms and key definitions of a sense of belonging, such as, “*the brand provides me*

with the feelings of ...” or “I’ve considered this brand as providing me with a sense with of belongingness.....” or “this brand helps me get where I belong”.

8.2.3.1.3 Material dimensions of spiritual relationships

---NZ respondents

According to the respondents, spiritual relationships not only provide them with intangible things, they also delivered their values and beliefs through tangible items or objects (**Table 8.14**).

Table 8.14 Material dimensions

Main Focus	Response Rate
Tangible items or objects that connect people and spirituality, and deliver values and belief that people espouse	NZ: 19/23 Respondents

Material values are one of the dimensions that motivate individuals in relation to spirituality, just as materials connect individuals with spirituality, such as, nature (trees, flowers and so forth), or items or objects that could inspire people.

“That’s probably the reason I love Apple, because it is Apple. I do want to buy more from Apple, I am interested if they have new products coming. I do follow their news. I do love Apple because it’s really easy to use, their devices just work. I love Apple because they make me feel like I am a better person for having the product. The story that Apple convey throughout their marketing is a powerful one. It represents lifestyle, innovation, passion, and style, it’s like an exclusive club that has millions of members.”-- NZ student, respondent 14

Respondent (NZ, 14) perceived that tangible items or objects delivered and expressed their social identity and were associated with the values and beliefs that individuals needed and wanted.

In this thesis, the term sense of belonging is based on the key terms and key definitions of a sense of belonging, such as, *“this brand gives me enjoyment of life”* or *“this brand supports me functionally and mentally”* or *“this brand not*

only provides me with the opportunities to learn something, it makes me feel this world is not boring and repetitive anymore”.

8.2.3.1.4 Emotional alignment from inside world to outside world

---NZ respondents

According to the respondents, their spiritual relationships gave them the positive emotion that they believed their thoughts were aligned with in terms of serving as sources of spirituality. In terms of being aligned, to the respondents, it meant that they felt good, and they could always hold the thought that everything is possible (**Table 8.15**).

Table 8.15 Emotional alignment

Main Focus	Response Rate
Items or objects that individuals have relationships with become bridges that connect the individual's inside world and outside world.	NZ: 21/ 23 Respondents

Individuals' internal worlds become integrated with their outer world, or in other words, individuals find something or a relationship that can help them realise the essence or spirit of their daily life and work.

“I do like Apple, the important factor is, it's easy, it makes sense to me, because if I use both iPhone and this Mac, and it's the same, here (phone) and here (laptop), I mean the devices and cloud products work for my everyday life even though Apple is far from perfect. And it's quite easy for me, as a student. When you buy an Apple product, you're sharing and representing those same ideals that this very brand stands for.”--

NZ student, respondent 19

Brands become a bridge that connects the respondent's (NZ, 19) behaviour with his feelings and beliefs. Apple not only satisfied the respondent's functional needs. It also elevated his feelings of happiness, enlightenment, and wisdom. The brand conciliated the respondent's inner world and the outside world. The brand itself becomes the intrinsic motive that expands and stimulates the respondents' mind.

In this thesis, the term source of emotional alignment is based on the key terms and key definitions of emotional alignment such as, “*this brand makes sense to me*” or it “*delivers inner peace/strength to me*” or it “*provides me with the energy to do what I want to do*”.

8.2.3.1.5 Transcendental factors of spiritual relationship

---NZ student respondents

According to the respondents, they admitted that their spiritual relationships consist of a transcendent factor in that they can achieve a cognitive level of having a deep intuitive understanding of their relationships with others and their existence in the world (**Table 8.16**).

Table 8.16 Transcendental

Main Focus	Response Rate
Transcendental not only includes an experience of pleasure, it is also a life-long self-transformational shift in an individual’s consciousness	NZ: 20/23 Respondents

Transcendence experience not only include an experience of pleasure, they might also repeatedly appear in life, be long lasting, and/ or be as a self-transformational shift in an individual’s consciousness.

“I am very patriotic, yeah, I feel a strong bond with New Zealand as a whole. I am very into ANZAC (his clothes included an ANZAC badge), it’s not original, and everything related to my country, I care about, and I am concerned about. I am very interested in politics, what’s happening in the world, I always go to ANZAC day, and I always donate money and buy poppies.” --NZ student, respondent 13

Spiritual relationships might be repeated behaviour, or feelings, or thinking that becomes part of an individual’s life. The respondent (NZ, 13) perceived the connection with his spirituality, he thought of ANZAC day as part of his spiritual experience. His experience of ANZAC day is rooted in his mystical states of consciousness that involved his transcendence of normal reality.

“I love Starbucks, only because I like their coffee, or I like how they run the company. I can pretty much get anything there, they are the place

that got me into the coffee, and whenever I go to Starbucks, I always consider it like treating myself.”-- NZ student, respondent 4

The brand is becoming more influential in consumer relationships, and it extends the respondent’s (NZ, 4) natural relationship to provide more pleasant experience that the respondent (NZ, 4) never had before. The brand provides the respondent (NZ, 4) transcendental experience, which shifted her life experience to extraordinary experience.

In this thesis, the term source of transcendence experience is based on the key terms and key definitions of transcendence experience, such as, “*the brand helps me change my mind*” or “*the brand is coming from a natural source that relaxes me*” or “*this allows my mind to be swept away in a stress-free moment*”.

8.2.3.2 Close relationships with consumers---NZ respondents

8.2.3.2.1 Self-enhancement in close relationship

---NZ student respondents

According to the respondents, their close relationships and brand relationships provide them with the intrinsic motivation that helps them maintain positive views about themselves and allow them to feel good about themselves. (**Table 8.17**)

Table 8.17 Self-enhancement

Main Focus	Response Rate
Positively combines independence and people’s lives so they continue to invest time and energy and things to go into more appropriate relationships	NZ: 20/23 Respondents

Self-enhancement is positively combined with independence, and people would like to continue to invest time and energy and other things to go into more appropriate relationships. Self-enhancement is the intrinsic motivation to be accepted with a positive view both from self and from others and to maintain high self-esteem.

“Know yourself, set your priorities and differentiate on the basis of your subconscious mind regarding the variables that you want to use to create a beautiful life purpose because ultimately this system will lead

you to live a wonderful life. Life purpose does not mean just your mainstream work, it's different factors that are connected and have a tendency to affect one or another aspect of your life, it's the system that defines you and the way you live your life."-- NZ student, respondent 14

The manner in which this respondent chose to talk about his goals and purpose is his way to show his self-enhancement. The respondent (NZ, 14) likes to contribute and illustrates his positive outcome to himself first, and he believes that his life purpose is to define himself in the universe, and this intensifies the respondent's sense of personal worth.

"YouTube is a kind of brand and I love it, cause it's not only a video, it's also a place to sell products, like whole number of sales. I use YouTube every day, more than Facebook. I think it gives more freedom, more creativity to do what you like, unlike any other platform, it can sort of restrict you on a more solo basis, I guess it's safe in that way. At the same time, it doesn't give you that many options." --NZ student, respondent 4

Since self-enhancement is the intrinsic motivation that improves an individual to strive to be his or her most positive self, it is a demonstration of self-positivity. YouTube enriches the respondent's (NZ, 4) life and work, and the respondent believes that she has more positive qualities than others have.

In this thesis, the term source of transcendence experience is based on the key terms and key definitions of transcendence experience. Such as *"it kind of motivates me to wants grow and evolve so I am better"* or *"this brand refers to the way that you promote yourself and define yourself"*

8.2.3.2.2 Willingness to invest resources

---NZ respondents

According to the respondents, they were satisfied with their brand relationship, and they were willing to invest their resources to maintain their relationships. In regard to their relationships they were satisfied they had the motivation, to improve them, so they were to invest to do so (**Table 8.18**).

Table 8.18Willingness to invest

Main Focus	Response Rate
People would like to invest their time, energy, and other effort to maintain close/brand relationship	NZ: 18/23 Respondents

People would like to invest time, or energy, or money, or other efforts into their desirable relationships and maintain them.

“We did long distance two years, I was up in Wellington, and I moved back now, it’s quite a good relationship. At first it was pretty hard for both of us at the time since we had just started our romantic relationship, we’ve been separated, so it has taken effort to maintain the long-distance relationship for two years. Distance and time could fade everything. And back to those two years, once we had time or a vacation, we would fly to visit each other, it’s quite hard to maintain that, we invested lots of time, money and energy in it.” NZ student, respondent 20

In close relationships, once two parties are certain about their love, they would like to share the desire to overcome all obstacles that might prevent them from establishing their romantic relationships. Respondent (NZ, 20) and his girlfriend both invested time, money, and energy to maintain their close relationship to secure their future together.

“Customers of Apple love products, such as, iPhone and MacBook because of the design and the aesthetics of both the hardware and the software. This is why people are willing to pay a premium for it. Apple continues to charm its customers with its incessant innovation in product design and functionality.” NZ student, respondent 14

Respondent (NZ, 14) would like to invest his money and time and trust into the brands he loves, and he is willing to maintain relationships with his favourite brands, because he believes he receives great returns. Respondents believe that investing in their brand love relationships will reward them by providing unique values to them. Respondent (NZ, 14) is willing to trust and maintain long-term relationships with brands he has a commitment to, which is an intrinsic motive that lasting the brand love relationships.

In this thesis, the term source of willingness to invest is based on the key terms and the key definitions of willingness to invest, such as, “*willing to pay*” or “*buy every one of their new products*” or “*you have to invest time or money or other sort of things to maintain*” your brand love relationships.

8.2.3.2.3 Eagerness to use and involve themselves in relationship

---NZ respondents

According to the respondents, they are involved in brand relationships because of the services they have experienced, and they like to support their favourite brands by taking action, to engage in brand relationships. For example, they buy every one of the products of the company, and they support all of the activities of the brands they hold.

Table 8.19 Eager to use

Main Focus	Sub-Themes		
Eager to engage in brand relationships	Cognitive components	Emotional components	Behaviour components
	(1) Idealized the brand; (2) Desire to know everything about the brand	(1) Desire for accompany; (2) No negative feelings and trust; (3) Satisfy with functions; (4) Involvement; (5) Enjoyable past experience	(1) Reliable services; (2) Actions taken for loved brands
	NZ:19/23 Respondents	NZ: 18/23 Respondents	NZ:16/23 Respondents

Consumers who are eager and have a desire to be involved in their brand love relationships displayed three characteristics as follows:

1. Cognitive factors: Always spend much time thinking about brands:

“I love Lush²¹ cosmetics, for example, they are expensive, they are also natural and come from natural sources. They like to promote pure berry, I really appreciate that, if I know what the brand is like, such as, what

²¹ Lush is a British cosmetic brand and their products include facial creams, soaps, shampoos, shower gels, lotions, moisturizers, scrubs, masks and other cosmetics for the face, hair, and body using only vegetarian or vegan recipes.

the company does for good will, I am more likely to buy it as my brand.”

NZ student, respondent 5

Respondent (NZ, 5) is involved in brand relationships, and her thoughts are often constant, enduring, and persistent with her favourite brands. Once consumers have cultivated the habit of using their favourite brands, they would like to be loyal to the brand, and so they commit to the brand relationships. Therefore, as respondent (NZ, 5) thinks about her loving brands, her thoughts and reactions are always fueled by positive reinforcement.

Idealising the brand---NZ respondents:

“Apple is in the Swiss Army Knife sense. They do this through an obsession to design and detail, and strict controls on the end user experience. They ruthlessly throw out fluff and are not amenable to features that are not useful. I think the most attractive features of Apple are that it obviously elegant, nice looking, and it’s also, just easy to find things.” --NZ student, respondent 21

Respondents who are in a brand love relationship would like to idealise their relationships, and they believe their match is the perfect one. Respondent (NZ, 21) in brand relationships likes to associate all the most affirmative words to her describe her loved brands, such as beautiful, elegant, perfect fit. While consumers think about the brands they love, they would like to intensify their responses and imbue them with the hope they have for their loved brands.

Desire to know everything about the brand—NZ respondents

“That’s probably the reason I love Apple, because it is Apple. Once Apple has got new products that are coming out, I do like to buy more Apple stuff. I am interested when they have new products coming out. I do follow their news.” NZ student, respondent 11

The respondent feels the brand, Apple, is attractive to him, he likes to follow the brand, and he has the desire to know everything about the brand. Consumers engage in brand love relationships for their self-expansion, so they would know what they can get from their relationships. Consumers involved in relationships with brands means they are willing to accept everything from brands.

According to the respondents (NZ, 5; NZ, 21 and NZ, 11), they fully trust the brand they love, and they always picture their favourite brands as perfect and flawless. They are willing to know everything about their loved brand, such as, the history of the brand, the culture, and anything that related to the brand.

2. Emotional components:

Desire for accompany---NZ respondents

“I will probably stick with Microsoft, for example, HP’s I think, since I’ve been using it for six years already, I love it because it’s works really well, and I don’t think I know anyone who has had problems with HP’s.”

NZ student, respondent 18

Respondent’s (NZ, 18) favorite brand is HP, she desires to become as close as possible to the brand, and she trusts the brand and is loyal to the brand. She also has the brand in her future plans. The respondent is willing to show her feelings of closeness and connectedness with the brand.

“I’ve been using Adidas, probably for six or seven years, I am very close to the brand. Adidas seems to be the one company that applies the 3-D printer to take their sports shoe to the next level, I like that the company is innovative and uses technology in an imaginative way.” NZ student, respondent 11

The longer the respondent (NZ,11) uses the loved brand, the better she knows the brand, and the closer she feels she is connected with the brand. The world ‘close’ in here means not only physical closeness, it also has to do with the psychological distance from the brand.

Negative feelings with the loved brand? Trust? NZ respondents

“Since everyone knows that Samsung has made some big decisions that were a mistake, I don’t think Samsung owns the company that supplies the batteries that they use, so, it’s probably the battery company’s fault rather than Samsung’s own fault.....my first phone was a Samsung, it was a flip top, and my first smartphone is a Samsung, and I still use this brand.” NZ student, respondent 7

Respondent (NZ, 7) is willing to build brand relationships with her trusted brand, which makes her feel secure in her interactions with the brand. She believes the trustworthy brand is reliable. She is confident the company will take responsibility for her welfare, in terms of the products she has purchased from them.

“I had an HP, it was big, it was noisy, it took a half hour to turn it on, it was really heavy to carry to Uni, and I didn’t like that. I started to use Apple in. 2012, I first started with the iPhone and then I got my laptop in. 2014. I love Apple computers because of the look they have, and they feel great. They are completely made of carbon fiber and are very consistent with their color. The design is impeccable and so is everything else. They are very damage resistant and also connect well with Wi-Fi.” NZ student, respondent 19

Brand trust is built on consumer reliance on the promise of value that the brand represents. The respondent did not trust HP anymore because that brand could not satisfy her needs and always put her at risk. However, the other brand—Apple gives her the motive to maintain her brand relationship. She found that Apple is a safe brand for her, and with the brand, she is willing to face up to the uncertainty and perceived risk for her purchasing decision.

Satisfied with the functions---NZ respondents

“I love Adidas rather than Nike, I used to buy a lot of Nike gear, and their durability is very bad. And I then started buying Adidas and their comfort is much more comfortable than Nike’s was. Adidas is not as sporty as Nike, from its appearance, so it’s more suitable for both your sportswear or for your daily wear.” NZ student, respondent 21

The brand’s reliability and dependability are the reasons that attracted the respondent (NZ, 21) to establish the brand relationship, and make purchase decisions. Perceived quality is one condition that respondents require, as the quality of the brand is closely related to the brand experience with Adidas and Nike, and the brand expectations with both of the brands.

“My car is quite reliable, and it’s Volkswagen, I like the look of their cars, and the brand I feel is well respected, it has been reasonably high

quality, and it is sort of, more of a little bit en, considered to be a middle range car. They are quite well made, they are at the higher end of the price range, and even though the parts and services are pretty expensive compared to other makes, they tend to last longer than the relatively cheaper ones.” NZ student, respondent 13

This respondent (NZ, 13) has had positive brand experience with his loved brand, and he was satisfied with the after-sales services. Based on the positive brand experience, the respondent is willing to improve and maintain the bond with Apple. The respondent (NZ, 13) has an effective brand commitment with the loved brand, and this is accompanied by a strong sense of personal identification and shared values.

Involvement---NZ respondents

Brand involvement was demonstrated as consumers realised that certain brands are central to their life, consumers consider those brands in a sense as part of their identity. The involvement is related to their past experience or their past.

“I got my first Apple device, when I was at year 8....10 years ago, yes, I have had 2 iPods, and then an iPhone, and then a laptop. And I will buy another iPhone, I’ve got my first Apple in 2007, as a gift, my parents gave it to me when I got back from a trip, yeah.” NZ student, respondent 13

This respondent’s brand love relationships with her loved brands were started with the pleasant memory of a gift. Since it’s a delightful and satisfying brand experience, respondents like to sustain the relationships.

Enjoyable past experience---NZ respondents

“I bought my MacBook because I like its standards, it lasted me quite a long while (four years and counting), it works better and faster today than when I first got it, and it fits my preferences” NZ student, respondent 11

An enjoyable brand experience constructs a form of brand identity with the respondents, in terms of which brands gave more than a pure functional value

of the products. As respondent (NZ, 11) described his brand experience, he was not only talking about the functional experience with the brand, he spoke about his emotional experience with the brand.

According to the respondents, they were not only satisfied with the functions of the brands, it was also the relationship that satisfied them psychologically (Table 8.16).

3. Behaviour components:

Reliable services---NZ respondents

“Apple hasn’t got anything wrong yet, and I’ve heard that they are really good at after-sales service. And I firmly believe that nothing will go wrong with Apple since they are good quality, have good functions, and a good support team. They are very good.” NZ student, respondent 2

This respondent (NZ, 2) found that the quality of the services that the brand offers has a significant influence on her ability to trust the brand, as long as she believes the brand services are of high quality, and that they are reliable and trustworthy. Respondent (NZ, 2) likes to make repeated purchases and engage in a relationship with her favourite brands as long as she believes she can rely on her brands to deliver the service they promised. If that is the situation, if the brand delivers the service they promised to deliver, then the brand would never disappoint them.

Purchase or consumer actions are undertaken for loved brand---NZ respondents

“I love Nike, I know how cheaply they make it, and it’s not really about the quality of it, it’s just about the brand, that’s I always wonder that is it really worth it? It’s kind of like a whole package you buy. I was always interested to know what goes into it.” NZ student, respondent 17

Respondent (NZ, 17) has a ‘buying routine’ with her loved brands, once brands have new products or news she would like to follow up. So, buying frequency is one way for a customer to show they have loyalty to their favourite brands.

In conclusion, this section reveals that consumer-brand love relationships with close relationship features can be identified and separated from consumer-brand love relationships with spiritual relationships, under New Zealand culture. Spiritual relationships and close relationships that are intertwined with brand relationships, all provide resources, perspectives, and identities to consumers in relationships, and help consumers' self-expansion. The features of brand relationships with spiritual relationships and the features of brand relationships with close relationships can coexist in brand love relationships, or they can support brand love relationships, because of their different characteristics.

Five spirituality motives are developed from spiritual relationships in terms of their interconnectedness, inner strength, transcendence, and life purpose. These motives are the reasons that consumers maintain their brand love relationships for their self-expansion. The first is the *source of inspiration*. The source of inspiration in brand relationships can be understood as brands that stimulate consumers' essence of themselves and guide them to find their life purpose. The second is a *sense of belongingness*, as brands provide valued and needed experience to consumers, which helps consumers identify themselves from different groups' perspectives, and develop a sense of interconnectedness. The third is the *material dimensions of the spiritual relationships*, which respondents described as "relating with brands", or "being filled with brands", or "coming closer with brands", or "engaging with brands". The spirituality features of brands are connected through material things. Fourthly, *emotional alignment from the inside world to the outside world*, as the spiritual features of brands help respondents in their search for the meaning of life, and the spiritual features of brands stimulate respondents' inner strength, resources, and awareness and connect them with the environment or outside world. Fifthly, transcendental features in brand relationships help respondents to extend themselves beyond their common boundaries and achieve new experience and perspectives.

New Zealand respondents were influenced by the independent culture that encourages them to be more concerned more about whether their brand love relationships could assist them to expand their internal thoughts and their abilities.

There are *three features of motives* that develop from close relationships in terms of their frequent interaction, diverse interaction, diverse interaction, and long-term interaction as it relates to brand love relationships. The first is *self-enhancement*, where brands provide perspectives and outcomes that fulfill consumers' expansion needs. The second is the *willingness to invest resources*. Consumers believe brands can provide what they need, and they include their favourite brands as extensions of themselves, and consumers believe that investment in brands equals investment in themselves. The third is *eagerness to use and involve brands in relationships*, where consumers are eager to involve themselves in brand relationships via three factors: 1) Cognition: consumers realise brands fit their habits and are suitable for their development; 2) Emotions: consumers trust and are satisfied with brands, and are attached with to them; 3) Behaviour: brands provide services and materials that make consumers involvement with them desirable.

Even though New Zealand respondents' view of themselves is one that has a certain uniqueness and separateness as a feature of their personal characteristics, it does not mean they don't care about others, and they care more about the personal attributes and personal characteristics of others.

8.2.4 Research proposition IV: Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Eastern culture

The features of spiritual relationships were more concerned about consumers' inner experience, inner self, and inner motives. The features of close interpersonal relationships were more concerned about consumers' daily, frequent, and regular interaction experience with their loved brands. Both relationships provided motives for consumers' self-expansion and have their characteristics to maintain consumers in a relationship.

Examples of the spirituality features of Chinese respondents were arranged as one spiritual relationship example and one brand relationship example under each sub-theme and were followed with the results of the sub-theme. Examples of the close relationship features of Chinese respondents were arranged as one close relationship example, and one brand relationship example under each sub-

theme and were followed with results of the sub-theme. Table 8.20 demonstrates the motivation of Chinese respondents to maintain their brand relationships in two forms (spiritual relationships and close relationships).

Table 8.20 Motivation to maintain brand relationships (CN)

Motivation to maintain brand relationships		
Spiritual Relationships		Close Relationships
Inspiration 37/37 Respondents		Self-enhancement 31/37 Respondents
Sense of belonging 30/37 Respondents		Willingness to invest resources 27/37 Respondents
Material dimensions 25/37 Respondents		Eager to use and involve in
Emotional alignment from inside world to outside world 13/37 Respondents		Cognitive 22/37 Respondents
Transcendental factors 21/37 Respondents		Behaviour 30/37 Respondents
		Emotional 29/37 Respondents

8.2.4.1 Spiritual relationships---Chinese respondents

Spiritual relationships with consumers are one of the human experiences that include individuals' attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values. Spiritual relationships come from the conscious self and extend to the unconscious or “great” self. For Chinese respondents, they were more concerned about their meaning in life, life goals, and plans, and how their life meaning is essential to themselves and others.

8.2.4.1.1 Sources of inspiration to maintain relationships

---Chinese respondents

According to the respondents, their relationships brought them positive features, and help them overcome obstacles, challenges, trials and tribulations (**Table 8.21**).

Table 8.21 Source of inspiration

Main Focus	Response Rate
Chinese respondents considered their goals or future plans as their life meaning in their spiritual relationships.	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents

“My spiritual support is my goals. I would try my best to pursue my goals. I have had different goals at different ages and different stages.

When I was a primary school student, my goal was to have high scores on my middle school entry exam so I could go to a good middle school. When I was in high school, my goal was to achieve a high score on my university entry exam so I could go to a good university. And now my goal is whether or where I should find a job, or should I continue my studies.” Chinese student, respondent 21

Most Chinese respondents consider their goals or plans as their life meaning as they relate to their spiritual relationships. For example, Respondent (Chinese, 21), set different goals in her lifetime, those goals were for short term achievement. So, normally three to four years is the time span for a goal to be achieved, then she would set another goal or a future plan for the next life stage. In three to four years, the goals or plans she has have served as her spiritual guide and this has helped this respondent to explore the world.

Life meaning for Chinese respondents is not only related to themselves. It also is closely related to their life meaning as it relates to their friends or families.

“I’ve always wondered if maybe my life goals are closely related to my past experience. When I think of my study experience, I always think it went quite well, but now, my job is kind of no going very well. Compared with my previous life experience and study experience, I think right now is the hardest time for me. I’ve learned to adjust my attitude and I try my best to accommodate to different situations. I’ve never been in those situations before, so I would like to accommodate and adjust to the new situation. I believe I could fit it very well, and I hope I could fix it quickly.”

Chinese student, respondent 34

This quote is closely related to the respondent’s (Chinese, 34) life meaning and her purpose in terms of her past experience since she believes that she has learned from her experience, both her rewarding experience and her failure experience. When she sets a plan she would know her expansion goals, and where she can exploit her advantages to the full.

Life meaning is an interpretation of an individual’s life, and different people have a different life meaning and purpose. Meaning in life is expressed via a

higher level of satisfaction in life and there is an intrinsic motivation to be fulfilled in one's life. Life changes all the time, so to find out what is meaningful in the here-and-now is the most important thing.

“I would like to check if their design is what I like. I think this is related to my hobby since I quite like painting and designing stuff. I would like to check whether the brand designs fit me. All I like is something simple, fresh, and relaxing. I pay more attention to whether the design is suitable for the idea I have in mind. I love the Japanese brand-MUJI, whenever I went to the shopping mall, the MUJI store is the place I must go. I like the simple style, it's not too girly, it's more casual.” Chinese student, respondent 35

This respondent's (Chinese, 35) brand relationship is closely related to her life meaning since she found that design and painting can bring her life meaning, and it is an inspiration to her life. Her experience and interests are a way for her to understand the meaning of her life. Individuals always need to seek a way to make sense of their understanding in terms of what makes life meaningful.

In this thesis, the term source of inspiration is based on the key terms and the key definitions of the source of inspiration, such as, it “*provides me with goals in life*” or it is “*my spiritual support*” or it “*provides meaning to me in my life*”.

8.2.4.1.2 Sense of belongingness

---Chinese respondents

According to the respondents, they were happy with their relationships, since they believed that their relationships provided them with a close and secure base. The respondents found a sense of personal involvement in the social system, which makes them feel that they themselves are an indispensable and integral part of the system (**Table 8.22**).

Table 8.22 Sense of belonging

Main Focus	Response Rate
The inherent desire and motive to be a part of something greater than themselves	Chinese:30/37 Respondents

“If I realised that I have not improved for the following two weeks or four weeks, I would like to find something that can cheer me up. In the past I played piano as a professional, I would like to play piano in order to improve to myself so I can remind myself that I am still good at something. I can pursue my goals. I like to make myself feel I am capable of a good and a bright future.” Chinese student, respondent 11

This respondent (Chinese, 11) above illustrated that her life encouragement comes from the belongingness, whenever she finds she is frustrated, her past experience or belonging can inspire her. For the respondent, she takes life belonging as the experience of relational intimacy, and this gives meaning to her life.

“I prefer shopping online instead of shopping at physical stores, it’s very convenient for me, and it saves time. I like to recommend my favorite brands to my friends and classmates. Because we are all students and we are at the same consumption level, if I or they think something is good for students, then we would like to recommend it to each other.” Chinese student, respondent 30

Life meaning comes from various sources in people’s lives. Respondent (Chinese, 30) finds that online shopping is her favorite way to shop, and her ways to shop represents her (Chinese, 30) life choices, and her approach gives meaning to her life. Respondents view acceptance and self-development as part of their life meaning.

In this thesis, the term source of sense of belonging is based on the key terms and key definitions of a sense of belonging, such as, *“I want to know everything about this brand”* or *“I would check their website every day for their news and new tech”* or *“I care about this brand”*.

8.2.4.1.3 Material dimensions of spiritual relationships

---Chinese respondents

Respondents believe that material objects and their gear brings them value and they believe this helps them understand the meaning of life (**Table 8.23**).

Table 8.23 Material dimensions

Main Focus	Response Rate
Tangible items that connect people and spirituality, and deliver values and beliefs that people want	Chinese: 25/ 37 Respondents

“Reading is my spiritual resource. You would experience the same things with the author. The more you read, the more experience you would receive. You might not feel anything after reading books, however you may feel you have the same experience as a result of reading those books. All the sentences and words would come to you immediately, and sometimes they would help you to make decisions. The help from books is useful even though it is invisible.” Chinese student, respondent 14

The above respondent’s (Chinese, 14) spiritual self-expansion is coming from books, as she mentioned that different books provide different experience and sentences, which help her solve different problems. Her life meaning is that she considers that every book contributes to her significant and comprehensible experience. The respondent is satisfied with the book that can contribute to her life goals and meaning. She is making satisfactory progress toward her valued goals, and she feels that life is meaningful, so the material thing, the book has had a positive spiritual effect in her life.

“The news this year was that Nike basketball shoes were found to be of lower quality than advised. Shoes sold in a limited edition did not incorporate the patented zoom air cushion. Nevertheless, I still trust Nike Company, and I believe they would have a reasonable explanation. I had an idea about their risk management and how it would work when the scandal came. Nike Company did a fantastic job with risk management with the issue, they’ve recalled all the shoes that had that problem and they have compensated the customer for 4,000 RMB/a pair of shoes. I appreciate their attitude.” Chinese student, respondent 13

Life meaning comes from various sources within an individual’s life. The respondent (Chinese, 13) above is satisfied with the brand, and even though there was a scandal, he still chooses to trust the brand. Since the attainment of meaning in life is associated with satisfaction, as long as the respondent is

satisfied with the brand, he believes that the brand is the one that gives meaning to him in his life.

In this thesis, the term source of material dimension is based on the key terms and key definitions of a material dimension, such as, “*good quality and good functions make me feel comfortable about it*” or “*they are fast fashion and that expresses their attitude and I appreciate it*”.

8.2.4.1.4 Emotional alignment from inside world to outside world

---Chinese respondent

According to the respondents, this component of the relationship helps them integrate their inner world with the outside world, both from a psychological and from a physical perspective. In other words, this component helped the respondents understand the world through their relationships (**Table 8.24**).

Table 8.24*Emotional alignment*

Main Focus	Response Rate
Items or objects provide the meaning in life as a vital element that supply consistency to an individual’s world view and to their inner world	Chinese:13/37 Respondents

“I have acknowledged that China still has lots of improvement to make it better since I was in high school. Even so, it was not an excuse to escape China to go to another country, you have to try your best to improve your own country. Some people said Chinese’ capabilities are getting weaker and weaker, and the young generations are not doing better than their parents. I disagree with this opinion, our lives are becoming better, so the opinion that this generation is doing worse than the last generations is wrong. I’ve never changed my dream or goals, I always hold the same goal that I have to improve my country.” --- Chinese student, respondent 26

To do something to improve the country is the intrinsic motive for the above respondent (Chinese respondent 26) since he associates the outside world situations and his intrinsic motivation together as his life meaning. To him, the meaning in life is a vital element, which supplies consistency to his worldview and his inner world.

“I am still young, expensive clothes are not suitable for me because all clothes update very fast. The fast fashion that I apply to those brands is because I found that all of those brands update very quickly. Fast fashion clothing is the most recent fashion trend. Fast describes their speed in terms of their frequent updating. I like to read some fashion magazines during my leisure time. I felt that although their quality is not as good as some big brands, for example, Gucci or LV, or BURBERRY, they stimulate those big brands, they didn’t copy those big brands. They’ve linked to some big brands, and at the same time, their prices are much less expensive.” Chinese student, respondent 34

The above respondent (Chinese respondent 34) loves fast fashion brands because she believes that they update quickly and lead the fashion trend, and she also believes the fast fashion delivers the ideas that fit her well. She believes that the brand she loves provides the stable meaning of ‘fast fashion’, and this meaning suits her self-identity. Markets and companies do instill or establish meanings in their brands and products that they wish to deliver to consumers, and this respondent interprets the meaning of ‘her’ loved brands based on her interests, life goals, and the environment she grew up.

In this thesis, the term source of emotional alignment is based on the key terms, and key definitions of emotional alignments, such as, *“this brand fit me well”* or *“this brand delivers the value that I like”* or *“this brand supports my idea”*.

8.2.4.1.5 Transcendental factors of spiritual relationship

---Chinese respondents

According to the respondents, transcendent values are intangible and long lasting, beliefs, knowledge, or thoughts that deliver a positive meaning of life to them (**Table 8.25**).

Table 8.25*Transcendental*

Main Focus	Response Rate
Involves a profound experience of pleasure and happiness. The experience might occur repeatedly throughout an individual’s life.	Chinese: 21/37 Respondents

“My spiritual support is meditation. The most recommended posture for meditation is seated cross-legged. This is because it balances support for the body and wakefulness for the mind. You close your eyes and breathe naturally. I focus my attention on the space directly ahead of me as the spot between my eyebrows. The purpose of meditation is silence and stillness. My attention can be focused and relaxed and without thought. I would set a timer and along with thoughts, many feelings may get churned up during meditation.” Chinese student, respondent 18

The above respondent (Chinese respondent 18) finds meditation is her spiritual support since while she is doing the meditation, her feelings and insights are constantly transcended and enrich her awareness of the world around her. Meditation helps the respondent focus her mind on one thing and concentrate on her eyebrows and let go of other things and accept everything that happens to her. The sense of self is expanded in the meditation process.

“I love MUJI, which I recommend to all of my friends. It makes me look like their saleswoman who helps them promote their brands. If I really like something, I would recommend it to my friends first, since I want to share it with them. I hope that people around me can have the best I know of, and so I very much like to share good things with them. If I bought something that wasn't very good, I would tell them about it, too.”

Chinese student, respondent 35

The respondent (Chinese, 35) above loves MUJI not only because it satisfies her physical and psychological needs, it also helps her build her self-concept, and it makes her understand what kind of gear fits her needs and allows her to deliver the ideal to all her friends. MUJI also becomes a company that serves the respondent with a social purpose by allowing her to reflect on her social ties to her friends, and that shifts the normal consumer experience to extraordinary experience.

In this thesis, the term source of transcendence experience is based on the key terms and key definitions of transcendence experience, such as, *“this is my spiritual support”* or *“this enriches me”* or *“this helps me build my self-concept”*. However, Chinese respondents shows a low response rate in terms of sub-theme

of ‘material dimension of spiritual relationship’ and ‘emotional alignment from inside world to outside world’, and ‘transcendental factor of spiritual relationship’, as they expressed directly that they would not connect their brand relationships with their spiritual relationships.

8.2.4.2 Close relationships---Chinese Respondents

8.2.4.2.1 Self-enhancement in close relationship

---Chinese student respondents

According to respondents, they found that their relationships help them to seek and interpret themselves in a way to maintain and create a positive self-image about themselves (**Table 8.26**).

Table 8.26 Self-enhancement

Main Focus	Response Rate
The motivation that makes people feel good about themselves and willing to maintain the relationship	Chinese: 31/37 Respondents

Chinese culture is an interdependent culture. The self is meaningful only within the context of social interactions, social roles, and the different responsibilities people have and their obligations to others. Individuals demonstrate thinking or behaviour not only for themselves they do so to achieve their in-group goals and to sustain their relationships with others. In other words, the concept that Chinese people expand themselves in close relationships is not just for their expansion, and it is also for their partners or other people in close relationships.

“VIVO²² has sponsored lots of TV shows, so whenever we turn on the TV, we can see their ads. I would trust my friends’ recommendations. VIVO produces a good phone camera. It is kind of popular that we take a photo of what we eat—breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and where we go—classroom, university campus, and we like take selfies. All those photos we like to share with our friends on WeChat, we would like to

²² VIVO is a Chinese technology brand and the company products include smartphones, smartphone accessories, software and online services.

share with our friends and share with our family members immediately.”

--Chinese student, respondent 36

The above respondent (Chinese respondent 36) likes to enhance the collective aspects of her self-concept to demonstrate a more group-serving position than a self-serving position. So, whenever a respondent felt that she had found some good brands or something good she would like to share it with others who she is in a close relationship with.

For Chinese respondents, if they believe they are in a good brand love relationship and they love their brands, they would recommend these brands to their friends or close others. Respondent (Chinese, 36) would like to get good impressions from her friends, and she would like to share good things with her close ones.

In this thesis, the term source of self-enhancement is based on the key terms and key definitions of self-enhancement, such as, “*this brand improved the quality of my life*” or “*I’ve recommended this to my friends and relatives*”.

8.2.4.2.2 Willingness to invest resources

---Chinese respondents

According to the respondents, they foresee that their goals in relationships, or their current and future investment in relationships can have a positive impact on them (**Table 8.27**).

Table 8.27 Willingness to invest

Main Focus	Response Rate
Respondents are willing to invest all the resources they have to maintain the relationship.	Chinese: 27/37 Respondents

“I have used this brand (OPPO) for over one year; I find it’s a good brand. I check their news updates and new products every day. I would definitely go with OPPO²³ again for my next phone.” --Chinese student, respondent 14

²³ OPPO is a Chinese electronics and mobile communications company, and their products include smartphones, blue-ray players, and other electronic devices.

The above respondent (Chinese, 14) is willing to invest his resources on his favorite brands, to maintain his brand relationships. This is because he believes his loved brand is different from other brands, and his loved brand has associated features that other brands do not have. The willingness to invest in relationships in China means consumers can foster understanding, consideration, tolerance, and forgiveness in their relationship.

In this thesis, the term source of willingness to invest is based on the key terms and key definitions of willingness to invest, such as, *“I like everything that this brand produces and I would like to purchase from them”* or *“I would support this brand financially and spiritually”* or *“I would never change to another brand”*.

8.4.2.2.3 Eager to use and involve in relationships

---Chinese respondents

According to the respondents, this component can facilitate the achievement of their goals by allowing them to perceive themselves as having access to or possessing the other's resources in relationships.

Table 8.28 Eager to use

Main Focus	Sub-Theme		
	Cognitive	Emotional	Behaviour
Three components: cognitive, emotional, and behavioural	(1) Always think of the brand; (2) Idealized the brand; (3) Desire to know everything about the brand	(1) Desire to accompany; (2) No negative feelings, trust; (3) Satisfied with the functions; (4) Involvement; (5) Enjoyable past experience	(1) Reliable service; (2) Actions taken for loved brand
	Chinese: 22/37 Respondents	Chinese:29/37 Respondents	Chinese: 30/37 Respondents

Consumers who are eager for and have a desire to involve themselves in brand love relationships would display three characteristics:

1. Cognitive factors:

“YUNIFANG²⁴ has a new product that was introduced to the market last month, they have applied new technologies in this product. They received lots of good comments and good reviews on that new product. I would like to buy that product. I have their WeChat public account and weblog, it’s an easy way to follow their news every day.” --Chinese student, respondent 39

The above respondent (Chinese respondent 39) wanted to know everything about the brand and did not want to miss any news or information about the brand. Their satisfaction not only came from the brands’ function, it also derived from the companies’ news, future plans, and other information related to ‘their’ brand.

“My friends suggested I buy VIVO²⁵, since VIVO is more suitable for a university student. It has a good appearance, it’s not too expensive, and it has good functions, especially to play games. And I was also influenced by VIVO ads, so I changed to VIVO. All my family members changed their phone brand to VIVO, because they were influenced by me and VIVO ads. I love VIVO, I check their News every day, and so do my families and friends.”-- Chinese student, respondent 36

The above respondent (Chinese, 36) engaged in the brand relationship with VIVO because of her friends’ influences, and her family was influenced by her. Respondent’s (Chinese, 36) friends maintained their friendships by recommending all their favorite things to each other. Both the respondent and her friends achieved self-expansion in their friendship, as the respondent acquired the resources she needs, and her friends sustained the friendship because of her recommendations.

Brands enrich consumers’ life---Chinese respondents:

²⁴ Yunifang is a Chinese cosmetic brand, and their products include makeup, masks, facial creams, and lotions. They use natural raw materials from all around the world.

²⁵ VIVO is a Chinese technology brand and their products include smartphones, smartphone accessories, software and online services.

“I love the Huawei²⁶ logo very much; it looks like a flower and this brand is pronounced like the sound of the flower. It’s a Chinese company, it’s not patriotism but I feel I have to support the Chinese company. I like the brand name very much and I like the logo. It belongs to company culture. The logo looks normal at the first sight, and I love the design of the logo. I love the color of the logo, it’s red, the logo is a flower, and that flower has six petals, very detailed. That logo attracts me, I like it. It’s like you would not like the logo at the first sight, but you would love it when you look at it the second time.”-- Chinese student, respondent 20

The above respondent (Chinese respondent 20) constructs her brand love relationship based on her understanding of the company culture since to feel understood and accepted is one way to express love in a close relationship. Human beings deeply need to belong, and while some might achieve this through supportive friendships, or marriage, or other close relationships, this respondent finds belonging through brand relationships. The respondent finds a certain feeling of belongingness through the brand logo because the Huawei logo satisfies her imagination about a brand, and since she built a relationship with the brand she felt happy, and she felt the relationship was meaningful to her. The more an individual is satisfied with the brand, the more they like to idealize the brand they love.

Desire to know everything about the brand---Chinese respondents

“I love Nike and Adidas because compared with other sports brands they are popular and trendy. Those brands are not only recognised by celebrities they also recognised by lots of fashion designers and some trendy people. Nike and Adidas are constantly innovating and pushing the envelope to create campaigns people will talk about.”-- Chinese student, respondent 6

²⁶ Huawei is a Chinese multinational networking, telecommunications equipment, and services company, and their products include electronic communication devices, and chips.

The above respondent (Chinese, 6) knows the backgrounds of his favorite brands, and this builds loyalty and trust. The respondent is willing to know more about his favorite brands as this behaviour contributes to need fulfilment.

According to the respondents, they believe their relationships express and reflect their actual and ideal selves. In other words, the respondents believed that their relationships helped them express to others either who they are now or their ideal self—with respect to the ideal self, it represents the expanded self.

Emotional components:

Desire for company---Chines respondents

“I have been using Yunnan Baiyao’s toothpaste since I was a child. Toothpaste was their first product on the market, and now they extended their products to shampoo, bath gel, and conditioner. I fully trust this brand because my father works there, and my father is responsible for the production line.” Chinese student, respondent 3

The above respondent (Chinese, 3) loves the *YunnanBaiyao* brand, because, on the one hand, the brand had accompanied her for many years since she was a child. She trusts the brand. On the other hand, her father works for the company, so the brand is a tie that connects her with her father, and her family. The respondent felt happy when in the company of the brand, and the brand experience is intensified when she takes time to be with the brand, and she is with her father and her father’s responsibility with the brand.

“My first Tupperware bottle was a gift from my mother’s friend. She brought one from Kunming and gave to me as a gift. I still remember it was a red bottle with a nice appearance and good quality. After that, it seems it became a tradition, because my mum’s friend, would always bring Tupperware bottles for me. Then I got to use this brand, and I love this brand very much.” Chinese student, respondent 27

The above respondent (Chinese, 27) received a gift from her mother’s friend, and then it became a tradition. Since then, the gift was a tie between the respondent’s mother and her friend and the respondent. In China, gifts in relationships not only accompany each other, but they also represent a system that involves continued or reciprocal exchange between the two parties involved.

Negative feelings with the loving brand? Trust? ---Chinese respondent

“I fully trust and support this brand. Huawei had a product quality issue with one of their products—Mate 8, and the company processed it very well. The company recalled all the products associated with Mate 8. They have high quality products, at a reasonable price, and the company has excellent strategies. I follow their WeChat account, and I don’t want to miss any of their news and products.” Chinese student, respondent 32

The above respondent (Chinese, 32) fully trusts the brand, and he is willing to rely on and attach himself to the brand, even if his loved brand has made some bad decisions, he is still willing to place his confidence in the brand. The respondent trusts the brand because he has used the brand for a very long time and nothing had ever happened. The after-sales services and word of mouth are both good for the relationship. Even if the company has undergone any company scandals before, they have applied the proper ways to solve the crisis, and this has convinced its consumers to stay with them.

Satisfaction with function---Chinese respondents

“Pilot²⁷ pen has good writing quality: smoothness and reliability; it’s very comfortable to write with and hold, it is especially suitable for long writing sessions; even though the price is a little expensive compared with other brands, I think it worth it.” Chinese student, respondent 23

The above respondent (Chinese, 23) believes that the tangible features of the pilot pen increase the attractiveness of the brand. Respondent (Chinese, 23) built brand relationships that start with the functional values of the brand’s products as if the brand has all the features or qualities he needs and wants.

“The brand I have used for the longest time is Adidas. I like to buy the sports brand of Adidas. It is a good quality brand, and it is suitable for Asian people. I am quite satisfied with the price and the quality and the appearance. I have known about this brand since I was a primary school student, some of my classmates were wearing it, and I would check this

²⁷ Pilot is a Japanese brand and their products include writing instruments, stationery and jewelry, but is best known for its pens.

brand whenever I went to the sports stores with my parents.” Chinese student, respondent 29

The interactions with favorite brands are closely related to the time, frequency, and strength, and the more interactions the above respondent (Chinese, 29) has had with the brand, the closer and more satisfied he was with the brand. The respondent (Chinese, 29) had maintained the brand relationship for a long time and stayed with the brand because it provided the resources he wanted, and needed and he was satisfied with it.

Involvement---Chines respondents

“I love this brand (Yunifang²⁸) very much, I have purchased all of their products, the moisturizers and creams, lotions, and masks. I think this brand is not only good in terms of the qualities of the products, it’s professional. This brand did not extend its products to other fields, such as, makeup or other products. This brand just does what they specialize in.” Chinese student, respondent 39

The above respondent’s (Chinese, 39) love for the brand was not only limited to the functional value of the brand—as she bought all of their products, she also loves the culture value of the brand—the brand is just doing what it specializes in. The respondent is highly involved in the brand (since she would buy all of their products), and she tends to seek all of the brand information for the relationship on an on-going basis.

The respondent’s (Chinese, 39) involvement with the brand reflects that she was interested in the brand, that the brand was very important to her, and she has a positive attitude toward the brand. All these factors assist the respondent to maintain her relationship with the brand.

Enjoyable past experience---Chinese respondents

“The first time I knew about Samsung it was as a result of the influence by my family, as both of my parents were using it since I was a primary school student. I had no idea whether this was a good brand or a bad

²⁸ Yunifang is a Chinese cosmetic brand, and their products include makeup, mask, facial cream, and lotion. They use natural raw materials from all around the world.

brand. During my years as a middle school student, I did not replace Samsung with other brands. Because I have used Samsung for a long time, I am used to this brand and I don't need to replace it.” Chinese student, respondent 11

The above respondent's (Chinese, 11) brand relationship with her favorite brand had been influenced by her family for a long time. Since her parents were using Samsung she was used to Samsung, and she has used it ever since she was a primary school student. Her pleasant past experience with the brand had become part of her long-term memory in the shape of her brand preference.

“I think something that has accompanied me for the longest time is my pen, the brand is Chengguang²⁹. I've been familiar with this brand since the beginning of primary school. Back then, my parents had to sign all my homework to prove they had checked it, and they would use that kind of pen to write their signatures.” Chinese student respondent 26

The respondent's (Chinese, 26) favorite brand comes from her past study experience, and she described the Chinese homework style, which after all the homework is finished, the parents check it and sign it. This is to improve the quality of the homework. A pen is an essential product for all Chinese students, from primary school to university. Her past brand experience are closely related to the respondent's long-term memory and are stimulated by her long-term memory. Therefore, the long-term memory of the consumer is combined with the consumer's emotions and inner feelings for the brand, and the sense of brand—as touch, taste and smell, and the things that they do with the brand, and people or groups that are related to the brand.

Twenty-nine of thirty-seven Chinese respondents expressed that their relationships contain an emotional component (**Table 8.24**). According to these respondents, they believe their relationships inspired them to engage, or they touched their hearts or helped them find the perfect match that suits them from different perspectives.

Behaviour components:

²⁹ Chengguang is a Chinese stationery brand.

Reliable services---Chinese respondents

“I have been with iPhone since then; I used to use Nokia, the Symbian system. Apple’s system is IOS, they are two different systems and they have different styles. Apple has more back up software and supporting equipment. They have good after-services.” Chinese student, respondent 4

The above respondent (Chinese, 4) is satisfied with the brand because of the support services and delivering good services to consumers is one way to encourage consumer brand loyalty. The respondent is loyal to the brand, and she has the intent to repurchase the brand. The respondent has the confidence to recommend the services of the brand.

The respondent’s (Chinese, 4) expectations about the brand services are based on past experience. The repurchase of the brand on the part of the respondent speaks for the brand, and because she believes the services will remain the same in the future, she would like to be loyal to the brand.

Their purchase or consumption actions exemplify their support for their loved brand, and this is from the perspective of the Chinese respondents.

“I think I have fully trusted the brand I like—Adidas, if they have any problems with their products, I would still support them, since after all, it’s a big brand. I don’t think it would influence me. I believe that every company has scandals, has their problems, I would fully support the brand I like. Even if I check their new products every week online, I will only buy the products that are suitable for me and are suitable for me to play football. I’ve only checked and buy the products that I like and I need.” Chinese student, respondent 29

The above respondent (Chinese, 29) cares about the loved brand as long as the brand has new products coming out and he would like to be among the first people to purchase them. Meanwhile, he would unconditionally support the brand because he loves the brand.

“Huawei is a fantastic brand, I love it, and I have used it for four years. I began to use it because my English teacher at high school highly

recommended it, and all my friends are using this brand because they are influenced by me” Chinese student, respondent 5

The above respondent (Chinese, 5) recommended her favorite brand to other people in her close relationships, as in the interdependent culture, individuals’ actions and feelings are closely connected with their in-group others. The respondent emphasised the relationships between herself and others, and she would like to notify others about her actions or feelings to demonstrate the closeness of the relationship.

Chinese respondents talked about their spiritual relationships and their close relationships that are intertwined with their brand relationships, that all provide resources, perspectives, and identities to consumers in relationships, and help in their self-expansion. However, the features of brand relationships with spiritual relationships and the features of brand relationships with close relationships can be divided and separated in the research, because of their different characteristics and they offer support to consumers from different perspectives.

The five spiritual features of motives developed from the four features of spiritual relationships (interconnectedness, inner strength, life purpose, transcendence). Firstly, the *source of inspiration* in brand relationships can be understood as brands that motivated consumers’ essence in terms of themselves and guided them to find their life purpose. Secondly, the *sense of belonging*, because brands provide resources or identities to fulfill consumers, which helped respondents to identify themselves from different perspectives developed from their interconnectedness. Thirdly, the *material dimensions of spiritual relationships*, if respondents mentioned the spirituality of their brand relationships, they described it as being ‘related to’, or ‘being filled with’, or ‘coming closer to’, or ‘engaging with brands’. The respondents acquired life meaning or purpose through the usage of their brands. The spiritual features of brands are connected through material goods. Fourthly, *emotional alignment from the inside world to the outside world*, as the spiritual features of brands help respondents in their search for the meaning of life, and the spiritual features of brands stimulate respondents’ inner strength, resources, and awareness and connect them with the environment or the outside world. Fifthly, the *transcendental features* in brand relationships help respondents to extend

themselves beyond their common boundaries and achieve new experience and perspectives.

As for the Chinese respondents, they set their future goals or plans as their spiritual resources, which motivated and encouraged them to fulfill their expansion. The Chinese respondents cared about whether the spiritual features in their brand relationship helped them to fit in with their relevant others, and to become more engaged with or closer to their close relationships.

The three aspects of motive were developed from the four dimensions of close relationships (frequent interaction, diverse interaction, strength interaction, and long-term interaction). Firstly, *self-enhancement*, in that brands provide identities and outcomes and satisfy respondents' needs and wants. Secondly, *willingness to invest resources*, in that consumers believe brands can provide what they are looking for and they perceive the brand features as their own. Consequently, consumers believe that their investment in their brands equals an investment in themselves. Thirdly, in terms of the *eagerness to use and develop brand relationships*, consumers are eager to involve themselves in brand relationships, and this is characterised by three factors: from cognition, consumers realised that certain brands fit their habits, and are suitable for their development. From an emotional perspective, consumers trust and are satisfied with their brands, and they have an attachment to their brands. From the perspective of their behaviour, brands provide services and materials that cause consumers to desire to involve themselves in a relationship with their favoured brands.

Chinese respondents' view of themselves and others around them is intertwined, since Chinese respondents believe that everything they do is related to others, their relationships with others are inseparable from their close others. As long as Chinese respondents believe the brand relationship is harmonious within their other relationships, they would like to maintain that relationship.

According to the research results, the two forms (spiritual relationships and close relationships) of brand love relationships can coexist in brand love relationships to support the brand relationships, or the two forms of brand love relationships can support the brand love relationships individually. Consumers

maintain their brand love relationships because they consciously or unconsciously “give and receive” in these relationships. The five features of spiritual motives and the three features of closeness motives were developed from close relationships that improve consumers’ self-expansion. **Table 8.29** shows the motivation for spiritual relationships and close relationships.

Table 8.29 Motives to maintain relationships

Forms of Brand love relationships	Perspectives of Relationships	Motives to maintain relationships
Close Relationships	Frequent interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self- enhancement • Willingness to invest • Eager to use and involve
	Diverse interaction	
	Strength interaction	
	Long-term interaction	
Spiritual Relationships	Interconnectedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment form outside to inside • Sense of belonging
	Life purpose and meaning	Inspiration
	Inner strength	Material dimensions
	Transcendence	Transcendence

8.2.5 Research proposition V: Young New Zealand consumers and young Chinese consumers have different experience in their brand love relationships could thus be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships.

Culture is composed of languages, values, religions, and standards, which influence an individual’s behaviour and influence individuals’ ways of thinking. Culture influences the way that people perceive other people, goods, and activities. People in different cultures might have different understandings about their brand relationships. Therefore, the motivation and reasons they maintained their brand love relationships might be different, because of the different influences of their culture. Table 8.30 demonstrates the cultural influences on consumers’ brand relationships and compares the New Zealand data and Chinese data

Table 8.30 Cultural influences

Themes	New Zealand	Chinese
Social Influences	20/23 respondents	34/37 respondents
Social acceptances	23/23 respondents	37/37 respondents
Responsibility sharing	14/23 respondents	20/37 respondents
Obligation	15/23 respondents	30/37 respondents

8.2.5.1 Social influence

Social influence is how a person's emotions, opinions, actions, or behaviour are affected by other people. Social influence refers to the way that people change their ideas and actions to meet the demands of a social group. Since Chinese culture and New Zealand culture have some differences, social influence is one of the culture difference factors that influence an individual's relationships.

Table 8.31 Social influences

Main Focus	Response Rate
Social influence-- individual's intrinsic motivation.	NZ: 20/23 Respondents
	Chinese:34/37 Respondents
	Total: 54/60 Respondents

NZ Respondents:

"I love Starbucks³⁰. not only because I like their coffee, I like how they run the company.....I love Starbucks, I can pretty much get anything there, they are the place that got me interested in coffee, and whenever I go to Starbucks, I always feel as if I can treat myself." NZ student, respondent 5

According to the above respondent (NZ, 5), she has her personality traits, preferences, and interests in the brand relationship. For New Zealand respondents, they are considering the other party's direct attributes and characteristics instead of considering the contextual factors in relationships.

³⁰ Starbucks is an American coffee company and coffeehouse chain. Products include hot and cold drinks, whole-bean coffee, micro-ground instant coffee, espresso, latte, full and loose-leaf teas, pastries, snacks, and other offerings, such as, breakfast, lunch and dinner.

“I love HP and decided to buy it, mostly because how it was. It’s not what everyone is using in camp (MAC book).” NZ, respondent 13

The above respondent (NZ, 13) is not easily influenced by the other parties in their relationships. New Zealand respondents think more about how others in relationships can help them expand without changing themselves. They are not easily influenced by others and they make changes for others and have a more self-presentational orientation. The others (people or goods) in relationships are important as a social comparison or responses which can help people recognise their inner attributes of themselves.

“I like this brand. Apple simply works, and it looks great. Apple makes good quality products that last and are supported by stores that don’t operate on commissions and thus give good advice and cheerfully fix anything that does go wrong.” NZ student, respondent 19

The New Zealand respondent (NZ, 19) above is more focused on whether the goods or the people in the relationship can help them in their pursuit of self-realization and individual freedom. The respondents are willing to form and maintain a relationship that they are satisfied with because the relationship provides them with the rewards or approval they need. The respondents from New Zealand culture were more independent instead of conforming to obedience in relation to the broader social trend, and they are likely to find meaning and the value of things or activities in reference to their internal feelings, emotions, and behaviour first.

“My school is an Apple school, so we have to use Apple, and we are used to using Apple, our school only has the Apple laptops I am getting used to it, and it’s easy to use. I think that Apple laptops are reliable. Students need a computer that saves the files every time, turns on every time they turn it on, and doesn’t need to restart 6 or 7 times every time they turn it on/off. It’s kind of simple to use, I don’t want to have to spend 10 minutes of class finding the ‘delete program’ in Windows or 100 hours deleting a program. I think the design is good too, the slick design helps. You can drop an Apple laptop, and it stays

together compared to some plastic screens.... I really love it.” NZ student, respondent 16

According to the above respondent (NZ, 16), her actions are led by cognition and intentions. Intentions and cognition are focused on people’s attitude in the direction of social influence. Since social influence is what others expect in terms of the behaviour of an individual, it works from the environmental influence to the inside, such as, the intentions of an individual.

For New Zealand respondents, their actions and behaviour are derived from their intrinsic reward system, which is related to the internal attributes of the self. The respondent takes the social influences as resources if the social influences can verify and affirm the respondents’ inner core of the self.

Chinese Respondents:

“If all my friends and classmates believe certain brands are nice and worth having, I would like to buy those brands. I am easily influenced by others. When I was younger, I have a strong vanity if all my friends and classmates were wearing the same brand, I would like to buy the same brand.” Chinese student, respondent 16

The above respondent (Chinese, 16) was satisfied with his existing relationships and was willing to maintain the relationships, so he would like to accept the influences of his friends and relatives. If this respondent wanted to form or sustain his satisfying relationship with someone or something, he would like to give credence to the relationship and would like to accept the influences from the relationship.

People under the Eastern cultural model would like to attain confirmations from others and would like to behave as others expect in any relationship, in order to keep the relationship. Chinese respondents are likely to have more connections within their satisfying relationships and would like to have more common ground within the relationship. Integrating one’s social role and one’s relatedness to others in relationships is very important. Respondents are looking to act and think in ways to insist on their connectedness to other parties in relationships and to reinforce their existing relationships.

“My friends suggested I buy VIVO, VIVO is more suitable for the university student. It has a good appearance and good functions, especially to play games. I was also influenced by VIVO ads, now, all my family members have all changed to VIVO, because they’ve been influenced by me and VIVO ads.” Chinese student, respondent 6

According to the above respondent (Chinese, 6), she likes to accept opinions or suggestions from her close ones because she hopes to achieve a beneficial reaction and expansion from relationships.

“Before I used Yunifang³¹, I used some very simple replenishment of cosmetics, and one day all my skin care was run out, so I borrowed some of my dorm-mates’ Yunifang. I found it’s quite mild and not very dense. I have always believed that it is more suitable to have some light and fresh skin care.... I found it’s really a good brand, and I bought this brand since then. I love it, I bought all of the products of this brand. I think this brand is not only good at its product qualities, it’s professional. This brand has not extended its products to other fields, such as, makeup or others. This brand just does what they specialize in.” Chinese student, respondent 39

According to the above respondents (Chinese, 6; Chinese, 39), they are motivated to find a way to fit in with others in relationships via brands, and they like to have more connections with others and fewer differences with others in relationships.

The Chinese respondents perceived themselves as more similar to others in brand intermediated relationships. They were more open to accepting social influences internally since they are willing to adopt other’s norms, values, and attitudes in relationships.

8.2.5.2 Social acceptance

The respondents accepted social acceptance as the ability to accept or to tolerate differences and diversity in their social group, or the respondents tried to fit in

³¹ Yunifang is a Chinese cosmetic brand, and the product includes makeup, mask, facial cream, and lotion. They use natural raw materials from all around the world.

with others and attempted to look and act like them. Social acceptance is one of the factors that have an effect on respondents' relationships, and social acceptance has a different influence on the respondents in Chinese culture compared with the respondents in New Zealand culture.

Table 8.32 Social acceptance

Main Focus	Response Rate
Attempt to look and act like others, accept the differences and diversity of others.	NZ: 23/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 37/37 Respondents
	Total: 60/60 Respondents

In terms of relationships, if one wants to construct and maintain a relationship with others, they have to act, behave or think close to others in the relationship, in order to achieve acceptance from social groups or certain relationships.

Individuals in independent (Western) culture and interdependent (Eastern) culture behave differently with regard to social acceptance. Social acceptance has to do with the motivation to form and maintain close, long-lasting relationships with someone. Social acceptance in relationships is composed of two parts: one is the positive regular social contact, and the other is the stable framework of the ongoing relationship as the individuals show mutual concern in the relationships.

New Zealand Respondents:

“My best friend is one who appreciates you, gives you the right dose of sunshine and support when s/he feels you need some, accepts you with all your short comings and even when you act/behave in an unsavory manner.” NZ respondent, respondent 22

According to the above respondent (NZ, 22), her actions and cognition are organised and made meaningful predominantly by reference to her internal behaviour, actions, feelings, and thoughts. People in independent (Western) cultures have a clear line between self and others. People control their behaviour and actions and are responsible for their behaviour and actions.

Unions, communities, friendships, and families are supposed to satisfy people's needs. According to one respondent, her closest friend is a person who appreciates her, and likes her the way she is, and supports her to become whomever she wants to become.

Chinese respondents:

"We (relatives) would go to a restaurant every week, gathering, and talking about our lives and interesting things that happened to us in the past week. We would have parties together during the spring festival, national day, labor day... and so forth, my family would invite all the relatives to come to our house and treat them with lunch and dinner during the holidays." Chinese student, respondent 28

Most Chinese respondents have the tradition of their family/friends gathering almost every week, it's a Chinese tradition that relatives would gather together to celebrate festivals. People in Chinese culture like to include others and self as inseparable and as a whole entity. Respondents consider that if s/he is separated from others, s/he is not complete and only a part if they are separate or isolated from the social whole.

"My family runs a Feng Shui business and we operate a restaurant at the same time, and that restaurant runs really good in my hometown. My father gave that restaurant to his brother and sister because they cannot find a job." Chinese student, respondent 31

The above respondent (Chinese, 31) preferred to conform with the expectations of others and the social norms prior to their values, personal attributes, or internal needs. For people in Chinese cultures, they like to attach importance to the welfare of the in-group and to presenting a sympathetic concern for the other people who are part of the in-group.

According to the Chinese respondents, they are willing to put the feelings of others and their situations in front of their own, and they are willing to help others solve their problems first. The Chinese respondents are sensitive to what others are feeling, and they are willing to adjust their behaviour. As the respondents' father took action in terms of his responsiveness to the needs and wants of his brother and sister, as an objective moral obligation, people in the

interdependent culture are more sensitive to the others' needs and accept others as extensions of themselves.

8.2.5.3 Responsibility sharing

According to the respondents, sharing responsibility means being on the same team, which means people in different relationships, have to share different responsibilities in order to maintain their relationships. Meanwhile, responsibility-sharing is a commitment that serves to develop and maintain the relationship. This component is another influential factor in relationships, and the respondents in different cultures have different experience and understanding.

Table 8.33 Responsibility sharing

Main Focus	Response Rate
Duty to satisfy, perform or complete in the relationship.	NZ:14/23 Respondents
	Chinese:20/37 Respondents
	Total: 34/60 Respondents

In Interdependent cultures, people are willing to share other's consequences of actions and behaviour in relationships. Independent cultures believe people should take responsibility for their actions and behaviour in relationships, instead of sharing the responsibility.

Chinese respondents:

"I would like to travel with my close friends, especially if we go abroad. If something bad happens, they can share the risks or some other consequences with you. Because travel abroad is different from a domestic trip, many unpredictable things might happen. I think it's better to go with close friends and share things and risks with them, in the meantime, we can have more exciting experience together." ---

Chinese student, respondent 33

According to this respondent (Chinese, 33), he believes that people should share responsibilities in close relationships, including friendships, family relationships, and other close relationships. The respondent is prepared to share

responsibilities with others in the same relationship, and he accepts some responsibility for how others' lives go, as others do for him. In an interdependent culture, friends and families would accept the consequence of actions or judgements as his/her responsibilities.

“I love MUJI, I recommended this brand to all my best friends. It’s a cool brand not only with good quality and long-lasting, it is also a brand that revolves around sustainability and simplicity. MUJI is the brand that cares about others, as they designed their brand with non-branded and muted colors. They kind of deliver a culture that thinks about others, and they quietly show their products.” Chinese student, respondent 35

According to the respondent (Chinese, 35), she believes that in an interdependent culture, looking after and taking care of others and sharing one's favorite things with others is her responsibility. Meanwhile, a brand's responsibility is to consider their consumers, and they also ought to look ahead and consider the needs and wants of the whole environment in the future.

New Zealand respondents:

“There is no better way to learn about life and responsibility than to be raised on a farm with livestock, even if the livestock is where only backgrounded stocker steers are bought and sold every year. This includes cattle along with other requisite farm animals, such as, dogs, cats, calves, piglets, and lambs. I think having a lot of animals teaches you how to be responsible for yourself, for others.” NZ student, respondent 13

According to the respondent (NZ, 13), she believes that responsibility can be learned from life experience, she learned to take responsibilities for her actions and behaviour in terms of taking care of farm animals, since her duty and responsibility was to look after the farm animals. These values and norms are also what an interdependent culture suggests. As has been suggested, that social responsibility for those in an independent culture has to do with people undertaking his/her responsibility for himself or herself, as a result of accepting and having confidence in his or her abilities.

“Whittakers is a New Zealand company and their product is good and as far as I am concerned, it is far superior to Cadburys. As far as I concerned Whittaker is more responsible for their employers, their customers, and themselves. Whittaker's found a certain way to have a crack at a really big, loved New Zealand brand and without a doubt I believe they got some traction with that. So, if you want to buy something, and if you pay a lot of money, it's kind of expected that the product should be very good”. NZ student, respondent 17

According to the respondent (NZ, 17), she believes that Whittaker is a responsible brand, as they made a balance between their company, customers, and their products. Moreover, she believes that Whittaker has a positive impact on its employees, its customers, and the company is committed to making a positive contribution to produce quality products.

8.2.5.4 Obligation

According to the respondents, they have a social, legal, or moral obligation in regard to their relationships. The form of the obligation from the perspective of respondents might be a duty, or a commitment, or a promise, or an expectation. This component is one of the factors that have an influence on the relationships, and those in different cultures have a different perspective on this issue.

Table 8.34 Obligation

Main Focus	Response Rate
It is a course of action that someone is required to take and involves fulfilling certain requirements.	NZ: 15/23 Respondents
	Chinese: 30/37 Respondents
	Total: 45/60 Respondents

Obligation refers to resources in relationships because it's defined as a commitment or duty wherein people are legally or morally bound to do something, and it is a condition of being linked in a relationship. The contents of commitment could be time, effort, or tangible resources that can satisfy other's needs.

Chinese respondents:

“A best friend is someone with whom you share the same values, the same worldview, or you can both agree on lots of things. Most of the

time we have some opinions on the same things. Growth is to become accepting of your parents so you all can agree with your parents, gradually. I found out that, once you organise a home, you have to know how to balance your relationship with your family members, your relationships with your classmates, your relationship with your friends and so forth. It is really hard to balance all the relationships. You have to know how to manage all the relationships and maintain them, and you have to earn money to support the family. So, it is not easy for our parents, they have to manage all the relationships they have, and support the family, financially and emotionally.” Chinese student, respondent 16

According to the Chinese respondent (Chinese, 16), she likes to take care of others’ needs and acquire conformity from others. Chinese respondents like to emphasise their social roles, in terms of what they should do in the relationship, and they are focused on the well-being of the in-group. Obligation is related to sacrifices for others in relationships. Obligation is closely related to well-being and decreased levels of depression.

“Spalding is crafted from quality rubber that can give toughness. It has a great rubber grip that is comfortable even if you are playing for long stretches of time. It’s easy to inflate and it’s ultra-durable. I believe that good quality and safety are a commitment that a brand company should provide to its consumers. Months or even years of outdoor play with this ball would be no problem. I think I have to share good things with other people, or I should share what’s worth sharing with other people.”

Chinese student, respondent 39

The above respondent (Chinese, 39) from an interdependent culture is likely to achieve enjoyment from implementing her obligations, and she takes social obligations as one of the motives to maintain her relationships. Since Chinese respondents understand their obligations as their life satisfaction, they have a positive affect and engagement to construct and maintain relationships.

New Zealand respondents:

“I have lots of respect for my elders, grandparents, people, and stuff like that. ANZAC day means quite a lot to me, I’ve always been patriotic, and I am not sure where I got this from, because my parents never went to ANZAC day, it’s more the situation, maybe it’s just what’s happening in the world at the moment, people seem to be more patriotic, more conservative, than ever before. I am one of them.” NZ student, respondent 13

Independent cultures are more likely to place emphasis on behavioural intention rather than an attitude of social obligations. More specifically, it has to do with what an individual’s willingness is to fulfil his or her responsibility for life’s happiness and sorrows. For example, in regard to the respondent (NZ, 13), he believes that he has become patriotic since he was influenced by the environment that surrounded him, and he believes that respect for others and respect for his country is his obligation, and it also has to do with his values and beliefs.

“Actually, it is the family which cultivates good habits and good values. Being a good citizen, being caring, compassionate, and honest are some of the values which are enhanced only in good families. Without family, you can't experience the glamour of love, affection and emotional bondage, which are stated to be the normal features of life. You may have to bear some responsibility and duty, to the family or even to the society, but that is all part of the game.” NZ student, respondent 22.

People influenced by Western culture, are educated as responsible for their own behaviour, acts, and thoughts first. For example, the respondent (NZ, 22) expressed that family cultivates her with good habits and values, and as a good citizen she has the duty and obligation to serve her family and the society.

“In all my years using Apple products I have never had a virus, although I am aware it can happen. I have also never bought an antivirus. Also, what keeps me trapped on an Apple device is the OS X and iOS. I really value its experience. To be honest, even though the design is convenient, and the thinness is cool, it's not what impresses me, really. It's simply how it works, and I enjoy the fact that it lets me get my

work done. Either way, at the end of the day it falls to personal preference. I would like to say Apple has got their act together. I certainly think that Steve Jobs would be rolling in his grave if he saw what these guys are doing now. They are doing the best they can, thinking it is what Steve would do. They are trying to follow in his footsteps and they are trying to come up with ideas.” NZ student, respondent 21

According to the respondent (NZ,22), he understands that the obligation or duty of Apple and what they want to deliver to him, as well as to other consumers, is that they are trying to create a brand that can bring unique experience to their consumers. Meanwhile, Apple designed their products to be unique and creative as their duties and obligations to the whole society.

In conclusion, this section compares consumers' behaviour under two cultures—New Zealand culture and Chinese culture. New Zealand respondents were more likely to have a well-developed independent self, in which their cognition are about whether their choice is suitable for their personal preferences and their rights. For New Zealand respondents, they viewed themselves as autonomous and independent people, as they construct themselves from a belief in the wholeness and uniqueness of their internal attributes and characteristics. New Zealand respondents formulate and maintain their brands' relationships in reference to their own internal features of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. New Zealand respondents care about their relationship with close others and their social relationships. They consider others in various relationships as sources who can verify and affirm their inner core of themselves.

Chinese respondents were more likely to have a well-developed interdependent self, in that their cognition are set to their close social relationships at the primary place. Chinese respondents were likely to seek and maintain harmony in a variety of relationships. Chinese respondents believe that any relationships that can help them or provide resources to them to help them connect with others, and fit in with others, are worth maintaining. However, that is not to say that Chinese respondents do not have their internal attributes, but their abilities, personal opinions, and personal judgments are part and parcel of

their social groups. Chinese respondents' internal attributes only belong to parts of their social groups and only can be understood while viewing them in their setting in their social groups. Chinese respondents, constantly caring about others' needs and goals are the most important factors in all of their relationships. Chinese respondents would like to maintain relationships that can satisfy their close others' needs, desires, and goals.

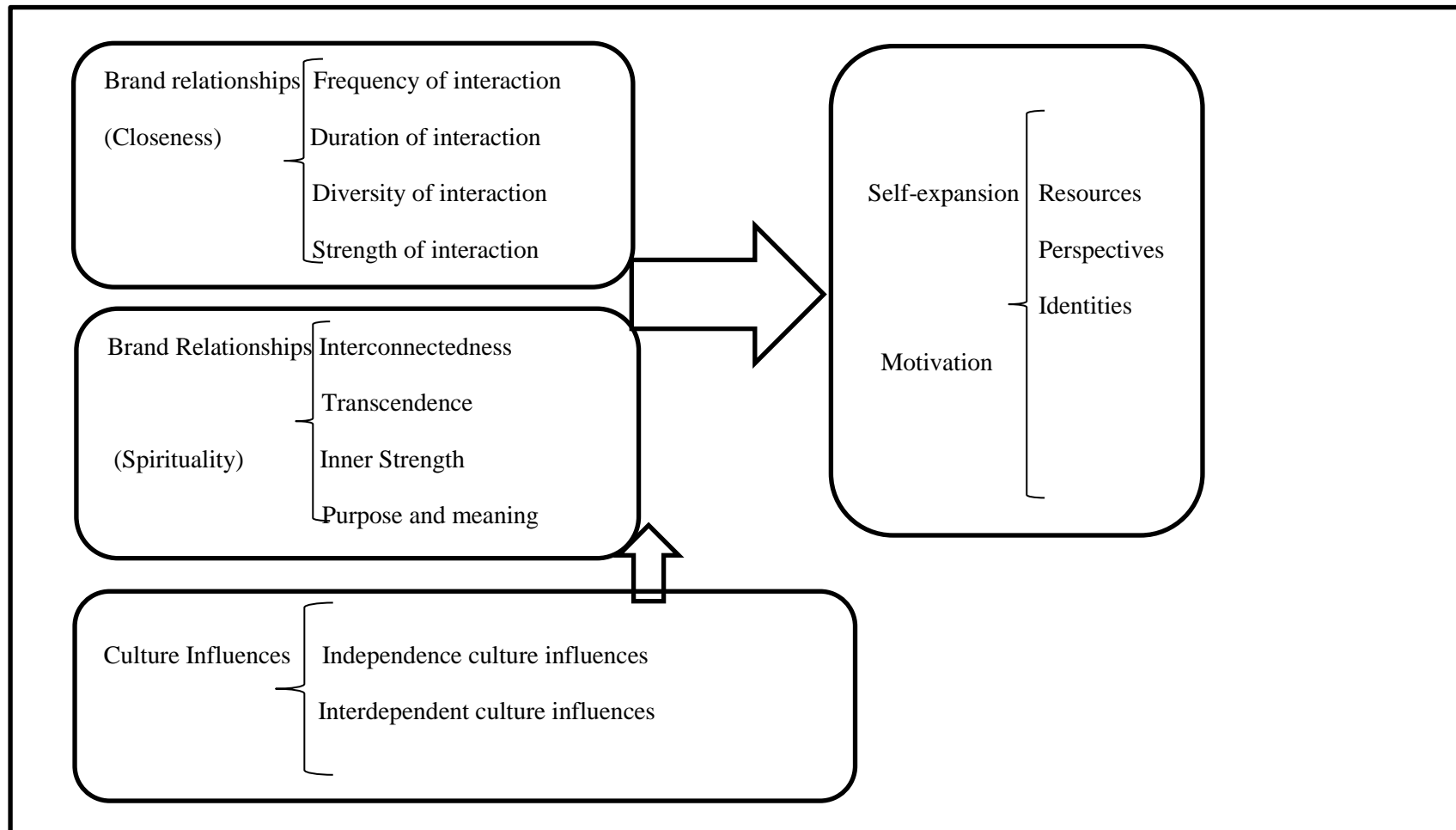
8.3 Conclusion

This thesis aims to understand consumer-brand relationships across cultures to predict that consumers are motivated to expand themselves by engaging with brands (resources, perspectives and properties) to accomplish their goals. In the meantime, the research result not only confirmed the potential conceptual model (Chapter 6, page. 77) but also developed the theoretical framework of this research (Chapter 9, **Figure 9.1**, page 269). Figure 8.1 present the potential framework of this research and the discussions of the potential framework followed.

This chapter confirmed that the potential framework of this research exists, and discussed the framework through five research propositions. **Research proposition I** proved consumer brand relationships are similar to interpersonal relationships, and the four features of consumers' interactions with their favoured brands stimulate the formation of familiarity, dependences, and routines that insert their favoured brands in consumer's behavioural system, which plays a role in cooperation or in association with consumers maintaining their brand relationships. **Research proposition II** confirmed consumer brand relationships are similar to spiritual relationships and the four features of spirituality in brand relationships gives people a sense of worth and a reason for living. **Research proposition III** and **Research proposition IV** confirmed five features of spiritual motive that developed from spiritual relationships, and three features of closeness motives that developed from close relationships improve consumers' self-expansion and are the motives that consumers willing to maintain their brand relationships. **Research proposition V** suggested that culture is one of the influential factors that exist in brand love relationships. There are four features of cultural influences, both exist in New Zealand consumers' brand relationships, and Chinese consumers' brand relationships.

The extension of the discussion of the emerging construct will be reported in the next chapter---Chapter 9 Findings and Discussions. Figure 9.1 (page 269) demonstrate the theoretical framework of this research.

Figure 8.1 Potential conceptual framework of brand love relationships



Chapter 9 Findings and Discussions

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher analyses the results with regard to the research propositions and describes the general conclusions based on the findings of this study.

This chapter is organised in five sections in response to the five propositions of this thesis and discusses the findings of this thesis. The discussion in this chapter provides evidence and synthesises the findings and arguments as they relate to the research propositions and research questions.

The formulation of the five propositions is the outcome that evolved from a review while considering the literature on close relationships (Chapter 2), spiritual relationships (Chapter 3), brand relationships (Chapter 5), motivation (Chapter 4), and culture and self (Chapter 5).

Thematic analysis has been conducted for this thesis to process and review the interview data generated by the respondents, to identify and refine the key themes. The key themes that emerged have been examined to test the validity of the research propositions.

9.2 New themes and ideas based on RP I

Research Proposition I: Consumers' engagement in relationship with brands is positively related to the close relationship dimensions of: (1) the frequency of the interactions; (2) the duration of the interactions; (3) the diversity of the interactions; (4) the strength of the interactions.

In terms of RP I, it is related to the context of the brand love relationships, and it is supported in several ways, by the findings and evidence gathered for this research study.

This thesis has applied Kelley's (1983) close relationship theory as it relates to the brand love relationship. As long as consumers believe brands assist them to achieve their goals, they enjoy the regular company of their loved brands, and they invest time or energy or other resources they have in them, in order to maintain their relationships with their favourite brands. Swaminathan et al. (2009) noted that consumers' motives, purpose, and objectives could be

understood in brand relationships, through the forms of the consumer's interactions with their loved brands. James (2013) proposed that the interactions in close relationships incorporate and explain peoples' motives, and people differentiate themselves and others through their interactions. The researcher has applied Kelley's (1983) theory in this thesis to understand consumers' brand love relationships from the perspective of motivation.

According to the research results (Chapter 8, section 8.2.1), the respondents feel a "closeness" with their favoured brands because of the interactions that exist in their relationships. Consumers' interactions with brands are reciprocated and repeated (pg.128, para 3, para 4, para 5- four perspectives of interactions in brand relationships), since on the one hand, consumers invest in brands to maintain relationships, and on the other hand, their favoured brands assist them to achieve their goals. Kelley (1983) defined close relationships as the strong, frequent, diverse interactions between people and their relationship partners that last over a significant period of time. The interactions that exist in the relationships are an essential element to maintain meaningful relationships. The interactions can occur even if one party in the relationship is inactive or quiet (James, 2013; Kelley, 1983). According to the results (page 125, para 1 & 2; page 142, para 2), the interactions between the consumers and their favourite brands are reciprocated and repeated because consumers invest the resources they have to maintain the relationships, and their favoured brands provide opportunities (brand resources, brand perspectives, and brand identities) for the consumers, for their self-expansion goals.

The results for RPI suggest that the consumer-brand love relationship is analogous to the close interpersonal relationship, because the ways consumers interact with their favoured brands are similar to the ways people interact with their close others (Chapter 8, section 8.2.1). The interactions in brand love relationships are expressed by consumers' long-lasting desires and motives (section 8.2.1). Fournier (1998) suggested that both consumers and brands affect each other in their relationships and that the relationships are at the end where the two parties no longer affect each other. The level of interaction between consumers and their favoured brands is not only illustrated by the mutual impact of the consumers and their brands (pg. 131, para 3, para 4), it is also revealed

by the reasons that consumers are willing to maintain their brand love relationships (pg. 132, para4; pg. 133, para, 1).

9.2.1 Frequency of interactions

In regard to the frequent interaction, it is one of the major attributes of the interactions. The findings and discussions are listed below:

Consumers' interest in brands is one factor that enhances their interactions with their favoured brands, according to the results (section 8.2.1.1.1), respondents who interact with their brands frequently do so not only because of their interests (pg.125, para 2), it could also include and express the interests of their close one's (pg.124, para4; pg. 125, para 2). Consumers' interest in a brand is defined as the positive motive that promotes their exploration of their brands (Izard, 1992), and consumers' interest in brands is animated by consumers' experience (Faircloth et al., 2001).

According to the results, interest is one of the factors that enhance consumers' interactions with brands (section 8.2.1.1.1). If consumers found that their brands were enjoyable or fitted well with their interests, they would like to maintain relationships with those brands and increase their interactions with them. Interest in brands is interpreted as the level of attraction that consumers have in brands (Machleit et al., 1990), and it could also be interpreted as a way to expand themselves (pg. 124, para4; pg. 125, para 2). Consumers would feel close with those who have the same interest in their brands and would like to be friends because of their interest in the same brands (pg. 125, para 2; para 3, para4). Plutchik (1991) suggested consumers' interests in brands could be considered as openness and inquisitiveness about brands and could also be considered as an orientation of exploring. Consumers' interest enhances their interactions with brands, and the three types of consumers' interest that exist in brand love relationships include self-interest, shared interests, and common interests. The respondents demonstrated that their self-interest in brand relationships is motivated by their gain with little or no consideration of others' benefits even though it is sometimes supported by others (pg.130, para 2). The respondents who expressed that they have shared interests with their close others are positive and supportive of each other's interests in their brand relationships (pg. 129,

para 4). The respondents found that other people have the same interest as they have in their loved brands and they might become friends with those who have common interests with them (pg.130, para 1, para 2). Meanwhile, interest is an essential factor that attracts consumers to engage in relationships, and it is also a motivation that keeps consumers in their brand love relationships (section 8.2.1.1.1).

Pleasure is the second factor that causes consumers to increase their interactions with their favoured brands (section 8.2.1.1.2). According to the respondents, the existence of pleasure in their brand love relationships is one of the motives and goal-directed factors that encourages them to involve themselves in the relationships (pg. 131, para 1). The more pleasure and happiness the brand relationships deliver to consumers, the more likely that consumers will increase their interactions with their favourite brands (pg. 131, para 3), Kringelbach and Berridge (2009) noted that pleasure benefits peoples' everyday experience. According to the research results, consumers would like to maintain their brand relationships if they believe their relationships can provide pleasure to them (pg.131, para 3, para 4).

Different consumers have different life experience, and they might experience different joyful interactions from the same brands (section 8.2.1.1.2). Some consumers have pleasant experience with their favoured brand/s because of its functional usage (pg.131, para 3), some consumers interacted with their favoured brands happily because of the meaning/s or achievements they received from their brands (pg.131, para 1; pg.126, para 3), and some consumers have pleasurable interactions with their brands as they share their brands with others (pg.131, para 5; pg.132, para 1). Consumers increase their interactions with their brands to acquire pleasure, and consumers' pleasant interactions with brands can be categorised into three perspectives: consumer's psychological pleasure interactions with their favoured brands (pg.131, para 1, para, 3); consumer's physical pleasure interactions with their favoured brands (pg.131, para 3); consumer's sociological pleasure interactions with their favoured brands (pg.132, para 1).

Self-identity is the third factor that appears in the data (section 8.2.1.1.3). Self-concept and identity are the ways that individuals realised themselves as

‘who am I’ and ‘where do I belong’ (Oyserman et al., 2012). Markus and Nurius (1986) concluded that an individual is capable of creating different ‘possible selves’, because of the different social-cultural environment and different historical contexts of the individual’s experience. An individual’s self-concept includes his/her thoughts, feelings, and actions that relate to his/her relationship with others (pg.132, para4, para5). In this thesis, the respondents’ self-identity was related to their brands and their favoured people in his/her brand relationships and close relationships (pg.132, para 5; pg. 133, para 1, para 2). Culture orientation is another factor that influenced self-concept, and the manner of consumer’s self-expansion and this will be developed in RP IV and RPV. Thus, consumers’ self-identity is complex, because if they want to achieve different goals, they might express a variety of their possible or ideal selves.

According to the research results (Chapter 8), consumers have a strong self-concept of themselves and their needs and goals. They realise their brand relationships help them define themselves and assist them for their self-expansion (pg.133, para 1). An individual’s self-concept includes a variety of content acquired across different time periods, environments, and experience (Fazio et al., 1981). In the research interviews, the researcher asked the respondents to talk about themselves and their favoured close others and favoured brands, and they only reported the self-relevant information that was central or important in their close relationship and brand love relationship (pg.132, para 5; pg.128, para 1). While respondents talked about their favoured brands they not only mentioned that they often interact with their favourite brands, they interacted with brands that prove “who they are” (pg.133, para1).

Consumer’s self-identity in brand relationships expresses the degree to which the brands represent a significant aspect of the consumers’ self (Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998), and the more consumers interact with their favoured brands, the more the consumers are clear about their self-identity or ideal selves that they would like to expand (section 8.2.1.1.3). Consumers would like to maintain relationships with their favoured brands, if those relationships help them define their roles from different perspectives (pg.132, para 1, para 2). As long as consumers believe their favoured brands own the resources, or perspectives, or identities they want to expand, they would like to include those

brands' resources, perspectives, and identities as themselves (pg.132, para 4, para 5; pg.133, para 2).

Potential risk is the fourth factor that enhances consumers' interaction with their favoured brands (section 8.2.1.1.4). Even though consumers understand that consumption risks might exist with their loved brands, they have the tolerance for the risks if something terrible were to happen to them, or consumers trust their brands and believe their favoured brands will never cause any danger to them (pg. 26, para 2).

According to the results, even though the respondents understood that there was the possibility that certain risks could exist in relation to their brand love relationships, their relationships with their loved brands was influenced by their expectancy and the incentive they could get from their brands (pg. 133, para 5; pg. 129, para3). Meanwhile, consumers' expectancy and incentive with their brands derive from their brand experience or others' brand experience (pg. 133, para 5).

Consumers who frequently interact with their favoured brands not only consider the growth or development they can acquire via their brand love relationships, they also consider the potential risks that might occur in their brand love relationships (pg.134, para 3; pg.135, para 4).

According to the research results, consumers' intense interactions in brand relationships increase the connection between the consumers and the brands (Chapter 2, pg. 23 – pg.26; Chapter 8, pg.123- pg.131). **Table 9.1** demonstrates the four perspectives of frequent interaction between consumers and brands. Consumers believe that engaging in these relationships can benefit them (section 8.2.1.1).

Table 9.1 Four perspectives of frequent interactions

Perspectives	Features		
Interests	Positive motivation	Self-expansion	Attract consumers to involve in brand relationships
Pleasure	Long-lasting	Useful for self-expansion	Psychological and physical pleasure and sociological pleasure.
Self-identity	Help consumer define themselves	Self-relevant information is important in both close relationship and brand love relationship	Frequent interaction help consumers clear their self-identity or their ideal self-identity
Potential risk	Believe in based on previous experience	Expectancies and the incentives	Fully trust the brand even though there are potential risks

9.2.2 Duration of interaction

Consumers' interactions with their brands in brand relationships endure over a long period, ranging from months to years (pg. 136, para 4). The longer the relationships last, the more the consumer hopes to maintain that brand relationship (Anders and Huber, 2010). Consumers interact with different brands to achieve different goals (pg. 138, para 2, para 4). Consumers' interaction with brands can be described as episodes and are part of a continuous stream (pg. 138, para 4), Huber et al. (2010), noted the longer the brand relationship lasts, the more likely it will reduce consumer's disappointment. The longer the consumers have maintained their relationships with their brand, the better they know it, and they believe it can assist them to achieve their goals (pg.138, para 3, para4, para 5; pg. 141, para 4). Even though the interaction has intermittent episodes, they are often experienced as an uninterrupted continuum (section 8.2.1.2).

Several distant episodes of interaction episodes can be linked together because of the same brand, and brand relationships can be developed and maintained even if an interruption were to occur. Consumers in long-lasting

brand relationships are unlikely to change brands because of their motivational and emotional involvement (Aker et al., 2004), and also due to the fact that their consumer's related interactions with their favoured brands fit their expectations (Chapter 2, pg. 23 para, 4; pg.24, para, 1). Distinct episodes of interactions with brands can be linked together as an uninterrupted continuum, only because of the continuity and sameness of the brand during the three phases of the episodes: **past time (section 8.2.1.2.1), present time (section 8.2.1.2.2), and future time (section 8.2.1.2.3) (Table 9.3)**, Fournier and Yao (1997) suggested that such bonds only exist in long term relationships, and Pawle and Cooper (2006) mentioned consumers do love and respect their brands and do have long-term relationships with them.

Lewis and Chambers (2000) suggested that consumers' past experience could be understood as the total combination of the environment, services, and the goods associated with the brands. According to the research results (section 8.2.1.2), respondents' past experiences influenced whether they would maintain their relationships or not, and the experiences of their past interaction episodes guide consumers' predictions about the present and future (pg.138, para 6; pg.139, para 2).

Carlson (1997) draws a conclusion about consumers' past brand experiences as stable and fixed feelings and thoughts with consciousness. Respondents' evaluations about past interactions include which past episodes they would like to repeat (pg.138, para 6), which past episodes they would like to memorize because of someone (pg. 137, para 5), and which past episodes they would like to recommend to others (pg. 132, para 3). Past episodes provide evidence to support current and future episodes, and consumers' current brand relationships are combined with both past experience as references (pg.138, para 4) and motivation (pg.139, para 1).

Current episodes in brand love relationships are a combination of the memories of the past, and the motives of the present (pg. 139, para 5), Boulding and Kirmani, (1993) noted that consumers buy what they perceive, and what they perceive is heavily influenced by their experiences and their impression. In a current brand episode, the respondents recalled how they felt about their past experience with their existing moments (pg. 140, para 5), and they summed up

those momentary feelings into a meaningful motive for the current moment (pg. 140, para 2; pg.140, para 5). Lewalski (1988) suggested that consumers' consumption preference is acquired in their early life. According to the results, respondents' current relationships are explanations of their reflections to their past experience with their favoured brands (pg. 140, para 5, para 6). Respondents have interacted with these brands over a long-term period and have good impressions of these brands, and this includes their resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves (pg.140, para, 2, para 5).

If respondents felt supported and encouraged by their favoured brands in the past, they would like to maintain these relationships in the present and future. Respondents' perception of their favoured brands are constructed based on past experience, and consumer's perception about these brands can be inferred from their interactions with their brands (pg. 158. Para, 5, para, 6). The longer consumers interact with their favoured brands, the more positive attitude they have towards their brands (Section 8.2.1.2). If consumers maintain a positive attitude with their brands, they are more likely to increase their chance of repurchase (Dimofte et al. 2008) and increase the chance and time to interact with their brands.

Future episode: consumers would like to develop and maintain brand love relationships in the future if they have meaningful or pleasant experience (Section 8.2.1.2.3). Shocker et al. (1991), concluded that consumers have an 'awareness' of which brands are suitable for their needs and goals. According to the research results, consumers' motives to maintain future interactions with brands are built on their positive experience surpass the negative experience in their previous brand relationships (pg.141, para 4, para 5, para 6). Consumers' brand experience includes both positive experience and negative experience (Reynolds et al., 2001). Consumers would like to interact with brands that can provide them with more positive consequences and opportunities for their self-expansion (pg.142, para 2).

In conclusion, according to the research results, the length of time the interactions occur between the consumers and their favoured brands is an important factor, the longer the existence of the brand relationships is the closer consumers would feel about with their favoured brands (Section 8.2.1.2).

Table 9. 2 Three influential factors of interaction duration

Interaction duration	Factors	Features		
	Past time	Related to current and future interactions	Rapid self-expansion	Increased self-concept after engaged
	Present time	The explanations of past experience	Self-expansion is the motive to maintain relationships	Long-term interaction lead to positive attitude
	Future time	Future interactions are built on motivation	Positive consequences are useful for self-expansions.	Positive experience and negative experience both exist in brand relationships

9.2.3 Diversity of Interactions

Consumers would interact with the same brands in different events or situations, because of their different motives and needs. Consumer's interaction with their loved brands is influenced by consumers' motivation as they relate to their brand relationships since Schank and Abelson (2013) suggested that human beings' motive structures are applied to understand occasions and situations, and proposed skills, knowledge, and objects to fit those events. Knowledge, objects, and occasions structured together are called 'script', and according to the research results, consumers would feel closer to their loved brands if they interact with the same brands in different scripts (events). A script is an interconnected appropriate sequence of events that comprise stylised and repeated everyday situations. Consumers clearly understand which brands are suitable for which kind of occasion. If consumers are asked about their loved brands, or to describe their loved brands, they normally start with brands that accompany them in most of their daily activities.

Baxter and Dindia (1990) suggested that people spend time with their close others together in different activities or places as a common way to maintain their close relationships. According to the research results (Section 8.2.1.3), the respondents reported that they have to interact with many different brands in a

day because of their different needs, yet as they mentioned their loved brands, they said they would like to bring their loved brands along with them all the time to different occasions (pg. 143, para 3), or brands they can apply during multiple events (pg.143, para 4), or brands that accompany them throughout some memorable events (pg.144, para 1, para 2) or use during some challenging activities (pg. 144, para 3). Aron and Aron (1986) suggested that close relationships can benefit from sharing the novel and challenging activities, and long term relationships can be improved and maintained through continued pair-bonding (Buss,2006). Consumer's loved brands accompany them in diverse situations to assist them to achieve different expansions in their lives, while on the one hand, consumers achieved self-expansion in different situations with same brands, on the other hand, diverse interactions are a way to increase intimacy between consumers and their loved brands.

Consumers' daily events or activities can be divided into three themes, as follows: 1) Role theme; 2) Interpersonal theme; and 3) Life theme. Role theme is defined as an individual has different roles with different goals, and the role theme is often referred to as social environment as social roles or community roles. Since the respondents (pg.143, para 5) in this study were all university students, their role theme was that of students. As the researcher asked them to talk about their loved brands, most of them would talk brands, such as computers, or phones, or clothing, or stationary (pg.143, para 3, para 4, para 5). Since these are the brands that they interact with almost every day, wherever they are, either at their classroom, library, or at home, the loved brands they mentioned fit their role theme as a student. Interpersonal theme often refers to roles in close relationships, such as parents and children, brother and sister, boyfriend and girlfriend, husband and wife. Since the respondents are young consumers' 18 to 25 years of age, they are full-time students, and their expenses were mainly from home support. In terms of the respondents' values, beliefs, and behaviour, they were cultivated and influenced by their close others. While the respondents interacted with their loved brands in the interpersonal theme, their close others would fully support their interactions with their loved brands, as their close others were familiar with their loved brands (pg.142, para 6; pg.143, para 2). Life theme, the third theme to organise scripts, describes the

aim or purpose an individual wants to achieve. Some of the research respondents' life theme was planning to continue their study after graduating from university, and some of the research respondents were planning to find a job after they graduated from university. In terms of the respondents' life theme, it is influenced by what they have done in the past or they build upon what they have done in the past. The idea that consumers interact with their loved brands in role theme or interpersonal theme can help them develop their life purpose with their life theme (pg.140, para 2, para 3, para 4).

Table 9.3 Three themes of diversity of interactions

Diversity of interactions		Features
	Role Theme	Social environment
	Interpersonal Theme	Surrounded by close others
	Life Theme	Constructed life goals and life purpose

Table 9.3 Demonstrate three themes that organise different scripts (events/situations), where consumers interact with their loved brands.

The theme in the brand love relationship would lead motivated consumers to behave differently in different situations. Consumers would have closer relationships with their loved brands that accompanied them to different scripts rather than those that could only accompany them to a few scripts (pg. 139, para 3, para 4; pg.140. para 3, para 4). This is not only because consumers interacting with their loved brands in diverse situations tended to increase their closeness to their loved brands, it was also because consumers could achieve self-expansion via different scripts through their same loved brands. Baxter and Dindia (1990) concluded that spending time together is a common way to maintain close relationships.

In regard to the three themes in consumers' lives, they are essential in that they help them to identify their goals and help them to behave properly. Within the theme, consumers would understand whether it is proper to interact with their loved brands or not. Schank et al., (2013) stated that the theme is essential for people to understand what they are doing and what result they want from the brand.

According to the research results, consumers interact with their loved brands since they understand that their interactions with their brands are useful for their self-expansion, and they included the brands' resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves, and they know their themes while they interact with their loved brands (pg.139, para 3, para 4; pg.140, para 2, para 3). The idea that consumers interact with their loved brands in different scripts (situations), is a way they increase their intimacy with the brands, and a way to show that they are satisfied with their loved brands so that they can apply them in different scripts within different themes. Strong and Aron (2006) suggested that shared activities in close relationships could increase the positive effect in the relationship and elevate the relationship quality. Aron and Aron (2012) noted that lovers or partners who are in close relationships are both involved in certain activities together, and this is good for them to help them maintain their relationships.

In conclusion, the more scripts consumers and their loved brands engage in, the closer the brand love relationships. The more activities consumers and their loved brands engage in, and the more self-expansion consumers can have. Aron et al. (2012), suggested in close relationships, the relationship partner's support and engagement in a variety of activities with their relationship partners could lead to the good quality of the self-expansion. In brand love relationships, consumers' loved brands assist them in different events or activities and help them to pursue their goals.

9.2.4 Strength of interaction

The intense interactions between consumers and brands can be perceived as consumer's dependency and efficiency interactions with brands, and Chou et al., (2010) concluded that consumers with dependency perceive their brands or objects to be interactive and satisfactory. Marsden and Campbell (1984) explained that two people who have engaged in a close relationship for a long time would feel the bond, and they would feel they have a stronger relationship. According to the results (pg.145, para 2, para 3), consumers' positive brand experience affects their dependency and efficiency interactions with their loved brands (pg. 146, para 2). Consumer's dependency and efficiency interactions with brands affect consumers' motive to develop and maintain their brand

relationships. According to the research respondents, the more they depend on brands the more they understand and are familiar with brands, the more likely consumers are to attach to their brands, and as a result they would like to maintain love relationships with their favourite brands (pg. 146, para 3, para, 4, para 5).

Kenny et al., (2001) suggested that people who want to maintain a good close relationship should not only focus on their shared self-expanding activities, they should also be supportive of their close others self-expansion. As the research respondents demonstrated, their dependency and efficiency interactions with brands are organised by three elements: time, distance, and environment. The three elements in strong interactions between consumers and their loved brands fit in with Kelley's (1983) idea about linking membership to the self-concept". When people are in a close relationship, he or she believes s/he is not just alone, and rather they are part of a unit defined by 'himself and his partner'. Respondents expressed that as they invest time and other resources to create the environment to stay with their loved people/loved brands (pg. 146, para 3). The respondents feel they are not the same person without their loved people/loved brands (pg.146, para 3, para4). This is not only because consumers invest all they have (invest time in relationships, 'face to face' interact/connect with loved people/brands and create a suitable environment for their close interaction with their loved people/loved brands) to maintain the relationships, but also because they feel themselves becoming tied to their loved brands.

Time, distance, and environment (Table 9.5) are three elements that increase the strength of the interactions. Since consumer's interactions with brands cannot be accomplished on a long-distance basis, the interactions between consumers and brands have to be 'face-to-face', because they require physical interaction (pg.146, para 4, para 5). Time, distance and even the environment influences the forms and qualities of the interactions, and limits the development and sustains the intimacy in close relationships (Murray et al., 1996; Stephen, 1986). Dependency and efficiency interactions between consumers and brands are in the form of self-disclosure and non-verbal behaviour (pg.146, para 2, pg.146, para 3). "Face to face" interaction and intense physical interaction is often assumed to be essential to developing and

maintaining successful close relationships (Stafford et al., 2006), and this also can be applied to consumer and brand relationships. The strength (dependency and efficiency) of the interactions in brand relationships can be sustained with daily (or monthly) ‘face to face’ interactions, and distance, time and environment serve as influential elements to create effective relational maintenance.

Interactions between two parties in close relationships normally happen repeatedly over a long period (McClintock, 1983), and the interaction in the relationship is always intermittent. The stronger interaction is built on the continuity of the interactions between consumers and their loved brands and is dependent on whether consumers achieved part or full self-expansion in their last interaction with their loved brands (pg. 147, para 1, para 2).

O’Connor and Gifford (1988) and Patterson et al. (1984), noted that distance is one factor that influences social interactions and close interactions. According to the research findings, in brand love relationships, consumers have ‘face-to-face’ interactions with their loved brands, not only to become familiar with the functions and operations of their loved brands, since consumers cannot interact with their loved brands without physically touching them. Consumers’ physical distance of interactions with their loved brands is closely related to their mental distance with their loved brands. The more frequently, consumers have physical interactions with their close ones or favoured brands, the closer they feel about their relationship with their close ones/brands (pg. 146, para 5).

A person’s surrounding environment controls his/her behaviour, and the interaction in closer relationships in terms of the fine points, particulars, or the specifics is influenced by their environment (Barker, 1963; Kelley, 1983). McClintock (1983) suggested that people often select or formulate a certain space or context for their interactions with their close others. Consumers’ interactions with their loved brands involve coordination so that they would find the proper space or certain circumstances to interact with their loved brands, in order to achieve their goals (pg.147, para 1, para 2).

Berscheid (1983) noted that in close relationships, people would increase their involvement in their partner’s lives and cooperatively influence each other

to attain both their shared goals and their individual goals. According to the research results, consumers have motives to invest their resources in maintaining their brand love relationships, as their perspectives and identities would be increasingly bound to their loved brands. Along with their strong interactions with their loved brands, consumers would like to include their brands' resources as a measure of themselves in order to achieve their goals (pg.146, para 4, para, 5; pg. 147, para 3, para 4).

Table 9. 4 Three perspectives of strength of interactions

Strength of interaction		Features of three perspectives of strong interaction	
	Time	Intermittently	Continuity
	Distance	Familiar with brands	physical touching
	Environment	Interaction have to under certain circumstances	Suitable for expansion

In conclusion, consumers' interaction with their brands can be viewed as sequences of interconnected events and experience that exist in their brand love relationships. The characterization of the interactions between consumers and brands are classified into four features as 1) the frequency of the interactions; (2) the duration of the interactions; 3) the diversity of the interactions; 4) the strength of the interactions. The four features of the interactions in brand love relationships not only help people to identify the events and experience of the interchange in their relationships, they also help consumers acquire the resources they need from their brands to achieve their self-expansions.

The interactions between consumers and their loved brands are repeated and long-lasting, and the closeness in their brand relationships are maintained by consumers' consciously or unconsciously giving and receiving (Section 8.2.1). The interactions between consumers and their loved brands is a series or chain, and so as long as consumers believe their interactions are meaningful, they would like to continue the interaction chain.

According to the research results, consumers believe that every interaction between them and their loved brands are meaningful. Consumers perceive their brands as resources in two ways: 1) the resources of brands function as utilities

(pg. 135, para 3; pg.139, para 7). Consumers who perceived brands as functional utilities are believed as material possessions that lead them to happiness, centrality, and success (Richins and Dawson, 1992). In brand love relationships, consumers perceive brands resources as their resources, and consumers are motivated to attain resources (brands) to help them achieve goals; 2) these are the resources of the social role (pg.131, para 5; pg. 132, para 1). Consumers include brands as resources as not only having access to other resources, or to identify or gain approval from others, but also to behave as a representative of their favourite brands. Consumers include brands as resources to construct, maintain and express their roles in the family, in their communities and society. Consumers' loved brands have the features that allow them to express their role and status in society.

Consumers' interactions with their loved brands are also for the expansion of their self-identity (Section 8.2.1.1.3). Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934) mentioned that an individual interacts with others because of the objects and events that deliver meaning to them. For consumers, their interactions with their loved brands are because they need the consistent and steady interaction to maintain the meaning that the relationships deliver to them (pg.132, para 4, para 5). The meaning that consumers want to maintain is relevant to their self-concept, because consumers interpret, predict and control their life and establish their identities through their relationships. Smith et al. (2008), noted that an individual's behaviour is indicative of self-identity of the person, and an individual's self-identity is also related to the genuine intentions of the person (Conner and Armitage, 1998). According to the study by Sivadas and Machleit (1994) an individual believes the meaning of an object is to help him/her to achieve his/her identity and is part of who he/she is. According to the research results, consumers maintain close relationships with their loved brands as they deal with and consider their loved brands are pretty much the same way they think of their love of close ones. The way consumers keep the interactions with their loved brands to maintain their brand relationships are similar and have the same purpose in terms of the way they maintain their interactions with their close ones (Section 8.2.1).

Consumer's interaction with their loved brands are also related and they include the point of view of their brand's perspectives as their own. Nisbett et al., (1973) concluded that people would not like to configure their close other's attribution when they have engaged in the close relationships for a long-time. Prentice and Miller (2007) suggested that people believe that they are less different than their close others, because they have been engaged in close relationships for a long time, so they have shared a lot. According to the research results, consumers would like to include their loved brands' perspectives as their own, as they have been involved in their brand relationships for a long time (Section 8.2.1). In terms of their behaviour toward their favourite brands, consumers include their loved brands as their own either consciously or unconsciously, and because consumers often form a relationship with their loved brands and are loyal to their favourite brands for a long time they are used to considering the attributions of their loved brands as attributions that they possess (Section 8.2.1.1.1; Section 8.2.1.1.2; Section 8.2.1.1.3; Section 8.2.1.1.4). The research respondents expressed that as long as they held positive motives with their interactions with their loved brands, they would believe their brand relationships were suitable for their present and future expansion, they would include their brand's perspectives as their own, and they would perceive the world from the perspectives of their loved brands (section 8.2.1).

9.3 New themes and ideas based on RP II

Research Proposition II consumers engaged in relationships with brands are positively related to the spiritual dimensions of: (1) Unifying interconnectedness; (2) Transcendence experience; (3) Innerness or inner resources; (4) Purpose and meaning in life

Research proposition II (section 8.2.2, pg.147) has to do with both the context of the brand love relationship and the spiritual relationship. The way that consumers believe the features or characteristics of brands improve them so they become better themselves, is similar to their belief that they can benefit from their spiritual relationship. Consumers engage in brand relationships because brands provide meaning to the consumer's life to fulfil their deeply rooted desire for spiritualism (section 8.2.2). The range of spirituality in this thesis is focused more on the goods and objects that consumers feel are meaningful to them.

Consumers perceive their loved brands as providing spiritual experience similar to those that other spiritual relationships can provide, and they also provide meaningful self-expression for themselves.

This thesis applies Howden's (1992) theory and organises the following four features of spirituality phenomenon: 1) Unifying interconnectedness, 2) Transcendence, 3) Inner resources and 4) Purpose and meaning in life. Spirituality is an essential and key component for people (Carlyon, 1984; Hill and Smith, 1985), and it is organised by the human body and mind, and it has inter-related dimensions (Howden, 1992).

9.3.1 Unifying interconnectedness

Hungelmann et al., (1985) suggested that unifying interconnectedness as an ongoing need that is meaningful, and it includes mutual loving, giving, and sharing. Unifying interconnections are closely connected with an individual's self-concept, love, and life (Dossey, 1998). The concerned and needed partner in relationships might be objects, nature, and close others. In this thesis, they are the brands that consumers have positive attitudes toward and motives with (section 8.2.2.1). The research respondents demonstrated that interconnectedness has to do with the brand love relationship whereby consumers and brands are intertwined with each other (pg.149, para 2, para 3), and consumers are satisfied with their life if they have brands that they are willing to invest in and receive from in the future (pg.149, para 3, para 4). Consumer's sense of harmony and interconnectedness with their loved brands is linked to their past experience with their favourite brands, that meet their needs in the present time, and that will help them with their future needs and goals (pg.148, para 1, para 2, para 3). All of the activities, behaviour, and qualities of spirituality are time-related (Hungelmann et al., 1985).

Unifying interconnection is an expression wherein the individual knows their deepest selves, the individual's inner life and how the individual connects their inner selves to the outside world, to form a better self (pg. 148, para 4; pag.149. para 4). An interconnection with others is identified as giving and receiving love from others (Ross, 1994). The research respondents illustrated that they feel like they are bonded with their loved brands, as consumers are aware that their

brand's resources or perspectives or identities have connections with their lives (pg. 149, para 2, para 3). Shelly and Fish (1988) suggested that love and relatedness/connectedness are two elements that construct spirituality, and those two sources of elements derive from close relationships where there is unconditional acceptance. According to the research respondents, their unifying interconnectedness in brand love relationships is the sense of love and relatedness they have for their loved brands in terms of harmony (pg. 149, para 3, para 4). The respondents believe that their loved brands deliver a sense of harmony to them that is closely connected with themselves (pg.148, para 3, para 4, para 5).

Hungelmann et al., (1985) concluded that unifying interconnectedness is closely related to positive motivation in regard to self and one's life. According to the research results, consumers who felt intertwined with their brands in brand love relationships are gratified with their existing relationships with their brands and had made peace with their past experience and were willing to maintain their relationships with their brands in the future (pg.149, para 2, para 3). Lane (1987) concluded that the three perspectives of interconnectedness in spirituality include the following: 1) *one is the ability to engage in energetic activities*, in other words, as consumers who are engaged in brand love relationships are satisfied with their experiences with their loved brands, they believe they can pursue their goals in the present and the future in terms of their love relationships with their favourite brands (pg. 149, para 1, para 2); 2) *enjoy the belongingness*, so for example, according to the respondents, the longer they stay in brand love relationships, the more likely they will perceive their brands as themselves (pg. 149, para 3) Consumers enjoy the belongingness of their loved brands and the belongingness is an expansion, wherein their loved brands can continuously provide resources, perspectives, and identities to consumers (pg. 149, para 4); 3) *achieve an inner sense of ultimate purpose*, so according to the research results, that consumers include their loved brands as themselves, not only refers to the idea that they are occupying or possessing their loved brands, it also means consumers transform their loved brands resources, perspectives, and identities and adapt the features of their loved brand to meet their own needs, wants and requirements (pg. 149, para 2, para 3).

Aron et al., (2013) suggested that individuals expand themselves from their small self to their large self through relationships. Consumer's primary self-expansion starts from their close relationships. Aron et al., (2013) then extended it to meaning-making relationships, such as spiritual relationships (pg. 148. para 5; pg.149, para 2, para 3, para 4, para 5).

9.3.2 Transcendence experience

Transcendence experience have the ability to achieve or overreach wellness (Howden, 1992). Consumers who have transcendence experience that correspond with their brand love relationships believed that their favourite brands have the capacity to assist them to achieve wellness (pg.150, para 1, para 2). Haaase et al., (1990) stated that self-transcendence is the capacity of an individual to reach out beyond his or her concerns and to take on a broader view of their life perspectives, activities, and purpose. The research results show that transcendence is an intrinsic motivation in brand love relationships, which motivates consumers to stand outside of their immediate sense of time and place and include the brand perspectives as their own themselves, to embrace life from a larger and objective point of view (pg. 150, para 3, para 4, para 5).

Jean et al., (2014) suggested that transcendence exists in every human being's life, except that some are aware of the existence of transcendence, and others are not aware of the existence. Consumers who described they have transcendence experience in brand love relationships expressed they have found their inner self from the perspectives of brands, or that they found meaning in life through their loved brands (pg. 150, para 3, para 4, para 5). Frankl (1959/1992) noted that transcendence is a fundamental feature of being human and transcendence comes from individual experience, and human existence is not meaningful unless it is lived in terms of transcendence.

According to the research results, consumers who reported that they had experienced transcendence believed their favoured brands are a source of comfort and meaning to them, which are connected with their positive motivation (pg.150, para 3, para 5). Transcendence experience are one of the factors that shape peoples' attitudes and behaviour. Luckmann (1990) concluded that individuals' transcendence experiences flows continuously flow.

According to the research results, they show that consumers consider their transcendence experience as motivation and a reward to keep and maintain relationships with their loved brands (pg.150, para 2, para 3, para 4). Piedmont (1999) suggested that transcendence is a broad-based motivation for an individual, and a source of intrinsic motivation that corresponds to an individual's selections of their behaviour, attitudes, and ways of thinking. Consumers who reported they experienced transcendence in brand love relationships would consider them as contributing to their self-expansion.

Consumers reported that transcendence experience in brand love relationships provided them with the chance to feel and observe their life from considerably more advanced perspectives (pg.150, para 5). Rayburn (1996) and Piedmont (1999) concluded that individuals not only can experience their life's continuing harmony through transcendence they can also experience the fulfillment of happiness and joy. Since consumers believed transcendence experience in brand love relationships assisted them to reinterpret their perceptions and their approach to things which helped them change their attitude, so they became more enthusiastic in the process and this extended their life (pg. 150, para 2, para 5; pg. 151, para 1, para 2).

9.3.3 Innerness or inner strength

Innerness or inner strength is the self-awareness that helps an individual identify his or her inner strength, and it is a positive self-concept that helps human beings to adjust and cope with the uncertainty in life and be at peace with him or herself and with the world (Howden, 1992). According to the research results, consumers who expressed their loved brands found that it motivated them from different perspectives in life and they were inspired by their loved brands, because their loved brands helped them to develop their inner strength (pg. 152, para 2, para 3). Consumers included the inner resources that their loved brands delivered to them personally, and the inner resources enhanced the consumer's mind, value, and beliefs (pg. 152, para 4, para 5). Consumers' brand love relationships provide opportunities and tools to help consumers understand the outside world in terms of how the world works and how other people do things and get their jobs done, and brand love relationships also provide opportunities to help consumers to understand their inner strength, for example, how to

connect their self-concept to the outside world (pg.151, para 6; pg.152, para 4, para 5). Consumers would have better and complete self-expansion, with the combination of their inner and outer experience that their loved brands give to them (pg.153, para 2, para 3, para 4). Hoche (2008) noted that a person's world is constructed by both his/ her inner and outer experience, because an individual should not only have the sense to understand the world, the outer experience, he/she should also have the conscious awareness to understand the world, along with his or her inner experience.

According to the respondents, they were aware of their own inner needs and goals, and they had a sense of their connections with their loved brands and they included their favourite brands as themselves, to achieve their goals (pg.150, para 3; pg. 151, para 3, para 4). The respondents illustrated that they felt the inner strength their loved brands gave to them that helped them stay calm and less stressed out. The inner resources their loved brands gave them is the intrinsic motivation that not only focuses on reward or result, the outcome was that it tended to stimulate the consumers' (Deci, 1972) personal causation.

Kagan (1972) stated that people have a motive to dominate their desire to achieve their goals and define themselves. Consumers felt that the inner resources from their loved brands provided them with the resources to understand themselves more, and consumers can clearly define themselves by combining both the inner experience and outer experience their loved brands provided to them. In the meantime, their inner experience gifted from their loved brands, helped them reduce their uncertainty (pg. 149, para 6; pg.150, para 3, para 4, para 5). Kagan (1972) and White (1960) mentioned that uncertainty exists in everything, and once an individual is conscious of that, he/she might feel fear or anxiety or guilt. Consumers rely on their brand love relationships, since their loved brands would provide inner resources to them, to help them resolve their uncertainty. The innerness in terms of a feeling of security that loved brands provide to consumers is positive motivation that give consumers the strength and help them expand their inner world.

Consumer's innerness that is motivated by their loved brands and the inner resources help consumers to deal with their environment. Deci (1972) noted that innerness or inner resources provide individuals with an awareness of their

potential for satisfaction (pg.150, para 3). Consumer's loved brands have supplied them with an awareness of whether they can achieve their self-expansion through their brand relationships.

According to the research results, consumers reported that they had experienced inner power from their loved brands, and they took that inner power as a motivation to assist them to maintain their relationships with their brands. (pg.150, para 5, para 6; pg. 151, para 2, para 3, para 4). Friedman et al., (2015) suggest that inner experience not only provide people joy, vision, and love as a true evolutionary guide in people's lives, it also provides inner resources, and perspectives that parallel people's view and experience.

9.3.4 Purpose and meaning in life

Purpose and meaning in life involve a sense of self-existence, coherence, and a general sense of the relationships among material goods and people (Howden, 1992). According to the research results, consumers who believe brands provide them with a sense of purpose in their life were willing to maintain the relationship with their loved brands are accompanied with a sense of fulfilment (pg. 154, para 2, para 3, para 4). Wong (1998) concluded that one's purpose in life is shaped by a person's value system and it gives meaning to a person's existence so that consumers who pursue their loved brands and include their loved brands in themselves enhance their natural habit of finding meaning in their lives.

Autton (1980) concluded that the need for meaning in life is essential in an individual's life since life meaning is a positive emotion that disperses distress and despair in life. Finding one's purpose and meaning in life is associated with positive feelings and mood, according to respondents, their loved brands bring happiness and pleasure to them, and they would like to maintain their relationships with their loved brands because of the positive feelings (pg. 154, para 3). People's main concern is "not to gain pleasure and avoid pain but rather to see a meaning in life" (Franke, 2000, p.115). According to the research results, consumers comprehend their experiences and interests in the way as to construct the cognitive components of meaning in life (pg.155, para 3, para 5). Meaning in life or life purpose is identified as the driving force of emotion and intellect (Bown and Williams, 1993).

Consumers understand that their loved brands not only provide meaning in their life they also realise that part of their life stories are constructed by the meaning their loved brands deliver to them (pg. 155, para 2, para 3, para 4). McLean and Thorne (2003) suggested that “meaning-making” is organised in two parts: 1) understanding how to gain the meaning and gaining insight from understanding and 2) acquiring meaning across different situations. Consumers believe that they can understand and interpret the meaning that brands deliver to them, and they can gain insights about the meaning of a brand so they can include brands as part of their identities (pg.155, para 3, para 5).

Consumer’s loved brands provide them with the meaning in life in accordance with Ellis’s (1980) personally perceived phenomenon that different consumers understand and interpret the meaning of life as it relates to their brands differently, because of their different experience. Therefore, consumers accepted the meaning of life from their brands according to their uniqueness and individuality (pg. 155, para 2, para 3, para 4, para 5)

In conclusion, spirituality in brand love relationships delivers the meaning of love, intimacy and intense emotions, and close connectedness (pg. 154, para, 3; pg. 155, para 3, para 5). Consumer’s spiritual love associated with their loved brands is obtained from consumer needs and goals to overcome the feeling of separation from the outside world (Fromm, 1956). The features of spirituality in brand love help consumers construct their mental and spiritual connections with brands. Consumers who believe their brands provide spiritual love for them have intense and strong relationships with their brands and would like to maintain their brand relationships (pg. 155, para 3, para 4, para 5, para 6).

Consumers’ favoured brands assist them to achieve their goals or obtain new skills by overcoming different challenges. Consumers include their inner world and inner experience from the perspectives of their loved brands, as their brands provide interconnectedness and harmony to them (section 9.3.1), and brands provide transcendence experience to consumers that help them connect with their inner self (Section 9.3.2), and brands also inspire consumers to find their inner strength and inner resources (Section 9.3.3). Brands provide purpose and

meaning in a consumer's life and help consumers express their identities (Section 9.3.4).

9.4 New themes and ideas based on RP III and New themes and ideas based on RP IV

Research proposition III: close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Western culture.

Research proposition IV: close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Eastern culture.

Research Proposition III (pg.156-pg172) compares close relationship-brand relationship and spiritual relationship-brand relationship under Western cultural contexts. Research Proposition IV (pg.172-pg.193) compared close relationship-brand relationship and spiritual relationship-brand relationship under Eastern culture contexts.

According to the research results, consumers' spiritual love with brands and consumers' interpersonal love with brands are all attained from consumers' understanding and interpretation of their brands (Section 8.2.1; Section 8.2.2). Two forms of brand love relationships motivated consumers to invest their resources and energies in developing and maintaining their brand relationships. In the meantime, consumers' brands provide resources, perspectives, and identities to assist them to achieve their goals. Two forms of brand love relationships can be identified and separated as each brand love relationship has its unique characteristics.

People interact with their close ones in close relationships not only to maintain their relationships for closeness, but they also do so to pursue their goals through the process of their interactions with their close others (McClintock, 1983, Aron and Aron, 1996). According to the research results, if consumers are in love, they are more likely to include others/brands in themselves through their interaction with others/brands (for example, pg. 132, para 4; pg.143, para 4), as they are seeking infinitely to expand themselves by

including others'/brands' everything in themselves (for example, pg.138, para 5; pg. 141, para, 4).

According to the results, spirituality exists in brand love relationships that consumers believe provide them with meaning in life and inner strength (for example, pg.150, para 3; pg. 154, para 4). Weber (2013) concluded that the main functions of spirituality have to do problem-solving. The respondents reported their brand relationships to provide them with inner power, meaning in life, and transcendence experience that not only expand their understanding about themselves, it also assists them to interpret the world from a spiritual perspective (for example, pg. 143, para 3, para 4; pg. 152, para 4).

The spirituality of brand love relationships delivers expansion opportunities from 1) a source of inspiration (section 8.2.3.1.1); 2) a sense of belonging (section 8.2.3.1.2); 3) the material dimensions of spiritual relationships (section 8.2.3.1.3); 4) emotional alignment from the inside world to the outside world (section 8.2.3.1.4); 5) transcendental factors from a spiritual relationship (section 8.2.3.1.5). The five features of spirituality self-expansion motives are developed and fostered from RP II along with the spirituality of the brand love relationships. According to the research results, spirituality exists in all brand love relationships, consumers may not aware of the spiritualities in their brand love relationships until they have described their love brands, as meaningful objects that provide them with inner strength, and their loved brands provide them opportunities to understand themselves from different perspectives (pg.147-156).

The five features of motives in spiritual relationships complete the spiritual phenomenon in the brand love relationship.

9.4.1 Sources of Inspiration

Inspiration is one feature, and it is the intrinsic motive resources that stimulate consumers to develop more interests to maintain their relationships (pg.156; pg.173). Deci (1976) suggested that inspiration is the source of encouragement, and it makes people aware of their potential satisfaction, and it provides sources, or energy for them to seek to reach their goals. According to the research results (pg.156; pg.173), inspiration is closely connected with consumers' experience

and their internal state, in other words, as consumers become aware of the potential reward of their inspiration and believe their inspiration will lead them to achieve their goals, they might engage in and maintain the brand relationship (pg.157, para 3, para 4, para 5). Inspiration is a tool that helps individuals overcome challenges, obstacles, and trials in life (Morgan, 2003).

According to the respondents, consumers who reported they had experienced inspiration in their brand love relationships because their favoured brands encouraged them to achieve, to attain and to accomplish the best in themselves (157, para 5; pg. 158, para 1; pg.173, para 5; pg.174, para 4). Spirituality has the ability to inspire a movement (Max, 1967). Consumers who reported they had experienced inspiration from their loved brands have received internal rewards from their relationships, since they provide them with a strong sense of themselves in terms of resources, perspectives or identities (pg. 158, para 1; pg.174, para 4). The research results demonstrate that consumers' inner sources from brand love relationships are a source that supports them to live a happy life, and a motive that inspires consumers to overcome their difficulties and create possibilities for themselves (pg. 158, para 1, para 2; pg.175, para 1).

Deci (1975) noted that inspiration happened in a period of time in which people learned from situations or circumstances they experienced. Consumers reported that they experienced inspirations from inner resources where they found the motivation to move forward to achieve their life goals, despite the difficulties and trials that their life presented to them (pg. 157, para 3, para 5; pg. 158, para 1; pg. 174, para 2, para 3, para 6).

9.4.2 Sense of belonging

Sense of belonging is the second feature in spiritual relationships and is consumers' involvement that makes them feel that they are an integral part of a larger system in the society (pg.158; pg. 173). Consumers attach to brands because brands deliver the meaning that makes them feel the belongingness that they are looking for and it helps consumers identify where they belong (pg.158, para 5; pg. 176, para 1, para 2). The sense of belonging is developed from the unifying interconnectedness (Deci, 2002; Howden, 1992), since consumers have a sense of involvement and belongingness in connection with their brand

relationships through the feelings of being connected with other living beings or the environment, or objects (pg.158, para 6; pg.176, para 3, para 4).

Lindgren (1990, P469) suggested that a sense of belonging “allows one to believe that he or she is cared for, loved, and belongs to certain parties or communities”. Consumers who reported they have an awareness of the sense of belonging from their loved brands since it gives them the sense their life is fulfilled and they have hope and feel they are being assisted in terms of their development (pg.158, para 5, para 6; pg. 159, para 1; pg.176, para 3). Kestenberg et al. (1988), suggested that sense of belonging not only illustrates peoples’ involvement in relationships, it also expresses whether individual’s identities, perspectives or resources are accepted by themselves and by others. A sense of belonging is a feature of spirituality in brand love relationships, and the consumer experience they are seeking since they want to contribute and be appreciated by others (pg. 158, para 3, para 4; pg.176 para 3).

According to the research results, consumers can find their sense of belonging in their brand love relationships, similar to that sense of belonging that they can find in spiritual relationships (pg. 148, para 5; pg. 149, para 2; pg. 158, para 4; pg. 176, para 1). This feature is developed from the interconnectedness in spiritual relationships and is found in respondents’ brand relationships (pg. 148, para 5; pg. 149, para 2, para 3).

9.4.3 Material dimension

Material dimension is the third feature that contains special meaning and as a medium to deliver knowledge to people (Belk, et al., 1989). Consumers’ favoured brands not only provide them with physical functions or resources, they also assist consumers to acquire spiritual meaning in life through brands’ physical resources (pg. 159, para, 5; pg. 177, para 1, para 2). Belk (1985) noted that material objects not only offer encouragement and motivation they also express and symbolize the giving of love.

This dimension is developed from the spirituality feature of purpose and meaning in life, so the tangible resources of brands are one way to assist consumers to define themselves (for example, pg. 154, para 4; pg.158, para 6; pg. 177, para 3). Consumers’ loved brands deliver life meaning and purpose to

them through consumers' interactions with their loved brands (pg.159, para 1; pg. 177, para 1, para 3).

Schachar et al. (2011), suggested that because of different brands' resources and functions, different brands have different ways or means to express consumers' self-worth. Consumers engaged in brand love relationships not only to pursue material expansion from their loved brands they are also they are seeking and need confirmation of their positions in the world, their perspectives in the world (for example, pg. 158, Para 5; pg. 159, para 1; pg. 177, para 3). Consumers' favoured brands assist them to achieve their goals by including their brands' in themselves, for the functions of their loved brands (pg.149, para 2; pg. 177, para 3, para 4), for the knowledge their loved brands deliver to them (pg. 149, para 3), for the awareness of their life purpose and life meaning that their loved brands provide to them (pg. 159, para 1, para 2).

9.4.4 Emotional alignment

Emotional alignment is the fourth feature that develops from spirituality in brand relationships. Brands are featured as connectedness to meaningful phenomenon outside the self that awakens consumers and help them achieve self-transformation (pg. 160, para 7; pg. 178, para 4, para 5). Consumers' attitudes, moods, and evaluation systems are all influenced by the meaning that brands deliver and convey to them (pg.161, para 2; pg. 178, para 4). Emotional alignment from consumers' inner state to consumers' physical world and the outside world is developed by the spirituality features of unifying interconnectedness (pg. 149, para 2, para 3; pg.179, para 1, para 2). Albert et al. (2013), suggested that consumers connected themselves with brands represented consumers identification with a brand. According to the respondents, they use brands to fulfill their self-definitional needs, which is consistent with Belk (1988), and consumers believe that emotional alignment is meaningful to them and it is worth maintaining their brand relationships in order to keep their emotional alignment (pg. 160, para 7; pg. 161, para 1, para 2). Escalas (2004) mentioned that the connection between consumers and brands is an intense and meaningful association that ties consumer's self-identity with their loved brands.

Respondents' favoured brands stimulate and extend consumers' inner thoughts, values, and beliefs, and assist consumers to understand more about themselves and help them interpret the outside world. Consumers' loved brands generate and construct an emotional combination from their inner world and the outer world of consumers (pg. 149, para 2, para 3; pg. 161, para 2; pg. 179, para 1, para 2). Sprott (2009) concluded that consumers connected themselves with their loved brands, and this indicated that consumers want to apply brands as part of their self-schemas.

9.4.5 Transcendental

Transcendental is the fifth feature that developed from spirituality in brand relationships. Transcendental factors in brand love relationships can be described as intense, positive motivation that shape or influence consumers' values and attitudes (Arnould and Price, 1993). The transcendental factor is developed by the spiritual features of the transcendence experience in brand love relationships (pg. 161; pg.179).

Belk (1988) mentioned that peoples' transcendent experience could regarded as an extension of themselves. According to the research results, brands provide utility resources or services to help consumers achieve transcendence (pg. 161, para 6; pg.180, para 1). The more transcendence experience respondents have, the more loveable and special the brand, and the stronger the consumer brand relationship (pg. 161, para 7; pg. 162, para, 1; pg.180, para 1).

Levin and Steele (2005) defined that transcendence is that human reality extends itself beyond the physical and psycho-social boundaries. The respondents reported that their transcend experience as one of the motives to maintain their brand relationships (pg. 150, para 2; pg.180, para 3), and transcendence experience expand consumers' thoughts and understanding (pg. 150, para 2, para 3; pg.180, para 3, para 4). Transcendence is a factor that stimulates consumers' awareness of their inner self, and it includes their cognition, emotions, and behaviour (pg. 150, para 4; pg. 180, para 1, para 3).

Levin and Steele (2005) suggested that transcendence includes two types: one is the green type that has the power to motivate people and involves an experience of joy, happiness, and pleasure and Csikszentmihalyi (1990) noted

that it occurs repeatedly and is accompanied by a certain environment (pg. 150, para 4; pg. 180, para 1). The other type of transcendence experience is the mature type that most respondents described as a powerful, meaningful and long-lasting experience (pg. 150, para 2, para 3; pg. 180, para 3). According to the respondents, their transcendence experience are described as self-transformational conversions to awaken their consciousness (pg. 162, para 1; pg. 180, para 3, para 4). Consumers reported their transcendence experience to connect them to their visions, as they found new possibilities and new perspectives in their life (pg. 162, para 3, para 4).

Respondents not only experienced joy and pleasure in their transcendence experience, they also felt the transcendence experience awaken their consciousness of themselves and help them transfer and view the outside world from different perspectives and identities (pg. 161, para 7; pg. 162, para 1, para 2, para 3; pg. 180, para 1, para 2, para 3, para 4). Consumers' transcendence experience is one of the factors that shaped their values and beliefs (pg. 162, para 3, para 4; pg. 180, para 3, para 4).

9.4.6 Comparisons between New Zealand respondents' and Chinese respondents' motivation from perspectives of spiritual relationships

New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents were acting and thinking differently in their spiritual relationships:

New Zealand respondents:

New Zealand respondents are influenced by Western culture, and their intrinsic motivation inspires and motivates them to pursue and purchase things that give meaning to their lives. New Zealand respondents care about fulfilling their needs and goals first (for example, pg. 157, para 4; pg. 158, para 5).

Carpenter (2000) suggested that people influenced by an independent culture have clear ideas about what acts are appropriate, and they firmly believe in themselves, as they believe they are stable and know what they need. New Zealand respondents would maintain their brand relationships that assist them to realise the essence of life and work, and their brands can elevate their feelings of happiness and enlightenment (pg. 157, para 3, para 5; pg. 159, para 4). New

Zealand respondents are more likely to maintain relationships with brands that can motivate their internal needs, capabilities, and capacities (pg. 160, para 6).

Source of inspiration: New Zealand respondents reported that spirituality in their brand love relationships inspires and motivates them and provides them with a strong sense of orientation (pg. 157, para 2, para 3, para 4).

The inspiration of spirituality not only comes from nature or environment it also derives from the unique brand experience of individuals (pg. 157, para 2). New Zealand respondents reported that the spirituality in the brand relationships not only provides them hope, it is also a connection tool or bridge that helps them feel the energy from their loved brands (pg. 158, para 1, para 2).

Sense of belonging: New Zealand respondents reported that spirituality helps them concentrate and consider the needs of themselves first and they apply their brand's resources, perspectives and identities to expand themselves (pg. 154, para 2). Their spiritual relationships not only help individuals accomplish expansion it also helps them find where they belong. New Zealand respondents reported that spirituality exists in their brand love relationships as it provides them opportunities to compare themselves with others, by referencing others to themselves in terms of their unique actions, feelings, and thoughts (pg. 157, para 3, para 4). A sense of belonging in spirituality to New Zealand respondents is a motivation that motivates them to interact with others and to improve their self-expansions (pg. 157, para 5; pg. 158, para 1, para 2).

Material dimensions of spiritual relationships: New Zealand respondents took their loved brands as nature or symbols that give them spiritual experience through the physical functions of their brands (pg. 159, para 5). New Zealand respondents reported that their loved brand provided and created a distorted and idealized life to them, which other brands or objects cannot provide (pg. 160, para 1, para 2).

Emotional alignment from inside world to outside world: New Zealand respondents believed that their loved brands delivered values from their functions and they transformed them to motivation, which helped the respondents locate their identities and perspectives and improve them to make more achievements. New Zealand respondents mentioned that they experienced

meaning in life through their loved brands that were like rewards and motives that made them feel their unique existence in the world (pg. 160, para 6; pg. 161, para 2).

Transcendental factors of spiritual relationships: Argyle and Hills (2000) said transcendental experience could help people by “glimpsing another world” from a different perspective. For New Zealand respondents, the transcendental feature is regarded as an extension of their unique self (pg. 161, para 6; pg. 162, para 1, para, 2, para 3).

Chinese respondents:

Chinese respondents are caring more about whether their loved brands can deliver the meaning that matches the expectations of their in-groups (pg. 173, para 3). Triandis (2011) suggested that people influenced by an interdependent culture believed the context of their environment was stable, and they like to change themselves to fit into the environment. Chinese respondents might have a different understanding of their life meaning and purpose at their different life stages (pg. 173, para, 5; pg. 174, para 1, para 2). Chinese respondents have different usages and different understanding about their loved brands at their different life stages, they like to adjust themselves to fit into different environments, and they believe adjusting for different situations is suitable for their expansions (pg. 174, para 3, para 4).

For Chinese respondents, the meaning of life and life purpose should be accepted and approved by families, or friends, or other in-groups. Moreover, their favoured brands should not only provide resources, perspectives, and identities to support their meaningful life, and it is useful for maintaining their relationships with others (pg. 174, para 2, para 5; pg. 175, para 1).

Chinese respondents' self-awareness, values, and beliefs about their life and the things they love are constructed based on others (pg. 176, para 3). Chinese respondents prefer their life meaning and life purpose are confirmed by their families, friends, neighborhoods, or companies, and they choose their loved brands according to the context of their surroundings (pg. 178, para 4).

Source of inspiration: Chinese respondents believed that their loved brands not only provide inspiration to their life, and they also prefer that their loved

brands make them feel closely related to their friends and families. For Chinese respondents, one of the most important aspects of the meaning of life to them is bonding with their family and friends, since doing so makes them happy (pg.173, para 5). Fadiman and Frager (1997) suggested that joy and pleasure are the consequences of inspirations in spirituality. Chinese respondents experienced spirituality in their brand love relationships as a motive that inspires them to seek happiness and Chinese respondents consider inspiration as a positive emotion (pg. 174, para 3, para 4, para 5).

Sense of belonging: Chinese respondents reported that they felt that they are being connected through their loved brands in two layers: 1) firstly, respondents felt their loved brands connect their feeling of belonging to their social identities (pg. 176, para 1); 2) secondly, their loved brands provide them with the feeling that life is worthwhile and this assists them to achieve their goals (pg.176, para 3, para 4).

Material dimensions of spiritual relationships: Chinese respondents reported that their loved brands help them and accompany them to overcome the challenges in their lives, improve themselves and help them to achieve self-expansion (pg. 177, para 1, para 2, para 3). Their loved brands deliver encouragement, knowledge, and information to them through the tangible functions of the brands (pg. 177, para 3, para 4).

Emotional alignment from inside to outside world: Chinese respondents reported that their loved brands are the means that help them to express themselves effectively and the respondents felt their inner need got integrated with the outside environment (pg.178, para 3, para 4; pg. 179, para 1).

Transcendence dimensions of spiritual relationships: For Chinese respondents, their loved brands provided them with a sense of union, as they felt they were able to understand and express their inner self via their loved brands. They felt the spirituality in their brand love relationships were positive experience, which made them feel they were connected with others and the outside world in a harmonious atmosphere (pg. 180, para 1, para 2).

The five dimensions of motive were developed from the four features of spiritual relationships and belong to spiritual relationships. **Table 9.5**

demonstrates the four spirituality features and the five motivational dimensions that were developed, from the four spiritual features.

Table 9. 5 Spiritual relationships

Spiritual relationships	Features	Motives	
	Unifying interconnectedness	Sense of belonging	Involvement; Mentally needed ; Harmonious inner world
		Emotional alignment	Connectedness to meaningful phenomes; Self-definitional needs Stimulate inner desire
	Transcendence experience	Transcendental factor	Green type: pleasure, intermittently; Mature type: long-lasting, powerful, meaningful
	Innerness or inner resources	Source of inspiration	Encouragement; Internal reward
	Purpose and meaning in life	Material dimensions	Fulfill need of self-expression; Demonstrate self-worth; Awaken awareness of life purpose and meaning of life

Three features of close relationships complete the intimate phenomenon of the brand love relationship:

9.4.7 Self-enhancement

Self-enhancement is an intrinsic motivation that belongs to the positive emotions of self-views. Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) suggested that self-enhancement on the part of the consumer has to do with the brands or products that consumer purchased that are accepted and recognised by others and those purchases fit and support the consumer's self-concept (pg.163, para 2; pg. 181, para 4). Consumers engaged in brand love relationships and interact with brands because brands enhance their sense of personal growth (pg.163, para 4; pg. 181, para 4). Self-enhancement is a positive motivation that promotes 'self-seeking' as it relates to self-worth and pride (James, 1890; Gordon Allport, 1937).

The respondents reported that they feel good about themselves in their brand love relationships since their loved brands help them to expand themselves, positively (pg. 163, para 4; pg. 181, para 4; pg. 182, para 1). Swann et al. (1987), concluded that self-enhancement is an individual understanding themselves as their positive self and how others positively treat them through their interaction. Self-enhancement is developed from interactions in close relationships (pg. 163, para 4; pg. 181, para 4). Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) concluded that an individual's self-concept is constructed and built through interactions with close others (for example, parents, good friends, teachers, and neighbors and so forth), and self-enhancement is improved and developed by interactions with close others too. Consumers reported that their loved brands delivered resources and meaning to them and assisted them to understand their sense of self (pg. 163, para 3, para 4; pg. 180, para 3). Consumers' recognize and understand their sense of self through their interactions with their loved brands, then consumers improve their positive self-concept image by edifying, informing and instructing themselves in accordance with their loved brands' resources, perspectives, and identities and applying their loved brands' resources, or perspectives or identities to interact with their close others (pg. 163, para 3, para 4; pg. 180, para 3, para 4).

9.4.8 Willingness to invest to maintain brand relationship

The idea that consumers are willing to invest time, money, and energy into their loved brands to develop and maintain their brand love relationships (Batra, et al., 2012) is similar to people investing all of the resources they have to maintain their close relationships (pg. 182, para 4). Consumers' willingness to invest in brand relationships expresses that they would like to give attention to their brands, that they are concerned with all the news that is relevant to their loved brands, as well as all the decisions their loved brands make, and they like to spend money on all the new products their loved brands offer (pg. 182, para 6; pg. 183, para 1). According to the research results, the fact that consumers are willing to invest in maintaining their brand love relationships demonstrates that the interactions between consumers and brands are mutual and repeated. As consumers invest all their intangible and tangible resources to maintain their brand love relationships, consumers adapt to their loved brands' resources,

perspectives and identities themselves to achieve their goals (pg. 163, para 3; pg. 182, para 4).

According to the research results, consumers' willingness to pay and invest in their loved brands to maintain brand love relationships is because of consumers' experience, and the other is consumers' familiarity with brands. Consumers' experience and consumers' familiarity with brands are both developed through consumers' interactions with brands (pg.165, para 2, para 3; pg. 182, para 6; pg. 183, para 1). Klaus and Maklan (2007) concluded that consumers' experience with brands accumulated from consumers' series of interactions with brands. If respondents were asked to describe their loved brands, normally they would like to start with brands' characteristics and the advantages of using those brands (pg.165, para 2, para 3; pg. 182, para 4). Consumers believe that it is not only the brands' characteristics and advantages that describe their loved brands, it is also how those brands help them develop themselves that is important, too (pg.164, para 5; pg. 182, para 3).

Consumers' brand familiarity affirms, substantiates, validates whether consumers have enough confidence with their loved brands (Park and Lessig, 1981). Consumers' brand familiarity can be viewed as 1) knowledge familiarity, this is about things that consumers know about the brands' features and attitude, and 2) choice familiarity, this is consumers understanding of the brands' meaning (Urbany et al., 1989; Laroche and Zhou, 1996; Park and Lessig, 1981), (pg. 165, para 2, para 3; pg. 182, para 3, para and 4) Laroche and Zhou (1996) mentioned that consumer's familiarity with brands is a necessary factor for them to develop their brand relationships.

Miller (1998) suggested that it is unlikely that consumers would commit to a brand they barely know. According to the research results, respondents were more likely to invest in brands they have experience with and invest in brands that they familiar with, to intensify their brand relationships. The more interactions consumers have with their loved brands, the more unlikely it that consumers will want to replace their brands (pg. 165, para 2; pg. 182, para 3).

9.4.9 Eager to use and involve in relationships

Consumers' eager to use and get involved in relationships is one of the motives that related to their cognitive, emotional, and acts. Consumers desire to know everything about their brands is a positive attitude that affects them, and that leads consumers to a deeper love relationship with their loved brands (pg.167, para 1, para 2, para 3; pg.184, para 2, para 3).

In regard to consumers' cognitive factor in brand relationships, Escalas and Betterman (2003) suggested that consumers applied brands to represent themselves and to achieve their identity goals (Huffman et al., 2000). The respondents expressed that their loved brands were categorised as part of their experiences, and components to construct their ideal self (pg. 166.para 3; pg. 167, para 3; pg. 185, para2, para 3). Escalas et al. (2003), mentioned that individuals are motivated to create a pleasant and positive self. Consumers were reported to have motivation to create their pleasant and reliable ideal self through their ideal brands (pg.183, para 4, para 5).

Consumers' emotional involvement in relationships is expressed as their desire for brands to accompany them, they want to be satisfied with the functions of their brands, they enjoy past experience with brands, and they are willing to get involved in relationships with their favourite brands (pg. 166, para 3, para 4; pg. 184, para, 2, para 3). Shimp and Madden (1988) introduced the concept of desire into the construct of "consumer-object love relationships" as "yearning", which they defined as a continuum of possibilities. Belk et al. (2003), suggested consumer's desire is highly enjoyable and happens at regular intervals.

According to the research results, consumers' desire for brands to accompany them belongs to their intrinsic motivation that consumers are willing to have a close connectedness with their loved brands (pg. 166, para 3, para 4; pg. 184, para 2, para 3). In terms of desire, it refers to a person's positive motivation (McCracken, 1990). According to the research results, consumers' expectations are developed from their cognitive awareness of their past experience, current life, and their possible future (pg. 167, para 3, para 4).

Consumers' behaviour involvement is related to brand's functions involvement and brand's value involvement (Sirgy, 1982). According to the research results, consumers' involvement with brands in brand love relationships is influenced by their goals, beliefs, values, and self-concepts (pg. 171, para 2; pg. 190, para 6; pg. 191, para 2). Belen et al. (2001), and Keller (1993) suggested that brand function can be viewed as brand's tangible functions and brand's intangible functions.

Brand's tangible functions are the first elements that consumers interact with. The tangible functions of brands are the factors that respondents mentioned first in the interviews (pg. 170, para 6; pg. 190, para 6), in terms of how they interact and relate to the brands, and all their interactions with their loved brands begin with the tangible functions. Amber (1997) noted that the tangible functions of brands are the guarantee of quality. The respondents reported that they would know whether their brands are reliable or efficient or durable, through their interactions with brands (pg. 190, para 6; pg. 191, para 2).

Brand's intangible function is the set of values, beliefs, and impressions that consumers accepted (Levy, 1959; Nandan, 2005). According to the research results, consumers reported that they represent their brands as part of their image since they believed that their loved brands enrich their life. Different consumers, because of their different needs, different values, and the different environments where they grew up have different expansion needs related to the intangible functions of brands (pg.171, para 2, para 3; pg. 191, para 2).

The three motivation features related to closeness in brand love relationships are presented in **Table. 9.6**. Different consumers have different self-expansion goals since they have different requirements about their life and work. Consumers want to expand themselves, not only their resources (tangible brands, brands tangible functions), they also want to expand their perspectives (brands' information, brands' knowledge), and they want to expand their identities (physical identities and psychological identities-as to include brands' identities in themselves so that can they can be recognised by the same group or as part of their ideal group (interdependent culture), or separate from others with their unique features).

9.4.10 Comparisons between New Zealand respondents' and Chinese respondents' motivation from perspectives of close relationships

The results of New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents are compared in the section that follows.

New Zealand respondents:

New Zealand respondents are showing a higher uniqueness in terms of their brand relationships, they would like to maintain relationships that fit their self-expansions, and they would consider less about whether the majority of their in-groups accepts their brand relationships their brand relationships (for example, pg.159, para 5; pg. 160, para 6). Grimm et al. (1999), defined that people who are more influenced by their independent culture behaviour, as it relates to their personality traits, involved pleasure-seeking, taking the initiative, self-assured, and curious. New Zealand respondents believe that they decided who they are, and their choices of loved brands are represented by their characteristics, their perspectives, and their resources, and they are responsible for their own choices (pg. 162, para 3; pg. 163, para 4).

Triandis (1995) concluded that people influenced by their independent culture have a higher tolerance for personal differences and divergences. New Zealand respondents are less dependent on others or influenced by others (pg. 157, para 2, para 4; pg. 158, para 5). That is not to say New Zealand respondents do not care about others' profits or do not help others, instead that they tend to achieve their personal goals first and then they help others, and they also suggested everyone should be responsible for their own deeds (pg.134, para 5).

Self-enhancement: New Zealand respondents reported that they felt enhanced through their interactions with their loved brands, as their brand relationships promote and expand their features of independence and uniqueness (pg. 163, para 4). Respondents feel meaning as their internal attributes thinking and feelings of their bounded and separate self are being stimulated by their loved brands. Self-enhancement is an intrinsic motivation that promotes respondents to strive for their positive self and a demonstration of their self-positivity (pg. 163, para 1, para 2).

Willing to invest resources: New Zealand respondents expressed that they would like to invest all their resources and energies in maintaining their long term relationships (pg. 164, para 4). New Zealand respondents reported that they would like to overcome all obstacles to develop and maintain their brand love relationships. This is since the respondents believed that the rewards, values, and benefits from their loved brands were useful for their independent self (pg. 165, para 2, para 3).

Eager to use and involve in relationships: The respondents who expressed they were eager to get involved in their brand love relationships were displaying three characteristics:

Cognitive factor: 1) they idealized their brand, in other words, New Zealand respondents tended to express themselves directly in that they applied describable words to their loved brands, such as beautify, amazing, perfect fit. New Zealand respondents reported that they would like to intensify the hope of their loved brands (pg. 167, para 1, para 2); 2) Desire to know everything about the brand, in other words, New Zealand respondents reported they liked to include everything their loved brands had to offer to expand themselves. They would like to know everything about their loved brands and accept everything about their loved brands (pg. 167, para 3, para 4).

Emotional components: 1) Desire for brands to accompany them, the respondents reported that their interactions between their loved brand and themselves were pleasant, and they felt affiliated to their brands. Respondents felt they were connected to their brands, that the longer they were with their brands the closer they felt (pg. 167, para 6; pg. 168, para 2); 2) Negative feelings toward their loved brands, the respondents reported their loved brands made them felt more independent and they believed their loved brands were reliable and worth trusting (pg. 169, para 2). As long as the respondents had positive experience with their loved brands, they would not believe negative news about their loved brands from others and they would not like to relate to negative experience about their loved brands from others, because of their independent personality (pg. 168, para 4, para 5); 3) In terms of their involvement, New Zealand respondents reported that they liked to maintain a long-term relationship with their loved brands not only because their loved brands were

central to their life, it was also because those brands represented part of their resources, part of their perspectives, and part of their identities (pg. 170, para 1, para 2); 4) Enjoyable experience, the enjoyable brand experience constructed a form of brand identity to the respondents, such that the brands provided more than the functional value of the products. While the respondents described their brand experience, they were not only talking about the functional experience with their brands they were explaining their emotional experience with their brands (pg. 170, para 3, para 4).

Behaviour components: 1). Reliable services, the respondents reported that they were happy with the services their brands offered, referring to both their interactions with their brand's companies and to the trust they placed in their loved brands that never disappointed them (pg. 170, para 6, para 7); 2) Actions taken for loved brands, the respondents reported that one way to express their love of brands were to frequently visit their companies' website or go to the shopping mall to check the news and new products of their loved brands. They supported their loved brands without any hesitation (pg. 171, para 2, para 3).

Chinese Respondents:

Chinese respondents constructed their self-concept by the references of those others who surrounded them, their ideal self is to be like their close others, and they tend to evaluate themselves and their loved brands in relation to their close others (pg. 181, para 4).

Triandis et al. (1990), suggested that while people in an independent culture are enjoying acting or behaving in a way that their in-groups expect them to, Chinese respondents like to maintain brand relationships that others approved of or suggested, and they supply resources, perspectives and identities to support their expansions (pg.184, para 4; pg. 185, para 4). With respect to Chinese respondents, they value themselves as intertwined with their in-groups, they would like to maintain brand relationships depending on others' suggestions and recommendations. (pg. 186, para 4; pg. 186. para 6).

Self-enhancement: For Chinese, the self is meaningful only within the context of their social interactions, social roles, and different responsibilities (pg. 181, para 5). Chinese respondents expand themselves in their brand

relationships, not just for their expansion, and it is also for their close others. For Chinese respondents, they would like to recommend their loved brands to their friends. The respondents would like to get good impressions from their friends so they can have their expansion in the relationships (pg. 181, para 5; pg. 182, para 1).

Willingness to invest resources: The willingness to invest in relationships in China, means consumers have fostered understanding, consideration, tolerance, and forgiveness in the relationship (pg. 182, para 6). Chinese respondents' brand love relationships were combined with both their families and friends' expectations of the respondents and the expectations of the respondents themselves (pg. 183, para 1, para 2).

Eager to use and involve:

Cognitive factors:

In terms of spending much time thinking about brands, the Chinese respondents reported that they were more likely to engage in brand love relationships that were recommended by their families, friends, or classmates. This is because they are not only able to maintain good brand relationships based on other's experience (pg. 184, para 4, para 5) they are also able to enhance their close relationships as having similar common interests with their loved brands (pg. 184, para 3).

In terms of their idealized brand, the respondents constructed their brand love relationships based on understanding the company culture to feel understood and accepted since it is one way to express love. The more the individual was satisfied with the brand, the more they liked to idealize the brands they love, and for the Chinese respondents, their idealizations about their brands are based on their close others' recognition of their brands (pg. 185, para 2, para 3).

In regard to their desire to know everything about their brands, the respondents would like to know the background, news, or other related information about their favorite brands, since this is the way to build loyalty and trust. The Chinese respondents would like to know everything about their loved brands not only for themselves but also for other people (pg. 185, para 4; pg. 185, para 1).

Emotional components:

With respect to the desire to be accompanied by brands, the respondents' desire to be accompanied by their loved brands, was because those brands had accompanied them for many years, and nothing bad had happened with the brand. Their favoured brands were recommended by their close others, and those brands were like a tie that connected them with their close ones (pg. 186, para 4, para 5). The respondents felt happy while they were accompanied by their brand since their brand experience is intensified while they took time to be with the brand (pg. 186, para 6).

In regard to any negative feelings related to their brands, the respondents trusted their loved brands because they had used their brands for a long time and nothing terrible had never happened, plus the after-sales services and word of mouth related to their brands were both good. For Chinese respondents, WOM is important for them to maintain their relationships (pg. 187, para 2, para 3).

With respect to being satisfied with the functions of their brands, the interactions with their favorite brands were closely related to the time, frequency, and strength, and the more interactions the respondents had with the brand, the closer they felt with the brand. For Chinese respondents, their loved brands are not only connected to themselves, they are also connected with their close others (pg. 187, para 4, para 5).

Regarding involvement, it is the other intrinsic motive for respondents to stay with their relationship, so for Chinese respondents, their involvement includes themselves and their close others (pg. 188, para 3, para 4).

In terms of enjoyable experience, Chinese respondents' brand experience are influenced either by their families or their friends, in other words, for Chinese respondents, their enjoyable experience are involved with their close others (pg. 189, para 1, para 2).

Behaviour components:

With respect to reliable services, for Chinese respondents, their reliable services are both those they and their close others are happy with (pg. 190, para 2, para 3).

In terms of actions taken for loved brands, Chinese respondents would like to inform other people or ask about others for their opinions before they take actions for their loved brands (pg. 190, para 5, para 6).

Table 9. 6 Features of close relationships

Close Relationships	Features	Motive
	Frequency of interaction	(1) Self-Enhancement
	Duration of interactions	(2) Willingness to invest resources
	Diversity of interactions	(3) Eager to use and involve
	Strength of interactions	

In conclusion, the five motives of spirituality (sense of belonging, emotional alignment, transcendental factor, source of inspiration, and the material dimensions of the spiritual relationship) were developed from the spirituality features of the spiritual relationships as seen in **Table 9.5**, and the three motives of closeness (self enhancement, willing to invest and eager to use and be involved with), were developed from close interpersonal relationships as seen **Table 9.6**, in regard to response to RP III (pg. 156-pg.172) and RP IV (pg. 172-pg. 193) the two forms of brand love relationships (spiritual relationships and close relationships) have their own unique features, and can be separated as a distinct relationship that exists. Brand love relationships with spirituality and brand love relationships with closeness are two forms of brand love relationships where the expressed motivation was from different perspectives. While some consumers reported their brand love relationships were similar to their close interpersonal relationships (since those consumers claimed that they would never connect their brand relationships with spiritual relationships), some consumers reported they their brand love relationships are similar to their spiritual relationships (because they believe their brand relationships provide them with their life purpose and life meaning, except they would not connect their brand relationships with their close interpersonal relationships), and some consumers reported they had experienced both forms of brand love relationships. RP III and RP IV proved that two forms of brand love relationships have their unique features and can exist together, or they can be separate. Even though the two forms of brand love relationships are independent relationships, both forms

can co-exist in a brand love relationship, or they can exist independently to support the brand love relationship from different angles.

9.5 New themes and ideas based on RP V

Research proposition V: Young New Zealand consumers and young Chinese consumers have different experience in their brands love relationships could thus be one of the influential factors in brand love relationships.

Research Proposition V has compared brand love relationships in New Zealand culture and Chinese culture. The reason to compare consumers' brand love relationships in the two-culture context is since this thesis is focused on the phenomenon of consumers developing and maintaining their love relationships with brands, culture might be one of the phenomena that influence consumer brand love relationships (pg. 193). Shweder (1999) suggested that culture is a phenomenon that has a distinctly different way of life, and culture is the lens that shaped how the phenomenon can be understood and comprehended (McCracken, 1990).

Comparing New Zealand culture and Chinese culture, New Zealand respondents' consumption behaviour and values are more likely formed, influenced, and interacted from their nuclear family. As New Zealand respondents reported that the constructs of their families are their parents and themselves and siblings who are under 18 years, most of the New Zealand respondents would move out from their parents' family and move to their universities' dorm or an independent house (pg. 164, para 5). New Zealand respondents' consumption values and behaviour are mostly influenced by their parents and their siblings before they were 18 years of age, and they solely have to deal with the sources and values that their parents delivered to them. Therefore, New Zealand respondents are more likely to express their consumptions values as being unique, express themselves directly, and are more focused on whether their loved brands are good for developing their attributes, and characteristics.

New Zealand respondents are influenced by their independent culture in that they considered themselves as unique in terms of the wholeness of their internal

attributes (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Barahal, 2008), and they like to develop and maintain their brand relationships by referring to their abilities, attributes, perspectives and identities rather than referring to others' brand love relationships.

Chinese respondents' consumption behaviour and values are more likely formed, influenced, and interacted upon from their extended family. Chinese respondents reported that the construct components of their families are their grandparents, parents, and themselves, and some respondents lived with their grandparents, parents, uncle, aunt and their cousins (pg. 199, para 3, para 4, para 5). Chinese respondents have to deal with different information from different people, and they've been told that they have to respect their parents and grandparents and should always be concerned about what others think. Chinese respondents' consumption behaviour were more expressed by the idea that they like to consider their grandparents' or parents' or close friends' recommendations or opinions first. Chinese respondents were influenced by their grandparents and parents, and their values and actions are related to obedience, respect for seniority, and that they should always show consideration for others. Chinese respondents believed that their behaviour and values are intertwined with others, especially their close others. In terms of Chinese respondents' consumption values and behaviour, they are more likely to be concerned about and consider others' opinions, and they would like to engage in brand love relationships that all of their close others supported and agreed with. Chinese respondents were more likely involved in brand love relationships that their close others recommended to them, or brand love relationships that their close others believe match the respondents' identities.

Chinese respondents are influenced by the interdependent culture in that they consider themselves as part of their in-groups and occupy a place at their in-groups, and they are intertwined with others at their in-groups. The Chinese respondents' were motivated to maintain their brand love relationships not only to satisfy their self-expansion, they were also able to help them connect with their in-groups and fit in.

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), the cultural influence that cultivated the individual were developed by an individual's cognition, emotions,

and motivation. According to the results, the four perspectives that reflect the result of the independent culture and interdependent culture in New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents include their social influence, social acceptance, responsibility-sharing, and obligations.

9.5.1 Social influence

Social influence is defined by the individual interacting with other individuals and groups, and the individuals' attitudes and acts are influenced by their interactions (Rashotte, 2007) since members of a culture share the same social norm and values. In brand love relationships, the interactions that are based on social influences not only come from close relationships, they also come from spiritual relationships. According to the research results, social influence is a value or standard or rule that is shared by the group, and people are expected to have proper attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour that are in accordance with the same group (pg. 194). Schneider et al. (1989), noted that a great deal of individuals' actions and thoughts are influenced by others, during the interactions between the individual and others. Since an individual is socialized, every interaction he or she has with others is based on the norms, values, and rules of his/her culture (Gudykunst et al., 2001). New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents have grown up with certain influences in the way they are socialized in terms of their independent culture and interdependent culture.

For New Zealand respondents, in their interactions, they are more concerned about how others can help their self-expansions. That is not to say, New Zealand respondents' brand love relationships would not be influenced by their social culture. New Zealand respondents select and adapt their resources, perspectives, and identities from their relationship interactions, which is useful for developing and maintaining their self-expansion (pg. 194, para 4; Pg. 195, para 2, para 3). Bellah et al. (2007), suggested that the main purpose for people in an independent culture to interact with others is because they are considering or concerned with the benefits for themselves first.

For Chinese respondents, they consider themselves as part of the social context, since they are closely connected with others and are less differentiated from others. Chinese respondents are likely to ask others' opinions or seek

others' help before they develop their brand relationships. This is because Chinese respondents like to adopt and rely on others' opinions because they trust others and assume others make choices based on information or the experience they lack. They seek opinions from others and adjust themselves to develop and maintain the brand love relationships that can help them fit in with their in-groups, and provide them with opportunities to achieve their goals. Interdependent culture influences Chinese respondents, they like to meet the expectations of their close others or social groups by relying on them as references. Chinese respondents believe others or groups might not accept them if they have different choices (pg. 196, para 4, para 5; pg. 197, para 2, para 3). Markus and Kitayama (1991) characterised interdependent culture as contextualized, constitutive, collective, and relational.

The relationship between culture and self is that they mutually influence each other (Matsumoto, 1999), different cultures formed different self-concepts, and a culture group is constructed and contributed to by individuals with the same values and actions. Social influences are the consequence of an individual's social interactions in his/her in-group, in this thesis, social influence is one of the factors that exist in respondents' brand love relationships. One reason that respondents in different cultures behave and think differently is because of the different social influences, as social-cultural groups interact with them differently. People in the same social in-group are supposed to have similar values, actions, and behaviour, as people tend to classify themselves as similar to others and influenced by similar others (Tuner, 1991). Culture is organised by individual's cognition, emotions, and motivation (Markus and Kitayama, 1991), New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents realised that their consumption values and actions might be different from other social groups because their social influence featured the boundaries of their in-group culture.

Individuals identify and categorise themselves in different cultures by their culture norms (Tuner, 1985). Different cultures influence individuals differently, and they provide individuals with different resources, perspectives, and identities, which individuals can be identified by from other different cultures (Tuner, 1991; Markus and Kitayama, 1991). According to the research results, social influence is the factor in a culture that helps respondents recognise which

perspectives and identities can be accepted and approved by the social-culture. Social influence presents a common understanding of values and actions in individual cognition, and the respondents applied it in their consumption behaviour. The interactions between the respondents and their loved brands were influenced by their different cultures. The respondents maintain their brand love relationships not only because their loved brands are good and solidify their perspectives and identities, they also do so to expand their self-concept by including their brands in themselves to achieve their goals. The social-culture influence of the individual refers to the idea that the individual has the cognition to identify where s/he belongs, and the individual has the motivation to improve himself/herself towards his/her goals.

In conclusion, both New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents' values and norms are influenced, identified and guided by their behaviour, actions, and thoughts in society, and also in terms of their consumption. Haslam et al. (2003), suggested that social influence is guided an individual over the long-term in a way of both situationally and contextually. New Zealand respondents were expressing themselves in their brand love relationships for their uniqueness, as the respondents expressed that they chose their loved brands not because it's a popular brand or other people chose it, it was just because they really wanted those brands, and they believed those brands could help them to achieve their goals (pg. 195, para 4, para 5). While New Zealand respondents interacted with their close others, they used explicit and direct messages, and the interactions between New Zealand respondents and their loved brands were direct and explicit about expressing themselves, too (pg. 195, para 6).

For Chinese respondents, they were expressing their brand love relationships as intimately connected with others (pg. 196, para 4, para 5). Chinese respondents would like to ask their families' opinions, or friends' suggestions, or dorm-mates' experience to make decisions about whether they should engage in brand love relationships or not (pg. 197, para 2, para 4). The first things Chinese respondents considered is whether their choice would fit in their in-group, or whether their choice would have meaning to their close others and themselves (pg. 197, para 4). The Chinese respondents like to interact in more implicit and indirect ways, this is because they grew up accompanied by

their grandparents, parents, uncles or aunts. Therefore, they have to consider whether their actions or thoughts are accepted by all of their family members. Therefore, Chinese respondents have to consider more about all of their family members accept their actions or thoughts (pg. 196, para 4; pg. 197, para 2, para 4).

9.5.2 Social acceptance

Social acceptance is another motivation for consumers to form and maintain close and long-lasting relationships with others. Social acceptance is also the positive emotion and cognition that combines fulfilment, joy, and rewarding experience (DeWall et al., 2011). Social acceptance also means that others or social groups embrace the consumer as part of their group, which means they accept and approve of consumers' resources, perspectives, and identities. Wentzel (1994) concluded that social acceptance is a line between the individual and social group, in regard to how the individual presents or behaves in terms of the action and how others or social groups perceive the individual's actions. Social acceptance also refers to the idea that individuals have cognition about the acceptances of their behaviour and values in their society (Lennon et al., 2010).

Independent culture influenced New Zealand respondents, that being independent, unique, and autonomous is encouraged by their families and social groups (pg. 198, para 4, para 5). New Zealand respondents develop brand love relationships that benefit them so they can expand their uniqueness and their autonomous self. The independent culture influenced and accompanied New Zealand respondents since they were young and New Zealand respondents' self-concept was derived from the independent culture norm in their social environment.

In an independent culture, individuals are accepted as making their own decisions based on their volition and are accepted to take action on their personal beliefs (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). New Zealand respondents reported that as long as their consumption behaviour were positive and fit their identities, they could make their choice with their loved brands, which can express their personal beliefs, and help them achieve their self-expansion

(pg.198, para 4, para 5). For New Zealand respondents, social acceptance is the motive that improves their construct with their brand love relationships by reference to their thoughts and needs.

For Chinese respondents, they grew up in the interdependent culture, and the culture delivers and furnishes the platform to foster individuals' character as harmony, cohesion, interrelatedness, and coordination (pg. 199, para 3, para 4). Chinese respondents would like to observe others' brand relationships or seek others' opinions before they develop brand relationships. Chinese respondents desire to develop and maintain close and long-lasting brand relationships that are not only suitable for their self-expansion, they also prefer to choose long-lasting brand relationships they will gain the support from others and fit in with others. Their interdependent culture encouraged Chinese respondents to develop their self-concept as dependent on social context so that they can be better accepted and supported by their social group. Chinese respondents expressed that they hope and want their brand love relationships to be confirmed by and have interconnectedness with their close others (pg. 199, para 5, para 6).

In an interdependent culture, individuals are accepted as making their own decisions bound and connected with their relevant others (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). The Chinese respondents reported that as long as their brand love relationships are supported by their in-group, as both their in-group and they are believing their loved brands are matching their current identities and are good for developing their futures. For Chinese respondents, social acceptance is the motive that improves them, in terms of their construct for their brand love relationships, not only by reference to their thoughts and needs, it should also be approved and supported by their in-group (pg. 199, para 3, para 5).

According to the research results, social acceptance is defined as a common phenomenon that happens in an individual's daily life (Glazer, 2006; Kim et al., 2008). Leary and Baumeister (2000) noted that social acceptance is the desire that forms and maintains long-lasting relationships with others based on their social values and norms. Social acceptance has to do with positive social interactions and is the way that individuals follow social rules and norms to maintain stable and long-term relationships with others. The respondents behave and act according to their cultural values and norms because different

cultures contain different values and norms, and New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents behave and act differently.

9.5.3 Responsibility sharing

Responsibility and obligation are two factors that both New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents were reporting they have experienced in their brand love relationships. Goodenough (1981) suggested that culture values, norms, and beliefs are developed through people's interactions, experience, and thoughts, and they combined them, and share them in the same culture group. Responsibility and obligation are two aspects that belong to cultural values and norms that are feelings of "oughtness" (Ogbu, 1993; Tuner, 1991). In other words, responsibility and obligation are behaviour that people in any culture should and ought to feel, believe, and do (Matsumoto, 1996; Tuner, 1991).

Responsibility sharing is an intrinsic motivation and reciprocity process that includes both giving and receiving (Radin, 1996; Belk, 2007). In terms of responsibility in the culture one of the meanings is that of "cause", which means one thing causes another thing to happen, or one thing gives rise to or results in another thing or things, and is responsible for the result and is the cause (Said, 2012). Culture is organised by different individual's experience and interactions, responsibility referred to personal responsibility is the event or thing that the individual caused or things that the individual did not directly cause even though the individuals are related to the consequences of the thing or event. Personal responsibilities are both accountable and appraisable (McCann, 1995). Individuals in different culture should fulfill different responsibilities, as different cultures have different scopes and boundaries of responsibilities.

For New Zealand respondents, they have a clear line between themselves and others, and they like to take responsibilities for their actions and behaviour in social groups (pg. 202, para 2, para 3). New Zealand respondents like to share responsibilities with others, to take responsibility for sharing as part of their self-expansions, to share responsibilities by using their resources, perspectives and identities to achieve the goals of extending themselves (pg. 201, para 4, para 5).

For Chinese respondents, they are willing to share other's consequences of their behaviour in relationships. Chinese respondents like to ask and seek other's help and opinions before they engage in something, so people who give help or advice also like to take responsibility for the consequences of the actions (pg. 200, para 4, pg. 201, para 1). Chinese respondents reported that they were encouraged and educated with the values that they are part of their families and culture, and they should always undertake their families' duties or liabilities.

An interdependent culture does not encourage individuals to be separate and autonomous (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Since Chinese respondents expressed that their sense of belonging to their families and their in-group, their self-concept is intertwined with others (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). While Chinese described their brand love relationships, they always related their loved brands to their family members or friends or classmates (pg. 201, para 2, para 3). This is because their loved brands were recommended either by their experienced friends or parents or their friends or parents helped them made the purchase decisions, to buy their loved brands. Chinese respondents understand their resources, perspectives, and identities are shared with their close others and their in-group. They share their close others' resources, perspectives and identities, and they also share responsibilities with their close others (pg. 201, para 2, para 3).

In conclusion, responsibility is connected to an individual's self-concept, so an individual values his or her perspectives and identities in culture and this reflects how an individual value him or herself in his or her brand love relationships, this is connected to the respondent's cognition. New Zealand respondents were more focused on their inner need, as they accepted that they are independent, and they have uniqueness capabilities and rights (pg. 201, para 4). For New Zealand respondents, they are responsible for their behaviour, acts, and thinking is primarily in independent culture. New Zealand respondents' responsibilities are relevant to their self-defining attributes, this feature shows that in their brand love relationships, they made their own decisions about their loved brands, and they would like to fulfill all of the consequences and duties about their choices (pg. 202, para 1, para 2). Chinese respondents expressed that their self-concept is meaningful and complete while it is intertwined with their

close others or their in-group. Chinese respondents' responsibilities are combined with their families or their in-groups, which Chinese respondents have to share the duties of their families or the duties of their in-groups (pg. 201, para 1, para 2). Chinese respondents' responsibilities are relevant to the self-in-relation to close others or their in-groups. Chinese respondents choose their loved brands according to other's voices and experience, as their brand love relationships are also combined with their close others' desires and goals in common.

Secondly, responsibilities in culture are understood based on respondent's emotion. New Zealand respondents expressed they have strong, intense, and positive feelings about the duties or responsibilities they have to do. Because their responsibilities are closely and directly linked to themselves, so to achieve their goals and include their love brands' resources to accomplish their self-expansion are the responsibilities they have to fulfill (pg. 201, para 4, para 5). Chinese respondents were more sensitive and caring about close others' feelings, and what they can do to support their close others (pg. 200, para 4).

Thirdly, responsibility in culture is also expressed by the respondent's motivation. New Zealand respondents were more personal orientated that the motive of their responsibilities is to fulfill their inner needs and wants, and take care of their behaviour first (pg. 202, para 1). Chinese respondents were more socially oriented in that the motive of their responsibilities is to meet the expectations of others and normally their responsibilities are related to their families and their in-group (pg. 200, para 4; pg. 201, para 1).

9.5.4 Obligation

Obligation is defined as duty or commitment to close others or to social groups (Deci, 1985). Obligation is a way that an individual maintains connections and relations with others (Godwyn and Gittell, 2011). Williams (2004) suggested that obligation is an intense and useful way to maintain relationships. Obligation is regarded as binding and serves as the glue in relationships, and that every relationship involves some sort of obligation. Individuals look at obligation in their relationships as things or rules to restrict an individual not to do things that break their obligations, or an individual should behave to obey their obligations.

For New Zealand respondents, they focus on whether relationships can provide independence and help them achieve their personal goals and happiness. Obligation to them is an intrinsic motivation, which they are more likely to emphasise to fulfil their personal goals first, and to do things or give help to others if they want to (pg. 204, para 1, para 2). New Zealand respondents fulfil their commitments to others or social groups if they believe it would not restrain their freedom (pg. 204, para 6).

Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested that independent culture has four dimensions that include physical independent, personal trait independent, hobbies independent, and aspirations independent. For New Zealand respondents, their independent self-concept as their uniqueness, wholeness and to maintain their distinct potential was expressed by the four dimensions of independent self (pg. 204, para 1, para 3, para 5). New Zealand respondents believed that in terms of their uniqueness and wholeness, they always care about their inner needs and wants as the things they ought to do (pg. 204, para 1, para 3, para 4).

Chinese respondents take obligation as an intrinsic motivation such that they believe they should satisfy their in-groups' need or request, by applying their resources (pg. 203, para 1, para 2). Chinese respondents believe that fulfil their duties or commitments to others, or social groups is one of their personal goals (pg. 203, para 3, para 4). Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested that an interdependent culture has four dimensions that include physical interdependent, personal trait interdependent, hobbies interdependent, and aspiration interdependent. Chinese respondents were constructing and developing their self-concept based on the four dimensions of the interdependent self. The Chinese respondents believed that they should consider their close other's thoughts, feelings, and actions and combine their close other's experience and values in themselves as things they should do. The Chinese respondents were feeling meaning in terms of self while they were more connected and less differentiated from close others (pg. 203, para 3, para 4).

Obligation is a commitment that individuals give to a group they belong to (Wiener, 1982). According to the research results, both New Zealand respondents and Chinese respondents reported that there were rules and duties

that existed in their cultures that they had to obey. For New Zealand respondents, their independent culture encouraged them to be themselves and be unique in terms of pursuing their goals, which their culture expected them to follow their internal feelings and thoughts. For New Zealand respondents, their obligations are to remain loyal to their cultural values and norms in their life and their brand love relationships. For Chinese respondents, their interdependent culture is to motive for them to adopt other's suggestions and advice to fit in. Obligation in an interdependent culture has more pressure than in independent culture. Obligation in culture is more like an "antecedent-commitment" (Meyer and Allen, 1991), as it informs people in different cultures about their duties, their rules and things they ought to do or things they should not do in their culture.

In conclusion, firstly, the obligation that exists in consumer's values and norms encourages them in terms of things they can do and things they cannot do as their duties. Secondly, culture values and norms not only provide rules about "should do" and "should not do", it also provides a context and an environment in which to implement the obligations in relationships. Thirdly, obligation in culture is an "antecedent-commitment" that informs and influences people with respect to their duties and rules.

Table 9. 7 Four features in culture

Consumer-brand love relationships influenced by culture in Four features	Features	
	Social influence	Value and standard rules; belongs to an interaction that is combined with cognition, motivation, and emotion
	Social acceptance	How others' respond; motive to maintain long-term relationships
	Responsibility	Include personal responsibility and social responsibility; cause of the behaviour;
	Obligation	Duty and commitment;

9.6 Conceptual Model and Conclusion

This section is divided into two parts that demonstrate the conceptual model of this thesis and includes the conclusion of this chapter. The conceptual model of this research is testified and summarised from literature review and research propositions. Table 9.8 summarised whether research propositions were supported by findings or not.

Table 9.8 Summarised whether propositions were supported by findings or not.

Table 9.8 Support for the propositions

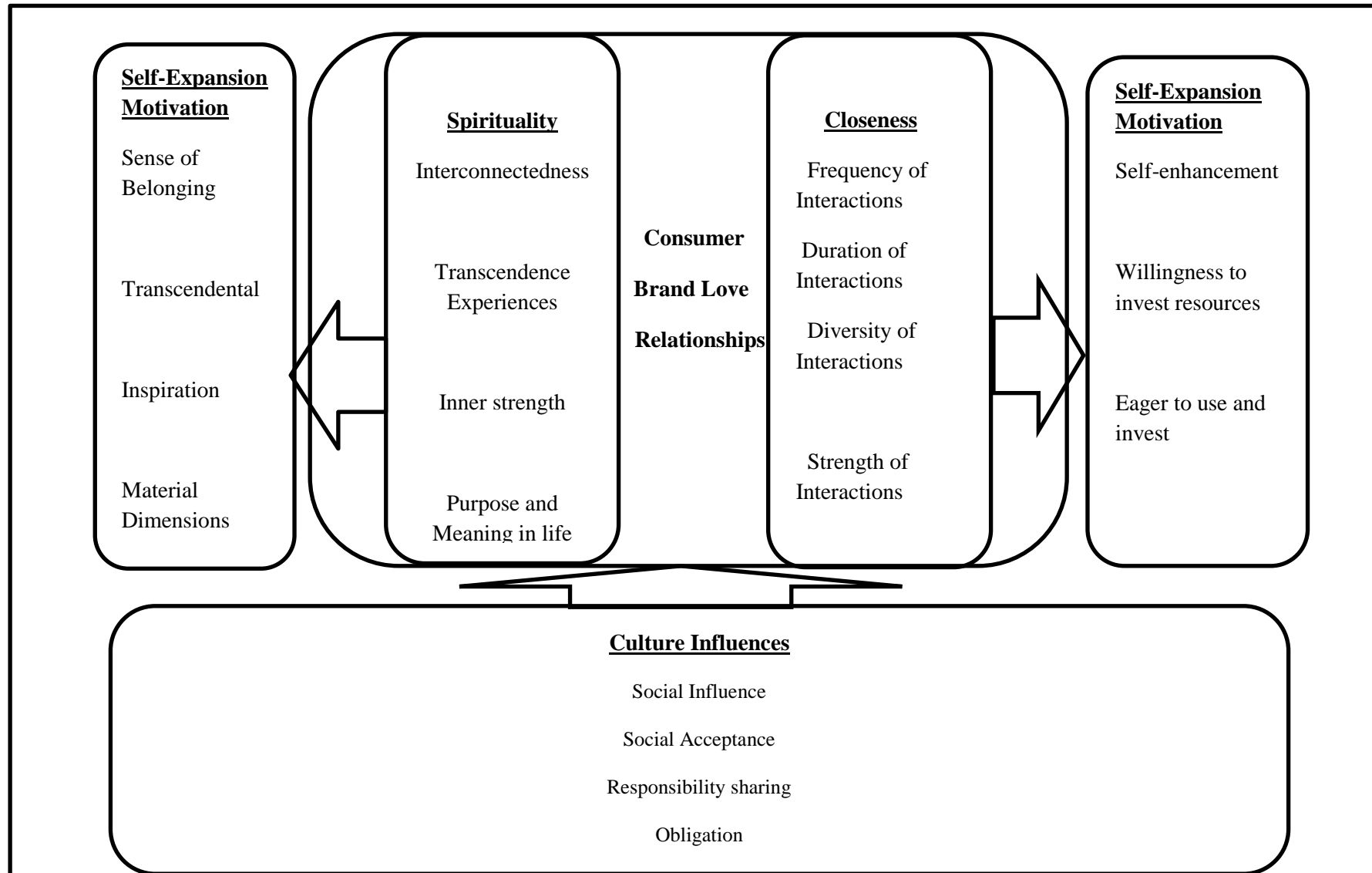
Proposition	Supported or Not Supported
RP I. Consumers' engagement in relationship with brands is positively related to the close relationship dimensions of: (1) the frequency of the interactions; (2) the duration of the interactions; (3) the diversity of the interactions; (4) the strength of the interactions.	Supported
RP II. Consumers engaged in relationships with brands are positively related to the spiritual relationship dimensions of: (1) Unifying interconnectedness; (2) Transcendence experience; (3) Innerness or inner resources; (4) Purpose and meaning in life.	Supported
RP III. Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Western culture.	Supported
RP IIII. Close relationships and spiritual relationships can be identified as separate and distinct states with consumers under Eastern culture.	Supported
RP V. young New Zealand consumers and young Chinese consumers have a different experience in their brand love relationships, culture could be one of the influential factor in brand love relationships.	Supported

9.6.1 Conceptual Model

After summarising the empirical results, there is a discussion of the results, the conceptual model was developed to explain consumer-brand love relationships (Figure 9.1). The conceptual model was developed by analysing the research data, narrowing down the theoretical framework, and forming explanations by comparing the data with the existing literature. This model is developed to identify consumer-brand love relationships by applying the self-expansion model (Aron and Aron et al., 2001). Consumers are willing to engage in brand love relationships because brands can provide resources, perspectives, and identities for their self-expansion. The central motive of consumers to enhance themselves via brand relationships can be achieved by incorporating brands' resources, perspectives, and identities into their selves. This cross-cultural research focuses on the perspectives of self-expansion motivation and the

cognition of the inclusion of others in the self with young consumers in consumer-brand love relationships, to illustrate that consumers treat their emotions as arising from a desire to expand the self by including their close brands in themselves, and by associating their expansions with particular brands in their brand love relationships.

Figure 9. 1 Conceptual model of brand love relationships



As shown in **Figure 9.1**, the consumer brand love relationship is organised by both the close relationship and the spiritual relationship, as both are found to be analogous to brand love relationships.

Consumers interacting with their loved brands can be viewed as sequences of interconnected experience and events that exist in brand love relationships. The four features of interactions in brand love relationships not only help consumers identify the experience of interchange in their brand relationships, it also helps consumers acquire the resources, perspectives, and identities they need to achieve their self-expansions.

The spirituality of brand love relationships helps consumers construct their mental and spiritual connections with their brands. Consumers accept their loved brands have the spiritual characteristics of 1) unifying interconnectedness; 2) transcendence; 3) inner strength; 4) provide meaning in life.

Consumers who believe their loved brands provide close relationships or spiritual relationships or both relationships have intense and strong love relationships with their brands. Consumers accepted their brand love relationships in a reciprocal way so that they are willing to invest all of their resources and energies to maintain their long-term relationships, and their loved brands support consumer's self-expansion with their brands' resources, perspectives, and identities. Consumers behave, act, and think differently because they were influenced by their different cultures' values, norms, and beliefs. Because of the influences of their different cultures, consumers were involved in brand love relationships with different goals.

9.6.2 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the main findings of this thesis. A model of this thesis Figure 9.1 was presented as a guide to understanding the reason that consumers were willing to maintain their brand love relationships, and different consumers in different cultures interact with their loved brands differently.

This chapter discusses the empirical findings in Chapter 8 and discusses whether the findings support the five research propositions and the conclusions that were drawn in terms of the new theory compared to those that were found in the literature are presented. This chapter ends with a conclusion of the

research model. The research model is organised and constructed by the findings and conclusions and is based on the five research propositions. The next chapter will provide the conclusions of this research study.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

10.1 Summary of thesis

As this thesis shows, consumers feel ‘close’ or ‘intimate’ in their brand love relationships because both consumers and their loved brands have an impact on each other, and have an influence on each other in terms of their relationship. The influences that exist in brand love relationships are the interactions, and the interactions between the consumers and brands are reciprocated and repeated. Aron and Aron (1991) observed that “Love is the constellation of behaviour, cognition, and emotions associated with a desire to enter or maintain a close relationship with a specific other people.” (p.26). In this thesis, love is defined as motivation, and both spiritual-brand love relationships and close-brand love relationships express consumer’s love motivation in different ways. Consumers who have experienced different forms of brand love relationships have their different needs and goals for their self-expansions.

This thesis adopted the phenomenology approach, and it relies on qualitative data. The method was chosen because it fits the research objective of this thesis. Phenomenology focuses on the lived experience of the respondents and aims to understand the motive perspective of the person who has the experience and the effect that the perspectives have on the lived experience (Omery, 1983; Valle et al., 1989). Phenomenology is the process that starts from a description of a situation experienced in everyday life and interprets them coming from a position of pre-reflexive thought (Husserl, 1970). In this thesis, consumers’ motives, thinking, and behaviour are influenced by what they perceived and experienced. Phenomenology is composed of the phenomenon of consciousness (Giorgi, 1985). While consumers describe their relationships with loved brands, it gives them awareness about their brand love relationships, since nothing can be referred to without consciousness. The in-depth interview was applied in this thesis, and respondents were allowed to talk about their own experience in their close relationships, spiritual relationships, and in their brand love relationships. The respondents’ responses were guided and inspired by the researcher as they related to the themes of this thesis.

Since the objective of this thesis is composed by the literature and the researcher's observations, the inductive approach was applied to interrupt the respondents' experience and beliefs and to develop the explanation by going between the research findings and literature. The theoretical framework is formed (Chapter 7, figure7.1) and also the responses to the three research questions for this thesis is presented in the first chapter.

To summarise the findings of this thesis, the empirical findings and theoretical explanations of consumer-brand love relationships will be demonstrated to answer the three research questions as follows.

RQ 1 Do consumer-brand love relationships mirror close relationships and spiritual relationships?

In this thesis, love is defined as motivation, and love is the motive and desire to develop and maintain a close relationship with a specific one (Aron and Aron, 1991). For now, love as a motive is an essential factor that exists in relationships, and it helps to maintain relationships, whether it is a romantic relationship, or a friendship, or a family relationship, or other meaningful relationship.

People are born in relationships and live within relationships with others, Berscheid and Peplau (1983) and Kelley (1983) noted that relationships are developed and maintained by interactions and the environment. In this thesis, the brand-love relationship is defined as consumers involved in brand relationships have a great deal of impact on their brand relationships, and they are motivated to maintain their relationships with their loved brands because they believe their brand relationships assist them to make their life meaningful.

According to the research findings, consumer-brand love relationships are analogous to close interpersonal relationships in terms of the feature of interaction. Interaction is the "give and take" between two parties (Kelley, 1983). Hinde (1979) noted that interaction is an essential factor in relationships that is the way that one party responds to the other parties in the relationships. Interaction is also the way that one party understands other parties psychologically and physically. According to the research findings, consumers interact with their loved brands in brand love relationships, and their interactions reveal their attitudes, values, experience, beliefs, mirroring, and

representing their relationships. The four perspectives of the interactions in brand love relationships can be described as the interconnected activities that have a high degree of interdependence between consumers and brands:

Consumers' frequently interact with their loved brands and this is motivated by four features: 1) firstly, consumers are attracted by brands because they found brands are enjoyable, and they would like to increase their interactions with brands because brands fit their interests. 2) secondly, consumers would like to maintain their brand love relationships as long as they enjoy the pleasure that their loved brands provide to them. Pleasure is another motive that improves consumers, so they have experience of wanting more. 3) thirdly, consumers believe their loved brands help them define themselves as consumers' love merges and blends with their identities to include their loved brands as in themselves. Consumers' loved brands can prove "who they are" and help consumers expand themselves to achieve their goals. The more frequently consumers interact with their loved brands, the more likely consumers are to be certain, clear, confident, and sure about their self-identities and their ideal identities that they want to achieve. 4) fourthly, consumers increase their interactions with their loved brands frequently even though they understand that potential risks might exist in their loved brands, and they believe their loved brands would not cause any danger to them. Consumers frequently interact with their loved brands not only to consider the benefits or return they can get from the relationships they also found their loved brands are attractive and can assist them to achieve their goals.

The longer consumers interact with their loved brands, the more likely the brand love relationships fit their expectations and consumers would like to maintain their relationships. The time that consumers interact with their loved brands can be divided into three stages as 1) past time, 2) present time, and 3) future time. Consumers fabricated their affective reactions and impressions that are associated with memorable and essential parts of their experiences, and they would make present and future decisions based on their affective experience in the *past*. Consumers would like to maintain their brand love relationships with their brand if they believe they have benefitted from their past interactions. If consumers achieved their self-expansion within their brand love relationships

in the past, if consumers feel supported and encouraged from their past interactions with their brands, they would like to maintain their relationships in the present. Consumers construct their *future interactions* based on their emotions and cognition, as the decisions of maintaining brand love relationships because their positive experience surpass the negative experience in their brand love relationships. Consumers would like to interact with brands that can provide them more positive consequences and can provide them with more opportunities for their self-expansions.

Consumers would like to interact with their loved brands in different events or situations (diverse interaction). Consumers' loved brands accompany them in diverse situations to achieve different goals, as consumers achieved self-expansions in different events with the same brands, and the interactions between consumers and brands in diverse events are opportunities to increase the intimacy between consumers and their loved brands. Consumers interpret different events/situations according to three themes, specifically, the role theme, the interpersonal theme, and the life theme.

The role theme is often referred to as a social role or communities' role, such as consumers understand their role theme as students, doctors, teachers, and interact and get involved in brand relationships in connection with their role. The interpersonal theme is often referred to as a role in close relationships, since consumers' values, beliefs, and behaviour were cultivated and influenced by their close others. While consumers interact with their loved brands as an interpersonal theme, their close others would fully support their interactions. Consumers' life theme is developed from their role theme or interpersonal theme, as life theme has to do with consumers' purpose or aims. Consumers' life theme is constructed as consumers fulfil their role theme or interpersonal theme in brand love relationships. Three themes that guide consumers to behave and act in different situations, and with the guidance of these three themes, consumers would understand whether their interactions are suitable for their self-expansion or not.

Consumers believe their loved brands provide them support and comfort with intense interactions in brand love relationships. Time, distance, and environment are three features that enhance the interaction in terms of the strength in brand love relationships. The interactions between consumers and

their loved brands are intermittent and repeated. The more frequently consumers have interactions with their loved brands, the closer they feel about their relationships with their loved brands. Consumers' interactions with their loved brands involve coordination so that they would find proper space or certain circumstances to interact with their loved brands, in order to achieve their goals.

In this thesis, brand love relationships mirror close interpersonal relationships because people in close relationships have a great deal of influence on each other. In brand love relationships, the motive of love is adopted as it enhances closeness between consumers and their loved brands. Berscheid and Peplau (1983) noted that relationship could be defined as "close" if the two parties in the relationship have a mutual impact on each other and are highly interdependent. In this thesis, consumer's love for brands is revealed in four features of their interconnected activities: 1) consumers' frequent interaction with their brands; 2) consumers' long-term interaction; 3) consumers' interaction with brands in diverse ways or diverse situations, and 4) consumers' intense interactions with their loved brands. Interpersonal relationships can be defined as closeness that is determined by a person's attitude toward their relationships, an understanding of their relationships, and social conditions (Kelley et al., 1983). Consumers' frequent, intense, long-lasting, and diverse interactions with their loved brands demonstrate their closeness and intimacy relationships. They also reveal that the love between consumers and brands are an expression of their love for their brands is based on their thoughts, acts, and beliefs.

Interaction is the way that individuals increase their understanding of themselves as their positive self, and they want others to treat them in a positive way through their interaction (Swann et al., 1987). Individual self-concept is constructed through interactions with close others, and self-enhancement is improved and developed by interaction with close others (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). Consumers develop and maintain their self-concept with their loved brands, and consumers define and support their self-concept through their interactions with their loved brands.

Consumers' willingness to invest in their brand love relationships is the way to demonstrate that the interactions between consumers and their loved brands

are mutual. This is because brands provide resources, perspectives, and identities to help consumers expand themselves, and consumers would invest all their intangible and tangible resources to maintain their relationships with brands.

Interactions are a way to assist consumers to become familiar with brands, to get involved in brand relationships, and develop and maintain their brand love relationships. Interactions are an essential element that delivers and convey consumers' needs and desire in relationships, and the quality of the interactions between the consumers and brands has an influence on the intensity of their brand relationships (Annis, 2007; Kelley et al., 1983). The closeness or intimacy in a relationship is determined by the interaction frequency, interaction time length, diverse interaction, and interaction strength. In consumers' brand love relationships, consumers continuously interact with their loved brands to fulfill their needs, and brands provide both psychological and physical benefits to consumers in response to their needs.

In this thesis, consumer-brand love relationships are not only analogous to close interpersonal relationships, they also mirror the features of spiritual relationships. In this thesis, the definition of spirituality has more to do with the items or objects that construct a sense of meaning in consumers' life. (Hay, 1989; Howden, 1992; Skousgaard, 2006). Spirituality is the source of hope and strength, and it is an expression of giving and receiving love, and an expression of a need for bonding (Mayeroff, 1971; Roy, 1984; Ross, 1994).

There are four features of spirituality in brand love relationships, according to the research findings. The four features are listed below:

Unifying interconnectedness: consumers are aware that brands' resources, perspectives, and identities are intertwined with themselves. Since consumers' loved brands are like bridges, they connect the inner needs, thoughts, and beliefs of the consumer together with their physical need. Consumers' loved brands stimulate consumers' inner thoughts and beliefs and help consumers understand more about themselves. In brand love relationships, consumers can include the features of their brands in their lives, and consumers can enjoy the feeling of belongingness with their loved brands.

Transcendence: Spirituality is delivered dependent on some “things” (Oldnal, 1996), consumers feel their life meaning and their inner self through their transcendence experience from their loved brands. The features of transcendence in brand love relationships help consumers to reinterpret their perceptions of things and extend themselves, so they become more enthusiastic about life. Consumers regard their transcendence experience that their loved brands provide to them as their motives and rewards that expand their thoughts and life.

Innerness: consumers include brands’ resources in themselves as their resources, and they behave from the perspectives of their loved brands’, not only because their brands provide them with external rewards and resources, it is also because their brands provide them with the meaning of life and an internal state that consumers find rewarding. Innerness is a motive that inspires consumers to overcome their challenges, and it guides them to achieve their life goals. The inner power that their loved brands gifted them reduces the uncertainty that might happen to consumers.

Purpose and meaning in life: Meaning in life or life purpose is identified as the driving forces for human beings. Consumers believe that they can understand and interpret the meaning their brands deliver to them, and they can gain insight into the meaning of their brands as part of their resources and identities.

The features of spirituality in brand love help consumers construct their mental and spiritual connections with brands. Consumers who believe brands provide spiritual love to them have intense and strong relationships with their loved brands. The features of spirituality in brand love relationships provide consumers a sense of self-worth and a reason for living, which is an essential element to consumers’ life. Love and connectedness are the key components of spirituality (Fish and Shelly, 1988), as consumers who claimed they have spirituality features in their relationships with their brands expressed that they have a sense of relatedness and connectedness with their loved brands.

This study affirmed that consumer-brand love relationships are analogous to close relationships, and to spiritual relationships, the two forms of brand love relationships. Meanwhile, the two forms of brand love relationships both

provide resources, perspectives, and identities to consumers for their self-expansions. Consumers enhance their closeness with their favoured brands by their repeated, long-term, and intense interactions, similar to their close interpersonal relationships. Consumers' favoured brands provide them with inner power, inner strength, and meaning in life, similar to the way that the natural world or universe transforms the inner strength and life purpose of human beings.

RQ 2 What are essential factors that motivate consumers to form brand love relationships and maintain their brand love relationships?

James (2013, p.124) suggested that "All love- love of house, love of cat, love of spouse, and love of child-all love is directed toward the self". The objects we love and the people we love, and the nature we love all have an impact on our sense of who we are (Ahuvia, 2005). In this thesis, the researcher defines and studies consumers' love for brands from the perspective of motivation. Consumers get involved in brand love relationships not only to understand their self-concept as receiving love (brands' resources, perspectives, and identities) they also give love (to demonstrate that they have abilities to invest and maintain relationships with their loved brands) to maintain their relationships.

According to the research findings, the two forms, spiritual-brand love relationships, and close-brand love relationships, encompass consumers' motives to maintain their brand love relationships from different perspectives. Spiritual-brand love relationships fulfill consumers' self-expansion motives from the perspective that they are (1) sources of inspiration; (2) offer a sense of belonging; (3) provide the material dimensions of spiritual relationships; (4) create an emotional alignment from inside world to outside world; (5) and offer a transcendental aspect. Close-brand love relationships transmit consumers' self-expansion motives from the perspective of (1) they offer consumers self-enhancement; (2) consumers are willing to invest in them; (3) consumers are eager to use their loved brands and get involved with them.

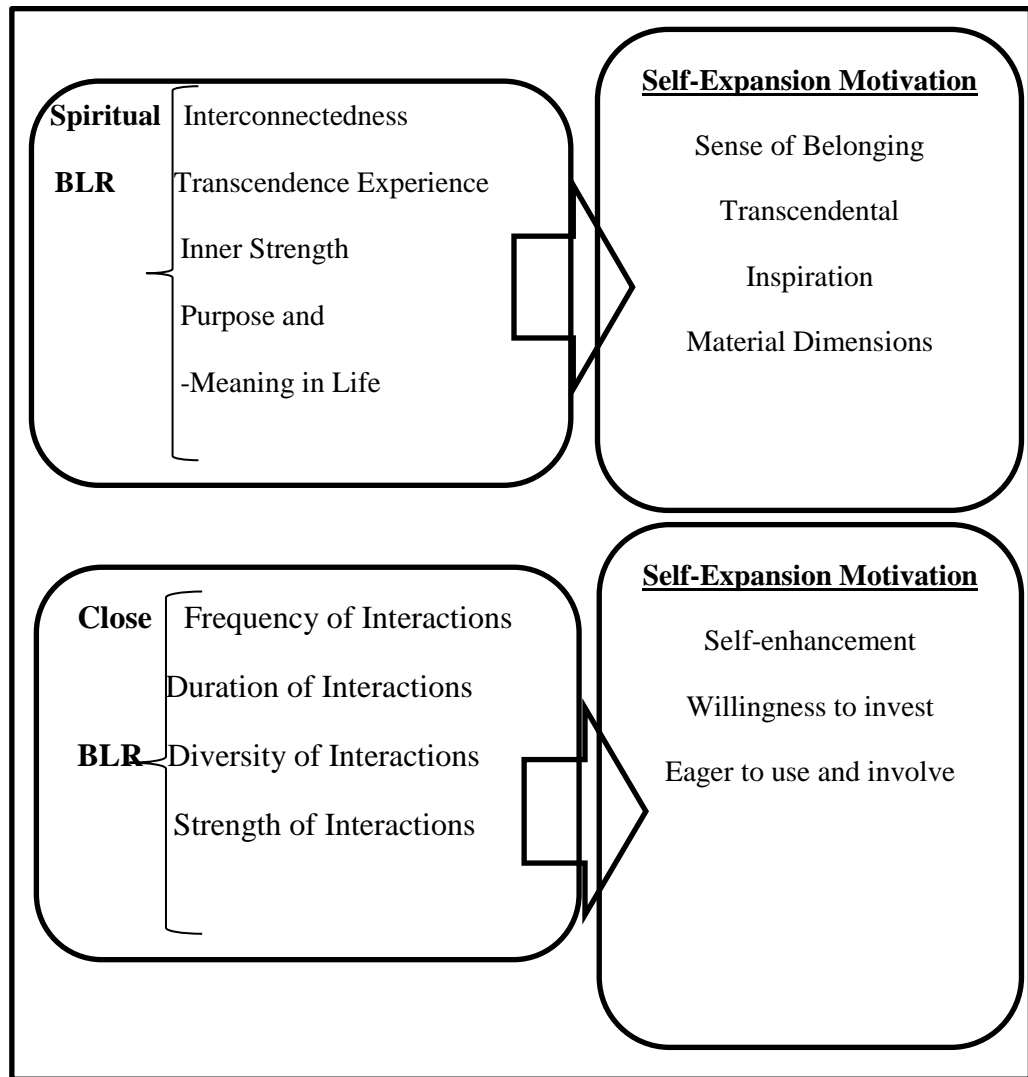
Consumers' motives in two forms of brand love relationships can be summarised as having three main goals: 1) firstly, part of consumers' needs and wants emanate from the physical/functional values of the brands. From a review

of the literature, several studies demonstrated that brands' functional benefits influence consumers' attitudes, preferences, and values (Chitturi et al., 2008; Okazaki et al., 2010; Zarantonello et al., 2013). Consumers' love is stimulated by brands' functions especially at the beginning stage of brand relationships. Since brands' physical functions are available to consumers directly and depending upon whether the resources, or another potential, the brands provide consumers, are attractive or not, consumers can easily understand the physical functions of their brands. 2) secondly, consumers interpret and understand the world from the perspectives their brands provide to them, as their brands assist them to extend their knowledge and insight. 3) thirdly, consumers' awareness of their positions in the universe and from a social-cultural point of view, this motive is related to consumers' consciousness of whether their brands assist them to understand and interpret their meaning in life and their life purpose.

These three goals that have been developed from this study represent the reasons and motives that consumers maintain their brand love relationships.

Figure 10.1 Demonstrates consumers' motivation and their goals in their brand love relationships

Figure 10. 1 Consumers' motivational goals in brand love relationships



RQ3 Do consumers in brand love relationships behave differently under two different cultural contexts (New Zealand and China)?

Consumers' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour are cultivated and influenced by their social environment and their close others (Weiss, 1974; Wright, 1974). Culture is organised by many components, such as languages, religion, values, and beliefs, and culture influences individuals' perceptions and evaluations (Hill, 2002). According to the research findings, New Zealand consumers and Chinese consumers have different values and beliefs with respect to their brand love relationships, and culture is one of the influential factors. Culture is a powerful force that shapes an individual's behaviour, perceptions, and

dispositions (Triandis, 1989). New Zealand consumers and Chinese consumers understand and interact with their loved brands differently because of their cultural influences. The main reason consumers engage in love relationships with their brands is to attain and enjoy their brands' resources, perspectives, and identities. Because of the different cultural influences, New Zealand consumers and Chinese consumers attain and enjoy brands differently.

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), individuals in Western culture act independently, (independent self) whereby they view themselves as unique, and they strive for their own goals, they express themselves, and they express themselves in a more direct way. Individuals in Eastern culture act interdependently (interdependent self), wherein they focus on belonging and fitting in, occupying their proper place and they express themselves more directly.

New Zealand consumers' consumption behaviour and values are influenced by their nuclear families. This is because their nuclear family is characterised as having independent features that are constructed within the parent-children unit (Litwak, 1960; Sussman and Burchinal, 1962). The features of the nuclear family are independent, autonomous, and they are influenced by a weak kin network. New Zealand consumers solely have to deal with the resources and values that their parents delivered to them, they do not have close interactions with their kin network, and their values, beliefs and attitudes would not be influenced by their kin relationships. In other words, New Zealand consumers form their values and beliefs consistently by their parents, and only by their parents. The family culture cultivates New Zealand consumers as independent self, and they are more likely to consider whether their loved brands are useful to express their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. New Zealand consumers' self-enhancement can be achieved through their brand love relationships if their loved brands' resources, perspectives, and identities can indicate and develop their attributes, abilities, and preferences.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested individuals in Eastern culture act as interdependently (interdependent self), which is due to their upbringing, the way they are cultivated and educated to act and their thinking is less differentiated from their relevant others, and they are part of their relevant groups or their

families, and if they separated from their groups or families they become incomplete. Chinese consumers are influenced by interdependent culture, and their self-concept is intertwined with others. Chinese consumers would like to maintain brand love relationships that are suggested or approved by their close others or their relevant group. Meanwhile, Chinese consumers would be motivated to maintain their brand love relationships if their brands are recognised and confirmed by their close others or their social groups.

Yorburg (1975) suggested that in Chinese culture, the extended family is interdependent, and people interact with their kin network very often. The features of the extended family are both psychological and economic interdependence and the concept of family not only includes parents and children, it also includes grandparents, or aunts and uncles or other relatives. Chinese consumers are educated and influenced by their extended family culture, and they not only have to consider and follow their parents' words, they also have to follow their other relatives' words, too. Chinese consumers defined their self-concept as connected and assimilated with their relevant others, and they would like to choose loved brands that not only can represent their desire and attitudes, more importantly, their self-concept can represent their close others' desires and values. Since Chinese consumers have grown up in their extended family, they are sensitive to others in terms of what they are thinking and how they act, they would like to respect others' feelings, and they are willing to adjust accordingly. Because Chinese consumers' values and attitudes are influenced by their extended family and as Mead (1934) suggested that interdependent culture involves individual's willingness to think and act in ways that are similar to their close others in terms of how they think and act, and to assimilate others' needs without being told.

The values and attitudes of Chinese consumers expressed in their brand love relationships are associated with or are contingent upon their close others' needs and desires. Chinese consumers included their brands' resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves not only for their own expansion needs, they also do so to fulfil their close others' goals and needs.

10.2 Contributions

This thesis has explored an area of consumer brand love relationship that has previously not been studied deeply in academic marketing literature.

In terms of the consumer brand love relationship, it not only has similar features and characteristics that could be compared to close relationships, it also has similar features and characteristics that could be compared to spiritual relationships. The features of close relationships and the features of spiritual relationships in brand love relationships can be identified and separated. Consumers develop and maintain relationships with brands not only to acquire resources, perspectives, and identities from their loved brands, they also want to achieve their self-expansion goals through their relationships with their loved brands. This thesis highlights the reasons consumers develop and maintain their brand love relationships, it discusses Chinese consumers' brand love relationships and New Zealand consumers' brand love relationships and it identifies culture as one of the influential factors in brand love relationships.

The two parts in this section include the conceptual contributions with a discussion on the conceptual contributions of this thesis and the managerial contributions of this thesis.

10.2.1 Conceptual contributions

This thesis applies both close relationships and spiritual relationships as a metaphor for the consumer-brand love relationship area, and compares New Zealand consumers' brand love relationships and Chinese consumers' brand love relationships. A number of conceptual contributions have been advanced, engendered, established, and fostered.

The first contribution of this thesis concerns the “closeness” in the consumer-brand love relationship including the interactions between consumers and their loved brands and the process and the ways of the interactions between consumers and their loved brands. Closeness in relationships is defined as positive motivation, and it has to do with the high effective involvement. The interactions between consumers and their loved brands are characterised by the

closeness of the relationships. The four properties of the interactions are the strength, frequency, diversity, and duration. (Chapter 2 and Chapter 5)

Consumers' response to brands is determined by both the mental and physical capabilities, attributes, and processes of the consumers. Consumer's mental and physical response to brands can be understood through their interactions with their brand love relationships. In this thesis, the researcher studies the consumers' love from a motivational perspective, which is understood as a mutually influential relationship. In terms of examining the situation to understand whether consumers engage in close relationships with brands, it is necessary to investigate the interaction to evaluate the impact consumers, and brands have on each other.

The interactions between consumers and brands can be illustrated in four perspectives of interconnected activities:

1. Consumers have frequently interacted with brands, and brands have a frequent impact on consumers (frequency);
2. Consumers have interconnections with brands for a long period of time (duration);
3. Consumers interact with their loved brands that involves various activities (diversity);
4. Consumers have strong interactions with their loved brands (strength of interactions).

Consumers' interactions within their brand love relationships involve a process of give and take, and consumers' interactions with their loved brands are reciprocated and repeated, as consumers invest their resources and energies in maintaining their relationships, and brands provide resources, perspectives, and identities to assist consumers to achieve their goals. Consumer's intense and long-term interactions with their loved brands strengthen their relationships with their brands. In other words, the more interactions consumers have with loved brands, the more familiar they are with their loved brands, and the more likely consumers will be to want to maintain their relationships with their brands.

Consumers' self-concept is constructed and built through their interactions with their close others, and their self-enhancement is improved and developed

by their interactions with their close others. As consumers include brands' resources, and identities in themselves, brand relationships enhance consumers' sense of personal growth. Consumers who have positive experience with brands would like to invest in their relationships and maintain long-lasting brand relationships. The more interactions consumers have with their loved brands, the more familiar they are with their loved brands. The interactions between consumers and their brands increase consumers' familiarity with their brands, as both knowledge familiarity (brands features, attributes, performance, and brand meaning) and choice familiarity (as to whether brands match consumers' values, acts, actions, and accomplishments). Consumers would like to invest in brands that they have experience with and invest in brands they are familiar with, to intensify and maintain their brand relationships.

In regard to the contributions of the second concept of this thesis, it focuses on the spirituality in the consumer-brand love relationship (Chapter 3 and Chapter 5). Spirituality is a dimension of consumer experience in brand love relationship, which includes consumer's beliefs, attitudes, values, and perspectives. Spirituality exists in or potentially exists in every brand love relationship, and it is a general feature in consumer brand love relationships. The four components of spirituality in brand love relationships are identified in this thesis as 1) firstly, consumers hold a positive attitude about themselves, and they understand themselves and their life situations, and they understand things or objects that are of value to themselves. Consumers understand how to apply brands into their life to achieve harmoniously, and they include brands as part of themselves; 2) secondly, consumers believe their loved brands provide them with a positive mood that makes their life more meaningful. Consumers like to develop and maintain their brand love relationships, which can provide a sense of hope or a reason for their existence; 3) thirdly, consumers believe brand relationships complete themselves and help them discover wholeness, to provide inner resources to themselves to help them find their positions and identities; 4) fourthly, consumers loved brands provide the experience or capacities to help them overcome difficulties and achieve wellness.

In the study, the feature of spirituality in brand love relationships is more of the feature that consumers struggle with to experience a connection with the

essence of life. Consumers include brands' resources in themselves because their loved brands deliver the meaning of life and life purpose through a sense of affinity, which transcends to consumers self and expands consumers' self-concept. Spirituality in brand love relationship helps consumers understand their life meaning, clarify their life goals and purpose, and provides them with perspectives and standards to measure their life.

The third contribution of this research is, in love relationships, individuals are at least sometimes, in some sense, pursuing opportunities to expand themselves (Aron and Aron, 1995). For consumers, the main motivation to maintain a brand love relationship is to acquire, attain, and enjoy brands' resources, perspectives, and identities. (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5)

In consumer brand love relationships, consumers not only pursue expansion in tangible objects, they also expect to expand their knowledge and insight, their social and bodily identities, and to expand their awareness of the meaning of life and their life purpose. Consumers include brands in themselves not only for closeness, transcendence, and they also do so for the merging of resources, perspectives, and identities.

With respect to the contributions of the fourth concept of this thesis (Chapter 5), it focuses on a comparison of the culture between young New Zealand consumers and young Chinese consumers. In regard to the existing literature on the consumer-brand love relationship, it solely focuses on America and the few cross-culture research studies that exist focus on comparing two countries that have the same culture. Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggested that people in Western culture are influenced by the independent culture as people are "unique, bounded, have a dynamic center of awareness, emotion action is organised into a distinctive whole..." (p. 226), and the people in an Eastern culture are influenced by the interdependent culture as people are "motivated to find a way to fit in with relevant others, to fulfill and create obligation, and are more connected and less differentiated from others" (p. 227). New Zealand consumers have the features of independency in their brand love relationships because they have grown up and have been influenced by their nuclear family environment. Chinese consumers have the features of interdependency in their

brand love relationships because they grew up in and have been influenced by their extended family environment.

New Zealand consumers' independent features and Chinese consumers' interdependent features are demonstrated in the four attributes:

1. Social influence - social influence is a value or standard or rule that is shared by the group and individuals are expected to have proper attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour that is in accordance with the same group. The attribute of social influence in culture helps consumers recognise which resources, perspectives, and identities can be accepted and approved by their social-culture.

New Zealand consumers grew up in the independent culture, and the culture delivers and influences the platforms to foster the individuals' character as unique, separate, and autonomous. New Zealand respondents expressed that they choose their brand love relationships on the basis of helping them achieve their personal goals. Chinese respondents would like to choose brand love relationships that all their close ones are happy. Chinese respondents expressed that the things or objects that are meaningful to them are mainly because their close others believe those things or objects are meaningful to themselves, and therefore, those things are meaningful to the respondents. Chinese consumers grew up in the interdependent culture, and the culture delivers and influences the platform to foster individuals' character as harmony, cohesion, interrelatedness, and coordination.

2. Social acceptance- social acceptance means that others or their social group embrace the consumer as part of their group, which means they accept and approve of consumers' resources, perspectives, and identities. Social acceptance involves positive social interactions and is the way that individuals follow social rules and norms to maintain stable and long-term relationships with others.

New Zealand consumers believe that as long as their consumption behaviour are positive and fit their identities, they can make their own choices with respect to their loved brands, which can express their personal beliefs, and achieve their self-expansions. For New Zealand

consumers, social acceptance is the motive that improves them to construct their brand love relationships by reference to their thoughts and needs. Chinese consumers believe that as long as their brand love relationships are supported by their in-group so that both their in-group and they themselves approve of them, then they believe their loved brands match their current identities and will be good for developing their futures. For Chinese consumers, social acceptance is the motive that improves them to construct their brand love relationships not only by reference to their thoughts and needs, it is also important that they are approved and supported by their in-group.

3. Responsibility- responsibility in culture relates to the meaning of “cause”, which means one thing causes another thing to happen, or one thing gives rise to or results in another thing/things, and it is responsible for the result and cause.

For New Zealand consumers, they have a clear line between themselves and others, and they like to take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour in social groups. With respect to the influence and interaction they have with their environment, they should be responsible for themselves first, they should be responsible for whatever they do, and they are responsible for their decisions and choices. For Chinese consumers, they are willing to share the consequences of others' behaviour in relationships. Chinese consumers like to ask and seek other's help and opinions before they choose or they engage in something, so people who give help or advice also like to carry the consequences of the actions. Chinese consumers understand their resources, perspectives, and identities are shared with their close others and their in-group. They share their close others' resources, perspectives, and identities, too.

4. Obligation - obligation is regarded as binding and serves as the glue in relationships, and every relationship involves a certain obligation. New Zealand consumers consider their obligation as an intrinsic motivation, in which they are more like to emphasis the fulfillment of their personal goals first, and they do things or give help to others as they want to. Chinese consumers take obligation as intrinsic motivation that they

believe they should satisfy their in-groups' need or request, by applying their resources. Chinese consumers believe that the fulfillment of their duties or commitments to others or their social groups is one of their personal goals.

This thesis focused on both New Zealand and Chinese consumers, more specifically, university students. As young consumers between 18 and 25 years of age, they have already formed their self-conscience in terms of how they see themselves and their ideal self (Simmons et al., 1975). Consumers become more sophisticated after they reach the age of 18 since their cognition and emotions have developed along with their age. Most consumers who are 18 years of age are both psychologically and physically mature enough to know what they need, although they are not financially independent. Young consumers have motives to enhance and expand their self-evaluation and to increase, maintain, or confirm their feelings of values and beliefs. Young consumers have been raised in a time that is surrounded by brands, and they are more used to and comfortable surrounded by brands than their parents (Hafstrom et al., 1992). Young consumers' brand love relationships are shaped by their surrounding environments, such as their families, friends, and social class. Family is the prime and important influential factor that cultivates young consumer's consumption goals, with respect to forming the ideal of the essential requirements of good brands.

Since New Zealand consumers' values and beliefs are often solely influenced by their parents, in the way they construct themselves in terms of their awareness, emotions, and actions, they are more direct, in terms of their overall uniqueness and distinctiveness. Chinese consumers' values and beliefs are not only influenced by their parents, they include their grandparents and other relatives. Chinese consumers construct their self-concept as more connected and less differentiated from their close others and in-groups. Chinese consumers are motivated to find a way to fit in with their families, relatives, friends, or classmates or other relevant people.

10.2.2 Managerial contributions of this thesis

This thesis not only provides contributions in terms of conceptual contributions, it also provides some suggestions for market practitioners.

First, Aron and Aron (1995) suggested rapid self-expansion might happen to every close relationship as individuals are motivated to improve and enhance themselves by entering a relationship by acquiring the new resources, perspectives, and identities of their partners, and they become cognitively linked with their partners, and treat other's resources as belonging to themselves. Markets should be aware that rapid expansion happens in brand love relationships, for newly formed relationships, as Tucker and Aron (1993) called this stage as the 'honeymoon period' in a relationship. Consumers might become exhilarated and stimulated because of the new functions and new meaning their loved brands provide to them. Consumers expand themselves at a rapid rate, and consumers rapidly include brand's resources, perspectives, and identities in themselves, at the beginning stage of brand love relationships.

Consumers look for relationships to help them obtain expected self-expansion. Consumers would compare themselves while they are faced with potential brand love relationships, they would consider whether they can acquire the resources, perspectives, or identities they lack, from the potential relationships. After engaging in brand love relationships, consumers include every feature the brands have as themselves. In other words, consumers identify and consider brand's resources as their resources, consumers present themselves not only from the perspectives of themselves, they also present themselves from the perspectives of their brands', and consumers include the brand's identities as theirs themselves.

Marketers should be aware that the self-expansion motives that exist in consumer-brand love relationships are mutual. For one side, consumers seek and pursue brand's resources, perspectives, and identities in their brand love relationship for their innovation and growth. For the other side, consumer's loved brands should preserve the established core essence or core features in order to help consumers develop their expansions.

Second, Marketers should be aware that cross-culture differences exist in brand love relationships, especially in New Zealand consumers and Chinese

consumers. New Zealand consumers are motivated to construct their brand love relationships with brands that help them expand their overall uniqueness and distinctiveness. Chinese consumers are motivated to construct their brand love relationships with brands that help them fit in with their social groups.

10.3 Limitations of the research

The main objective of this thesis is to understand, the main reasons that consumers develop, improve and maintain their brand love relationships (from the perspective of two relationships, the close relationship, and the spiritual relationship perspectives). To this end, the researcher explores the brand love relationships based on the self-expansion theory in the mindsets of young people and two different cultural contexts. This thesis collected data based on the features or reasons that involve consumers maintaining their brand love relationships and the researcher collected the responses of young populations (students between 18 and 25 years of age) from two universities (Otago University, New Zealand and Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, China) and two culture contexts (New Zealand culture and Chinese culture).

However, despite the theoretical contributions and managerial contributions of this thesis, various limitations of the current research can be identified.

10.3.1 Geographic limitations

The primary research is geographically limited to New Zealand and China and compared data under two cultural contexts. However, if the independent culture samples can include one or two more countries and if the interdependent culture samples can include one or two more countries, the findings might be richer in terms of the construct of the research. This is even though consumers influenced by the same culture have the same attitudes, acts or values, yet because of the different histories of the countries and the different environments, differences might exist in their brand love relationships.

10.3.2 Theoretical boundaries

Love is complex, and this study relies on one love theory on close relationships and applies it in the brand relationship context, and applies one spirituality theory on the spiritual relationship and applies it in the brand relationship context. Adopting and relying on two theories in the marketing context has

involved only studying and researching one or two perspectives of the brand love relationship, instead of the whole picture. Since love in this study is the motivation, it looks at the way consumers interact with their loved brands and achieve self-expansion through their interactions.

This thesis is limited by narrowing the focus to consumers' motivation of developing and maintaining their brand love relationships and it narrows the definition of love in this study to motivation. Although this narrow focus provides an in-depth explanation of the motives of consumers' love for their brands as their self-expansion, it will also provide other love perspectives (for example, behaviour, emotions, cognition) even though these were not explored and considered in this thesis.

Bajde (2006) suggested that consumer research has been governed and occupied by self-interests. This thesis is focused on both Western consumers' and Eastern consumers' self-interests, their lives, and self-related behaviour, instead of exploring other-oriented consumer behaviour. New Zealand consumers are focused on themselves first in terms of engaging with innovation in brand relationships and then they would consider about close others. Chinese consumers are focused on whether their self-development is at the same pace as their in-groups.

10.3.3 Age limitations

In regard to the age limitations of this thesis, firstly, this study only collected data from respondents from 18 to 25 years of age, and most of those respondents were not financially interdependent. University students normally maintain their brand love relationships with brands, such as stationary brands, social media brands, clothing brands, and phones or computer brands since these consumers' brand love relationships are closely connected with their life experience and values and attitudes. Future research could broaden the respondents' age range, such as consumers from a middle-age group, consumers from a working-class age group, or consumers of an elder group. That approach might collect some different consumers' motivation as they relate to their brand love relationships.

10.3.4 Method limitations

This thesis has a number of limitations with respect to the data collection, including the time limitation for the collection of the data. The researcher only collected data from students at two universities in two countries, although the students at the two universities were not only local students, they were also from other parts of the countries. The data that was collected from the university students from the two countries could not represent all consumers' brand love relationships since consumers' lifestyles and their environment influence their brand love relationships. Nevertheless, university students' consumption behaviour would not have been many differences in different places, even though slight differences might exist.

10.5 Conclusion

This chapter is the final chapter of this thesis. It summarises the thesis by providing the conclusion, a discussion of the key findings, it demonstrates the research limitations and provides directions for future research.

The contribution of this thesis is to identify “love” in brand love relationships from the perspective of motivation, and consumer-brand love relationships are analogous to two forms of relationships (close relationships and spiritual relationships). Meanwhile, the two forms of brand love relationships involve two sources of motivation that improve consumers in terms of developing and maintaining their brand love relationships.

I would like to finish this thesis with the following quote:

“Love is our true destiny, We don't find the meaning of life by ourselves alone. We find it with another.

I love you not for who you are, but who I am when I'm by your side.”---

Anonymous

10.4 Future research

Future research can increase the samples, as the collected data from two or more countries influenced by those from an independent culture and those from an interdependent culture might reveal more findings that have not been explored. This is not only because different histories and different environments might cause different consumer behaviour, it is also because consumers might have a different understanding or interpretation of the word 'love'. For example, whereas American consumers applied the word 'love' more directly to their loved brands (Ahuvia, 1993), French consumers might prefer to use the word 'adore' or other words to describe their loved brands (Albert, et al., 2008), even though America and France are both influenced by an independent culture. A future study could introduce some linguistic literature to enrich future research.

This thesis constructed brand love relationships based on the self-expansion theory, wherein consumers might face four stages of self-expansion in brand love relationships, the beginning stage, the ongoing stage, the supporting, and the fading out stage. However, if consumers were satisfied with their existing relationships, they would love to maintain their long-lasting brand relationships without going through the last stage. Future research could focus on consumers' behaviour at different self-expansion stages. For example, at the beginning stage, as consumers find new resources, or gain new perspectives, or new identities that their loved brands provide to them, their brand relationships might have rapid expansions. At the rapid expansion stage, brand loyalty, brand commitment, and brand trust might increase to develop lasting brand love relationships. Future brand love relationships can connect the definitions of brand commitment, and brand trust to brand love relationships, and look at their development at the different stages of self-expansion.

Future research can focus on the categories of particular brands, and it could identify if different brands might have a different influence or impact on brand love relationships. For example, consumers might have different self-expansion experience with endurable brands and non-endurable brands, and the differences might be the interaction frequencies and closeness with consumer's loved brands.

References

- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of marketing research*, 347-356.
- Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D. J., & Sanford, R. N. (1950). The authoritarian personality.
- Agar, M. H. (1996). The professional stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography.
- Ahbel-Rappe, S., & Kamtekar, R. (2006). *A companion to Socrates*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Ahuvia, A. C. (2005a). Beyond the extended self: Loved objects and consumers' identity narratives. *Journal of consumer research*, 32(1), 171-184.
- Ahuvia, A. C. (1993). I love it. *Toward a unifying theory of love across diverse love objects*.
- Ahuvia, A. C. (2005b). The love prototype revisited: A qualitative exploration of contemporary folk psychology. Working paper.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1982). *Attachment: Retrospect and prospect*. basic books.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1969). Object relations, dependency, and attachment: A theoretical review of the infant-mother relationship. *Child development*, 969-1025.
- Ainsworth, M. S. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American psychologist*, 44(4), 709.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D., & Valette-Florence, P. (2008). When consumers love their brands: Exploring the concept and its dimensions. *Journal of Business research*, 61(10), 1062-1075.
- Albert, N., & Merunka, D. (2013). The role of brand love in consumer-brand relationships. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 30(3), 258-266.
- Allport, G. W. (1937). The functional autonomy of motives. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 50(1/4), 141-156.
- Altheide, D. L., & Johnson, J. M. (1994). Criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research.
- Anders, S., & Huber, W. (2010). Differential expression analysis for sequence count data. *Genome biology*, 11(10), R106.

- Andersen, S. M., & Chen, S. (2002). The relational self: an interpersonal social-cognitive theory. *Psychological review*, 109(4), 619.
- Anderson, S., & Jones, J. K. (1984). *Orders and families of recent mammals of the world*. Wiley.
- Annells, M. (1996). Hermeneutic phenomenology: Philosophical perspectives and current use in nursing research. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 23(4), 705-713.
- Annis, D. H. (2007). Dyadic data analysis.
- Arnold, D. (1992). *The handbook of brand management*. Basic Books.
- Aron, A., & Aron, E. N. (1986). Love and the expansion of self: Understanding attraction and satisfaction. Hemisphere Publishing Corp/Harper & Row Publishers.
- Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 63(4), 596.
- Aron, A., Paris, M., & Aron, E. N. (1995). Falling in love: Prospective studies of self-concept change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(6), 1102.
- Aronfreed, J. (1968). Aversive control of socialization. In *Nebraska symposium on motivation*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Assael, H. (1995). *Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Action*, Cincinnati: South Western College Publishing.
- Asch, S. E., & Guetzkow, H. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgments. *Groups, leadership, and men*, 222-236.
- Aulton, N. (1980). The hospital chaplain. *Nursing*, (16), 697.
- Averill, J. R. (1980). A constructivist view of emotion. *Emotion: Theory, research, and experience*, 1, 305-339.
- Babel', I. (2002). *The Complete Works of Isaac Babel*. WW Norton & Company.
- Backman, C. W., & Secord, P. F. (1962). Liking, selective interaction, and misperception in congruent interpersonal relations. *Sociometry*, 321-335.
- Bajde, D. (2006). Other-centered behaviour and the dialectics of self and other. *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 9(4), 301-316.
- Bajpai, N. (2011). *Business research methods*. Pearson Education India.

- Bakan, D. (1966). The duality of human existence: An essay on psychology and religion.
- Baldwin, M. W. (1992). Relational schemas and the processing of social information. *Psychological bulletin*, 112(3), 461.
- Baldwin, M. W. (Ed.). (2006). *Interpersonal cognition*. Guilford Press.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological review*, 84(2), 191.
- Bandura, A., & Wessels, S. (1997). *Self-efficacy* (pp. 4-6). W.H. Freeman & Company.
- Banks, R. (1980). Health and the spiritual dimension: Relationships and implications for professional preparation programs. *Journal of School Health*, 50(4), 195-202.
- Banks-Wallace, J., & Parks, L. (2004). It's all sacred: African American women's perspectives on spirituality. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 25(1), 25-45.
- Baptiste, I. (2001, September). Qualitative data analysis: Common phases, strategic differences. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 2, No. 3).
- Barahal, S. L. (2008). Thinking about thinking. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(4), 298-302.
- Barney, R. J., & Buckingham, S. L. (2012). HIV/AIDS and spirituality in a South African township: A qualitative study. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 31(1-2), 51-66.
- Barker, R. G. (1963). The stream of behaviour: Explorations of its structure & content.
- Bartholomew, K., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Methods of assessing adult attachment. *Attachment theory and close relationships*, 25-45.
- Batra, R., Ahuvia, A., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2012). Brand love. *Journal of marketing*, 76(2), 1-16.
- Baudrillard, J., & Lotringer, S. (1988). The ecstasy of communication.
- Baxter, L. A., & Dindia, K. (1990). Marital partners' perceptions of marital maintenance strategies. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 7(2), 187-208.

- Belén del Río, A., Vazquez, R., & Iglesias, V. (2001). The effects of brand associations on consumer response. *Journal of consumer marketing*, 18(5), 410-425.
- Belk, R. (2014). You are what you can access: Sharing and collaborative consumption online. *Journal of business research*, 67(8), 1595-1600.
- Belk, R., & Tumbat, G. (2005). The cult of Macintosh. *Consumption markets & culture*, 8(3), 205-217.
- Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (2007). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Univ of California Press.
- Bellizzi, J. A., & Hite, R. E. (1992). Environmental color, consumer feelings, and purchase likelihood. *Psychology & marketing*, 9(5), 347-363.
- Berger, C. R., & Kellermann, K. (1994). Acquiring social information. *Strategic interpersonal communication*, 1-31.
- Berkowitz, L. E., & Walster, E. E. (1976). *Advances in experimental social psychology, Vol. 9, Equity theory: Toward a general theory of social interaction*. Academic Press.
- Berlyne, D. E. (1971). *Aesthetics and psychology*.
- Bernard, H. R., Wutich, A., & Ryan, G. W. (2016). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. SAGE publications.
- Berscheid, E. (2006). Searching for the meaning of “love”. The new psychology of love, 171-183.
- Berscheid, E., & Peplau, L. A. (1983). The emerging science of relationships. *Close relationships*, 1-19.
- Berscheid, E., Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (1989). The relationship closeness inventory: Assessing the closeness of interpersonal relationships. *Journal of personality and Social Psychology*, 57(5), 792.
- Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1974). Physical attractiveness. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 7(1), 157-215.
- Bertaux, D. (1981). From the life-history approach to the transformation of sociological practice. *Biography and society: The life history approach in the social sciences*, 29-45.
- Berthon, P., Pitt, L. F., & Campbell, C. (2009). Does brand meaning exist in similarity or singularity?. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(3), 356-361.

- Bikhchandani, S., Hirshleifer, D., & Welch, I. (1998). Learning from the behaviour of others: Conformity, fads, and informational cascades. *Journal of economic perspectives*, 12(3), 151-170.
- Blackston, M. (1992). Observations: Building brand equity by managing the brand's relationships. *Journal of advertising research*, 32(3), 79-83.
- Blaikie, N. (2009). *Designing social research*. Polity.
- Blaikie, R. J. (2010). Comment on 'Perfect imaging without negative refraction'. *New Journal of Physics*, 12(5), 058001.
- Blaikie, N. W. H., & Kelsen, G. P. (1979). Locating self and giving meaning to existence: a typology of paths to spiritual well-being based on new religious movements in Australia. *Spiritual wellbeing: sociological perspectives*. Washington: University Press of America, 133-151.
- Blau, P. M. (1964). Exchange and power in social life. Transaction Publishers.
- Blonder, L. X., Bowers, D., & Heilman, K. M. (1991). The role of the right hemisphere in emotional communication. *Brain*, 114(3), 1115-1127.
- 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.
- Branden, N. (1985). Psychology of Romantic Love. Bantam Books.
- Brandura, A. (1977). Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bretherton, I. (1985). Attachment theory: Retrospect and prospect. *Monographs of the society for research in child development*, 3-35.
- Brentlinger, J. (1970). The nature of love. *Eros, Agape and Philia*, 136-148.
- Brehm, S. S. (1988). Passionate love.
- Brink, P. J. (1991). Issues of reliability and validity. *Qualitative nursing research: A contemporary dialogue*, 164-186
- Broadbent, K., & Cooper, P. (1987). Research is good for you. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 5(1), 3-9.
- Brown, T. D., Baker, K. J., & Brand, R. A. (1992). Structural consequences of subchondral bone involvement in segmental osteonecrosis of the femoral head. *Journal of orthopaedic research*, 10(1), 79-87.

- Browning, D. (1992). Altruism and Christian love. *Zygon®*, 27(4), 421-436.
- Broxton, J. A. (1963). A test of interpersonal attraction predictions derived from balance theory. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 66(4), 394.
- Bruner, J. S., & Tagiuri, R. (1954). *The perception of people*. HARVARD UNIV CAMBRIDGE MA LAB OF SOCIAL RELATIONS.
- Bryman, A., & Cramer, D. (2012). *Quantitative data analysis with IBM SPSS 17, 18 & 19: A guide for social scientists*. Routledge.
- Bond, M. H. (1994). Trait theory and cross-cultural studies of person perception. *Psychological Inquiry*, 5(2), 114-117.
- Bond, R., & Smith, P. B. (1996). Culture and conformity: A meta-analysis of studies using Asch's (1952b, 1956) line judgment task. *Psychological bulletin*, 119(1), 111.
- Boulding, W., & Kirmani, A. (1993). A consumer-side experimental examination of signaling theory: do consumers perceive warranties as signals of quality?. *Journal of consumer research*, 20(1), 111-123.
- Bowlby, J. (1997). *Attachment* (Vol. 1). Random House.
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss* (Vol. 3). Basic books.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: retrospect and prospect. *American journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 52(4), 664.
- Bowlby, J. (1960). Separation anxiety. *The International journal of psycho-analysis*, 41, 89.
- Bowlby, J. (1958). The nature of the child's tie to his mother. *The International journal of psycho-analysis*, 39, 350.
- Bown, J., & Williams, S. (1993). Spirituality in nursing: A review of the literature. *Journal of Advances in Health and Nursing Care*, 2(4), 41-66.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Thematic analysis: Coding as a process for transforming qualitative information*. sage Publications.
- Browning, D. (1992). Altruism and Christian love. *Zygon®*, 27(4), 421-436.
- Bryman, A., & Cramer, D. (2012). *Quantitative data analysis with IBM SPSS 17, 18 & 19: A guide for social scientists*. Routledge.
- Burkhardt, M. A. (1989). Spirituality: An analysis of the concept. *Holistic nursing practice*, 3(3), 69-77.
- Burkhardt, M. A., & Nagai-Jacobson, M. G. (2002). *Spirituality: Living our connectedness*. Cengage Learning.

- Burns, M. M. (1989). Lessons from the Third World: Spirituality as the Source of Commitment to Affirmative Action. *Vt. L. Rev.*, 14, 401.
- Buss, D. M. (2006). The evolutionary genetics of personality: Does mutation load signal relationship load?. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 29(4), 409-409.
- Buss, D. M., & Barnes, M. (1986). Preferences in human mate selection. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 50(3), 559.
- Byrne, D., & Nelson, D. (1965). Attraction as a linear function of proportion of positive reinforcements. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 1(6), 659.
- Byrne, D. E. (1971). *The attraction paradigm* (Vol. 11). Academic Pr.
- Byrne, E. A., & Cunningham, C. C. (1985). The effects of mentally handicapped children on families—a conceptual review. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 26(6), 847-864.
- Caleb, R. (2003). What is spirituality. Retrieved October, 12, 2003.
- Cameron, D. (2001). The structures of intergovernmental relations. *International Social Science Journal*, 53(167), 121-127.
- Campbell, D. T. (1974). Qualitative knowing in action research. *The Journal of Social Issues*.
- Campbell, D. T. (1979). Degrees of freedom and the case study. *Qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation research*, 1, 49-67.
- Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research. *Handbook of research on teaching*, 171-246.
- Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (2015). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research*. Ravenio Books.
- Campbell, L., Simpson, J. A., Boldry, J. G., & Rubin, H. (2010). Trust, variability in relationship evaluations, and relationship processes. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 99(1), 14.
- Carroll, B. A., & Ahuvia, A. C. (2006). Some antecedents and outcomes of brand love. *Marketing letters*, 17(2), 79-89.
- Carpenter, S. (2000). Effects of cultural tightness and collectivism on self-concept and causal attributions. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 34(1), 38-56.
- Carper, B. A. (1999). Fundamental patterns of knowing in nursing. *Perspectives on philosophy of science in nursing: an historical and contemporary anthology*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 12-20.

- Carpenter, J. M., Moore, M., & Fairhurst, A. E. (2005). Consumer shopping value for retail brands. *Journal of fashion marketing and management: an international journal*, 9(1), 43-53.
- Carlson, R. A. (1997). *Experienced cognition*. Psychology Press.
- Carlyon, W. H. (1984). Reflections: disease prevention/health promotion--bridging the gap to wellness. *Health values*, 8(3), 27.
- Centers, R. (1975). *Sexual attraction and love: An instrumental theory*. Charles C. Thomas Publisher.
- Chamberlain, K., & Zika, S. (1988). Measuring meaning in life: An examination of three scales. *Personality and individual differences*, 9(3), 589-596.
- Chan, S. Y (1996). Interpersonal life events and psychological well-being of adolescents: a study of the moderating effect of Yuan (緣). *HKU Theses Online (HKUTO)*.
- Chang, C. Y. (2011). *Creativity and Taoism: A study of Chinese philosophy, art and poetry*. Singing Dragon.
- Chang, H. C. (2011). *Predestined relation (yuan): the passionate and the helpless of Chinese communication*. *China Media Research*, 7(4), 68-77.
- Chang, H. C., & Holt, G. R. (1991). The concept of yuan and Chinese interpersonal relationships.
- Chaves, M. (2011). Religious Trends in America. *Social Work & Christianity*, 38(2).
- Chen, G. M. (2002). The impact of harmony on Chinese conflict management. *Chinese conflict management and resolution*, 3-17.
- Child, J., & Kieser, A. (1977). Contrasts in British and West German management practice: Are recipes for success culture bound. In *Conference on Cross-Cultural Studies on Organisational Functioning, Hawaii*.
- Childers, T. L., & Rao, A. R. (1992). The influence of familial and peer-based reference groups on consumer decisions. *Journal of consumer research*, 19(2), 198-211.
- Chittister, J. (1998). *Heart of flesh: Feminist spirituality for women and men*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Chitturi, R., Raghunathan, R., & Mahajan, V. (2008). Delight by design: The role of hedonic versus utilitarian benefits. *Journal of marketing*, 72(3), 48-63.

- Chowdhury, R. M., & Fernando, M. (2013). The role of spiritual well-being and materialism in determining consumers' ethical beliefs: An empirical study with Australian consumers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 113(1), 61-79.
- Chou, C. M., Hsiao, H. C., Shen, C. H., & Chen, S. C. (2010). Analysis of Factors in Technological and Vocational School Teachers' Perceived Organizational Innovative Climate and Continuous Use of E-Teaching: Using Computer Self-Efficacy as an Intervening Variable. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, 9(4), 35-48.
- Cialdini, R. B., Brown, S. L., Lewis, B. P., Luce, C., & Neuberg, S. L. (1997). Reinterpreting the empathy–altruism relationship: When one into one equals oneness. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 73(3), 481.
- Clark, C. C., Cross, J. R., Deane, D. M., & Lowry, L. W. (1991). Spirituality: integral to quality care. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 5(3), 67-76.
- Clark, M. S., & Finkel, E. J. (2005). Willingness to express emotion: The impact of relationship type, communal orientation, and their interaction. *Personal Relationships*, 12(2), 169-180.
- Clark, M. S., & Mills, J. (2013). Communal and exchange relationships: Controversies and research. In *Theoretical frameworks for personal relationships* (pp. 41-54). Psychology Press.
- Clarke, J., Critcher, C., & Johnson, R. (2006). *Working-class culture: Studies in history and theory* (Vol. 6). Routledge.
- Controversies and research. In *Theoretical frameworks for personal relationships* (pp. 41-54). Psychology Press.
- Conn, J. W. (1993). Spirituality and personal maturity. *Clinical handbook of pastoral counseling*, 1, 37-57.
- Cooley, C. H. (1902). Looking-glass self. *The production of reality: Essays and readings on social interaction*, 6.
- Cook, B. W. (1979). "Women Alone Stir My Imagination": Lesbianism and the Cultural Tradition. *Signs*, 4(4), 718-739.
- Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (1979). *Quasi-experimentation: Design and analysis for field settings* (Vol. 3). Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Colliton, M. (1981). The spiritual dimension of nursing. *Clinical nursing*, 901-1012.

- Cova, B., & Pace, S. (2006). Brand community of convenience products: new forms of customer empowerment—the case “my Nutella The Community”. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(9/10), 1087-1105.
- Cova, B., & Paraque, B. (2010). When brand community and brand valuation collide: A case study.
- Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L., & Hanson, W. E. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research*, 209, 240.
- Crews, D. (1998). The evolutionary antecedents to love. *Psych neuroendocrinology*, 23(8), 751-764.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow. The Psychology of Optimal Experience. New York (HarperPerennial) 1990.
- Curtin, M. E. (1973). *Symposium on Love*. New York Behavioural Publications.
- Daly, C. C. (2005). Definition of terms: Spirituality versus religiousness. *Southern medical journal*, 98(12), 1238-1240.
- Darley, J. M., & Batson, C. D. (1973). “From Jerusalem to Jericho”: A study of situational and dispositional variables in helping behaviour. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 27(1), 100.
- Darwin, C. (1859). *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Election, Or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*. AL Burt..
- Darwin, C., Ekman, P., & Prodger, P. (1998). *The expression of the emotions in man and animals*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Davis, D. E., Worthington Jr, E. L., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren, D. R., Green, Davis, Don E., Everett L. Worthington Jr, Joshua N. Hook, Daryl R. Van Tongeren, Jeffrey D. Green, I. I. Jennings, and J. David. "Relational spirituality and the development of the Similarity of the Offender's Spirituality Scale." *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 1, no. 4 (2009): 249.
- Davis, K. E. (1986). Near and dear: Friendship and love compared. *Marriage and family*.
- Davis, K. E., & Todd, M. J. (1982). Friendship and love relationships. *Advances in descriptive psychology*.
- Davis, K. E., & Todd, M. J. (1985). Assessing friendship: Prototypes, paradigm cases and relationship description.

- Davison, T. E., & McCabe, M. P. (2005). Relationships between men's and women's body image and their psychological, social, and sexual functioning. *Sex roles*, 52(7-8), 463-475.
- Davison, T. E., & McCabe, M. P. (2006). Adolescent body image and psychosocial functioning. *The Journal of social psychology*, 146(1), 15-30.
- Dean, D. G., & Spanier, G. B. (1974). Commitment—An Overlooked Variable in Marital Adjustment? *Sociological Focus*, 7(2), 113-118.
- de Jager Meezenbroek, E., Garssen, B., van den Berg, M., Tuytel, G., van Deci, E. L., Betley, G., Kahle, J., Abrams, L., & Porac, J. (1981). When trying to win: Competition and intrinsic motivation. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, 7(1), 79-83.
- Deci, E., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive biography* (Vol. 17). Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Strategies of qualitative research. *Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications*.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Collecting and interpreting qualitative data.
- Delgado, C. (2005). A discussion of the concept of spirituality. *Nursing science quarterly*, 18(2), 157-162.
- De Mooij, M., & Hofstede, G. (2011). Cross-cultural consumer behaviour: A review of research findings. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 23(3-4), 181-192.
- De Rougemont, D. (1983). *Love in the western world*. Princeton University Press.
- De Spinoza, B. (2001). *Ethics*. Wordsworth Editions.
- DeVito, J. A. (2012). *The interpersonal communication book*. Pearson Higher Ed.
- DeWall, C. N., Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2011). The general aggression model: Theoretical extensions to violence. *Psychology of Violence*, 1(3), 245.
- DeWall, C. N., & Bushman, B. J. (2011). Social acceptance and rejection: The sweet and the bitter. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 20(4), 256-260.

- Dewey, J. (1911). Epistemology. *The middle works (1899–1924)*, 6, 440-442.
- Dewey, J. (1997). *How we think*. Courier Corporation.
- Dewey, J., & Bentley, A. F. (1960). *Knowing and the known*(No. 111). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Dierendonck, D., Visser, A., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2012). Measuring spirituality as a universal human experience: Development of the Spiritual Attitude and Involvement List (SAIL). *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*, 30(2), 141-167.
- Dickinson, R. E. (1975). Solar variability and the lower atmosphere. *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, 56(12), 1240-1248.
- Dion, K. K. (1972). Physical attractiveness and evaluation of children's transgressions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 24(2), 207.
- Dion, K. K., & Berscheid, E. (1974). Physical attractiveness and peer perception among children. *Sociometry*, 1-12.
- Dion, K., Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1972). What is beautiful is good. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 24(3), 285.
- Dion, K. L., & Dion, K. K. (1988). Romantic love: Individual and cultural perspectives.
- Dimofte, C. V., Johansson, J. K., & Ronkainen, I. A. (2008). Cognitive and affective reactions of US consumers to global brands. *Journal of International Marketing*, 16(4), 113-135.
- Dittmar, H. (1992). *The social psychology of material possessions: To have is to be*. Harvester Wheatsheaf and St. Martin's Press.
- Doss, S. K. (2014). "Spreading the good word": toward an understanding of brand evangelism. *Journal of Management and Marketing Research*, 14, 1.
- Dossey, B. M. (1998). Holistic modalities & healing moments. *AJN The American Journal of Nursing*, 98(6), 44-47.
- Douglas, M., & Isherwood, B. (1978). The world of goods: Towards an anthropology of goods. *London: Allen Lane*.
- Dowling, G. R., & Staelin, R. (1994). A model of perceived risk and intended risk-handling activity. *Journal of consumer research*, 21(1), 119-134.
- Duck, S. (1995). Talking relationships into being. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 12(4), 535-540.
- Duck, S. W. (1973). Personality similarity and friendship choice: Similarity of what, when? 1. *Journal of Personality*, 41(4), 543-558.

- Dudovskiy, J. (2016). Research methodology. *Retrieved February, 5, 2017.*
- Duke, J. T., & Johnson, B. L. (1984). Spiritual well-being and the consequential dimension of religiosity. *Review of religious research*, 59-72.
- Eames, P. (2009). SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING.
- Edelman, G. M. (1989). *The remembered present: A biological theory of consciousness*. Basic Books.
- Eifring, H. (Ed.). (2004). *Love and emotions in traditional Chinese literature* (Vol. 63). Brill.
- Ekman, P. (1992). An argument for basic emotions. *Cognition & emotion*, 6(3-4), 169-200.
- Ekman, P. (1993). Facial expression and emotion. *American psychologist*, 48(4), 384.
- Ekman, P., & Cordaro, D. (2011). What is meant by calling emotions basic. *Emotion Review*, 3(4), 364-370.
- Ekman, P. E., & Davidson, R. J. (1994). *The nature of emotion: Fundamental questions*. Oxford University Press.
- Ekman, P., Friesen, W. V., & Ellsworth, P. (2013). *Emotion in the human face: Guidelines for research and an integration of findings*. Elsevier.
- Ekman, P., Friesen, W. V., O'Sullivan, M., Chan, A., Diacoyanni-Tarlatzis, I., Heider, K., & Scherer, K. (1987). Universals and cultural differences in the judgments of facial expressions of emotion. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 53(4), 712.
- Elder, E. R. (1976). The Spirituality of Western Christianity.
- Elkins, D. N. (1995). Psychotherapy and Spirituality: Toward a Theory of the Soul. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 35(2), 78-98.
- Elkins, D. N., Hedstrom, L. J., Hughes, L. L., Leaf, J. A., & Saunders, C. (1988). Toward a humanistic-phenomenological spirituality definition, description, and measurement. *Journal of humanistic Psychology*, 28(4), 5-18.
- Elliott, G. R., & Cameron, R. C. (1994). Consumer perception of product quality and the country-of-origin effect. *Journal of international Marketing*, 49-62.
- Elliott, R., & Wattanasuwan, K. (1998). Brands as symbolic resources for the construction of identity. *International journal of Advertising*, 17(2), 131-144.
- Ellis, A. (1980). Psychotherapy and atheistic values: A response to AE Bergin's "Psychotherapy and religious values."

- Erikson, E. H. (1950). Growth and crises of the "healthy personality".
- Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). You are what they eat: The influence of reference groups on consumers' connections to brands. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 13(3), 339-348.
- Estes, W. K. (1972). Reinforcement in human behaviour: reward and punishment influence human actions via informational and cybernetic processes. *American Scientist*, 60(6), 723-729.
- Erikson, E. H. (1950). Growth and crises of the "healthy personality".
- Erickson, F. (1989). The meaning of validity in qualitative research. *Handbook of Research on Teaching*. New York: Macmillan.
- Endleman, R. (1989). *Love and sex in twelve cultures*. Psyche Pr.
- Engel, G., Olson, K. R., & Patrick, C. (2002). The personality of love: Fundamental motives and traits related to components of love. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 32(5), 839-853.
- Epstein, J. L., & Connors, L. J. (1992). School and family partnerships. *Practitioner*, 18(4), n4.
- Epstein, M. (2001). *Competing Discourses: Orthodoxy, Authenticity, and Engendered Meanings in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction* (Vol. 197). Harvard Univ Asia Center.
- Fadiman, J., & Frager, R. (1997). Essential Sufism.
- Faircloth, J. B., Capella, L. M., & Alford, B. L. (2001). The effect of brand attitude and brand image on brand equity. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 9(3), 61-75.
- Faiver, C. (Ed.). (2001). *Explorations in counseling and spirituality: Philosophical, practical, and personal reflections*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Faubion, J. (1994). Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology. *Paris: Editions Gallimard*.
- Feather, N. T. (1959). Subjective probability and decision under uncertainty. *Psychological Review*, 66(3), 150.
- Feeney, J. A. (2008). Adult romantic attachment: Developments in the study of couple relationships.

- Feeney, B. C., & Van Vleet, M. (2010). Growing through attachment: The interplay of attachment and exploration in adulthood. *Journal of social and Personal relationships*, 27(2), 226-234.
- Fehr, B., & Russell, J. A. (1991). The concept of love viewed from a prototype perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60(3), 425.
- Feldwick, P. (1996). What is brand equity anyway, and how do you measure it?. *Market Research Society. Journal*, 38(2), 1-17.
- Felfe, J., & Schyns, B. (2006). Personality and the Perception of Transformational Leadership: The Impact of Extraversion, Neuroticism, Personal Need for Structure, and Occupational Self-Efficacy 1. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 36(3), 708-739.
- Fisher, H. (2004). *Why we love: The nature and chemistry of romantic love*. Macmillan.
- Fiske, A. P., Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., & Nisbett, R. E. (1998). The cultural matrix of social psychology.
- Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (2013). *Social cognition: From brains to culture*. Sage.
- Fonagy, P. (2018). *Attachment theory and psychoanalysis*. Routledge.
- Foster, A. D., & Rosenzweig, M. R. (1995). Learning by doing and learning from others: Human capital and technical change in agriculture. *Journal of political Economy*, 103(6), 1176-1209.
- Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. *Journal of consumer research*, 24(4), 343-373.
- Fournier, S., & Yao, J. L. (1997). Reviving brand loyalty: A reconceptualization within the framework of consumer-brand relationships. *International Journal of research in Marketing*, 14(5), 451-472.
- Franke, W. (2000). Metaphor and the making of sense: The contemporary metaphor renaissance. *Philosophy & rhetoric*, 33(2), 137-153.
- Frankl, V. E. (1959). *Man's Search for Meaning*, Beacon.
- Franzen, G. (1999). *Brands & advertising: How advertising effectiveness influences brand equity*. Admap.
- Franzen, G., Bouwman, M., & Gordon, W. (2001). *The mental world of brands: Mind, memory and brand success*. Oxford: World Advertising Research Centre.

- Fredrickson, B. L. (1998). Cultivated emotions: Parental socialization of positive emotions and self-conscious emotions. *Psychological Inquiry*, 9(4), 279-281.
- Freud, S. (1961). The ego and the id.
- Freud, S. (1910). The origin and development of psychoanalysis. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 21(2), 181-218.
- Fromm, E. (2000). *The Art of Loving: The Centennial Edition*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Fung, Y. L. (1948). A short history of China.
- G. Koenig, H., & Larson, D. B. (2001). Religion and mental health: Evidence for an association. *International review of psychiatry*, 13(2), 67-78.
- Gardner, B. B., & Levy, S. J. (1963). *The product and the brand*. RD Irwin.
- 高方, & 苏童. (2013). 偏见, 误解与相遇的缘分——作家苏童访谈录. *中国翻译*, 34(2), 46-49
- Gay, G. R., Newmeyer, J. A., Perry, M., Johnson, G., & Kurland, M. (1982). Love and Haight: The sensuous hippie revisited. Drug/sex practices in San Francisco, 1980–81. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 14(1-2), 111-123.
- Gergen, K. J. (1991). The saturated self: Dilemmas of identity in modern life. *New York: Basic*.
- Gellatly, I. R., Meyer, J. P., & Luchak, A. A. (2006). Combined effects of the three commitment components on focal and discretionary behaviour: A test of Meyer and Herscovitch's propositions. *Journal of vocational behaviour*, 69(2), 331-345.
- Gilbert, J. A., & Ivancevich, J. M. (1999). A re-examination of organizational commitment. *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality*, 14(3), 385.
- Giorgi, A. (Ed.). (1985). *Phenomenology and psychological research*. Duquesne.
- Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. (2008). Phenomenological psychology. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, 165-179.
- Glazer, S. (2006). Social support across cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30(5), 605-622.

- Goodwin, R., & Findlay, C. (1997). "We were just fated together"... Chinese love and the concept of yuan in England and Hong Kong. *Personal Relationships*, 4(1), 85-92.
- Godwyn, M., & Gittell, J. H. (2011). *Sociology of organizations: Structures and relationships*. Sage Publications.
- Goetz, J. P., & LeCompte, M. D. (1984). Ethnography and qualitative designs in ethnographic research. *New York: Academic*.
- Gomez, R., & Fisher, J. W. (2003). Domains of spiritual well-being and development and validation of the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire. *Personality and individual differences*, 35(8), 1975-1991.
- Goodenough, W. H. (1981). Culture, language, and society.
- Goodenow, C., & Grady, K. E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 62(1), 60-71.
- Goodson, L., & Phillimore, J. (Eds.). (2004). *Qualitative research in tourism: Ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies*. Routledge.
- Goodwin, R., & Findlay, C. (1997). "We were just fated together"... Chinese love and the concept of yuan in England and Hong Kong. *Personal Relationships*, 4(1), 85-92.
- Gorsuch, R. L., & Shafranske, E. (1984). Factors associated with the perception of spirituality in psychotherapy. *The Journal*, 16(2), 231.
- Graber, D. R., & Mitcham, M. D. (2004). Compassionate clinicians: Take patient care beyond the ordinary. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 18(2), 87-94.
- Grant, V. W. (1976). *Falling in love: The psychology of the romantic emotion*. Springer Pub. Co.
- Graber, D. R., & Mitcham, M. D. (2004). Compassionate clinicians: Take patient care beyond the ordinary. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 18(2), 87-94.
- Green, J., & Thorogood, N. (2009). In-depth interviews. *Qualitative methods for health research*, 2, 93-122.
- Griffin, A., & Hauser, J. R. (1993). The voice of the customer. *Marketing science*, 12(1), 1-27.
- Griffiths, P. E. (1997). *What emotions really are: The problem of psychological categories* (p. 213). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Griffith, J., Caron, C. D., Desrosiers, J., & Thibeault, R. (2007). Defining spirituality and giving meaning to occupation: The perspective of community-dwelling older adults with autonomy loss. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 74*(2), 78-90.
- Grubb, E. L., & Grathwohl, H. L. (1967). Consumer self-concept, symbolism and market behaviour: A theoretical approach. *The Journal of Marketing, 22*-27.
- Gruber, T. (2009). Ontology. *Encyclopedia of database systems*, 1963-1965.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), 105.
- Gudykunst, W. B., & Nishida, T. (2001). Anxiety, uncertainty, and perceived effectiveness of communication across relationships and cultures. *International journal of intercultural relations, 25*(1), 55-71.
- Ha, H. Y., & Perks, H. (2005). Effects of consumer perceptions of brand experience on the web: Brand familiarity, satisfaction and brand trust. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review, 4*(6), 438-452.
- Haase, J. E., Britt, T., Coward, D. D., Leidy, N. K., & Penn, P. E. (1992). Simultaneous concept analysis of spiritual perspective, hope, acceptance and self-transcendence. *Image: The Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 24*(2), 141-147.
- Hackforth, R. (1952). *Plato: Phaedrus*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hall, J. M., & Stevens, P. E. (1991). Rigor in feminist research. *ANS. Advances in nursing science, 13*(3), 16-29.
- Hallett, G., Outka, G., Post, S. G., & Vacek, E. C. (1995). Christian Neighbor-Love: An Assessment of Six Rival Versions.
- Harlow, H. F. (1958). The nature of love. *American psychologist, 13*(12), 673.
- Hare, R. M., Sen, A., & Williams, B. (1982). *Ethical theory and utilitarianism*.
- Harper, J. S. (1987). Old Testament Spirituality. *The Asbury Journal, 42*(2), 5.
- Harris, A. H., Thoresen, C. E., McCullough, M. E., & Larson, D. B. (1999). Spiritually and religiously oriented health interventions. *Journal of Health Psychology, 4*(3), 413-433.
- Haslam, S. A., Eggins, R. A., & Reynolds, K. J. (2003). The ASPIRe model: Actualizing social and personal identity resources to enhance organizational outcomes. *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology, 76*(1), 83-113.

- Hatfield, E. (1988). Passionate and companionate love.
- Hatfield, E., & Rapson, R. L. (1987). Passionate love/sexual desire: Can the same paradigm explain both? *Archives of sexual behaviour*, 16(3), 259-278.
- Hatfield, E., & Rapson, R. L. (1987). Passionate love: New directions in research. *Advances in personal relationships*, 1, 109-139.
- Hatfield, E., & Rapson, R. L. (1996). *Love and sex: Cross-cultural perspectives*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Hatfield, E., & Sprecher, S. (1986). Measuring passionate love in intimate relationships. *Journal of adolescence*, 9(4), 383-410.
- Hatfield, E., Walster, E. H., Walster, G. W., & Berscheid, E. (1978). *Equity: Theory and research*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Hafstrom, J. L., Chae, J. S., & Chung, Y. S. (1992). Consumer decision-making styles: comparison between United States and Korean young consumers. *Journal of consumer Affairs*, 26(1), 146-158.
- Hake, B. J. (2004). Between patriotism and nationalism: Johan Hendrik Swildens and the 'Pedagogy of the Patriotic Virtues' in the United Dutch Provinces during the 1780s and 1790s. *History of Education*, 33(1), 11-38.
- Hwang, S., & Der-Jang, C. (2005). Relationships among internal marketing, employee job satisfaction and international hotel performance: an empirical study. *International Journal of Management*, 22(2), 285.
- Swildens and the 'Pedagogy of the Patriotic Virtues' in the United Dutch Provinces during the 1780s and 1790s. *History of Education*, 33(1), 11-38.
- Hammersley, M. (1992). Some reflections on ethnography and validity. *Qualitative studies in education*, 5(3), 195-203.
- Hansen, L. (2010). Ontologies, epistemologies, methodologies. In *Gender Matters in Global Politics* (pp. 43-53). Routledge.
- Hauerwas, S. (2011). *After Christendom: How the church is to behave if freedom, justice, and a Christian nation are bad ideas*. Abingdon Press.
- Hawks, S. (1994). Spiritual health: Definition and theory. *Wellness Perspectives*, 10(4), 3-13.
- Hay, M. W. (1989). Principles in building spiritual assessment tools. *American Journal of Hospice Care*, 6(5), 25-31.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 52(3), 511.

- Heider, F. (2013). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. Psychology Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1927). Sein und zeit.
- Heine, S. J., & Lehman, D. R. (1999). Culture, self-discrepancies, and self-satisfaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25(8), 915-925.
- Heintzman, P., & Mannell, R. C. (2003). Spiritual functions of leisure and spiritual well-being: Coping with time pressure. *Leisure sciences*, 25(2-3), 207-230.
- Heilman, K. M., Blonder, L. X., Bowers, D. A. W. N., & Crucian, G. P. (2000). Neurological disorders and emotional dysfunction. *The neuropsychology of emotion*, 367-412.
- Heise, D. R. (2002). Understanding social interaction with affect control theory. *New directions in contemporary sociological theory*, 17-40.
- Hendrick, C., & Hendrick, S. (1986). A theory and method of love. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 50(2), 392.
- Hendrick, S. S., Hendrick, C., & Adler, N. L. (1988). Romantic relationships: Love, satisfaction, and staying together. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(6), 980.
- Herzberg, F. (2017). *Motivation to work*. Routledge.
- Hermann, C. P. (2001, January). Spiritual needs of dying patients: a qualitative study. In *Oncology nursing forum* (Vol. 28, No. 1).
- Herzberg, F. (2017). *Motivation to work*. Routledge.
- Hills, M. (2003). *Fan cultures*. Routledge.
- Hills, P., Argyle, M., & Reeves, R. (2000). Individual differences in leisure satisfactions: An investigation of four theories of leisure motivation. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 28(4), 763-779.
- Hill, A., & Gauntlett, D. (2002). *TV living: Television, culture and everyday life*. Routledge.
- Hill, L., & Smith, N. (1985). *Self-care nursing: Promotion of health*. Prentice Hall.
- Hill, P. C., & Pargament, K. I. (2008). Advances in the conceptualization and measurement of religion and spirituality: Implications for physical and mental health research.
- Higgins, E. T. (1997). Beyond pleasure and pain. *American psychologist*, 52(12), 1280.

- Hinde, R. A. (1979). *Towards understanding relationships* (Vol. 18). Academic Press.
- Hoche, H. U. (2008). Anthropological complementarism. *Linguistic, logical, and phenomenological studies in support of a third way beyond dualism and monism. Paderborn: mentis.*
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (1991). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (Vol. 2). London: McGraw-Hill.
- Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of consumer research*, 9(2), 132-140.
- Hong, Y. Y., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C. Y., & Benet-Martinez, V. (2000). Multicultural minds: A dynamic constructivist approach to culture and cognition. *American psychologist*, 55(7), 709.
- Howden, J. (1992). Development and psychometric characteristics of the Spirituality Assessment Scale.
- Hoyt, L. L., & Hudson, J. W. (1981). Personal characteristics important in mate preference among college students. *Social Behaviour and Personality: an international journal*, 9(1), 93-96.
- Huber, F., Vollhardt, K., Matthes, I., & Vogel, J. (2010). Brand misconduct: Consequences on consumer–brand relationships. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(11), 1113-1120.
- Huebner, D. E. (1985). Spirituality and knowing. *The lure of the transcendent: Collected essays by Dwayne E. Huebner. London: Lawrence Erlbaum.*
- Hungelmann, J., Kenkel-Rossi, E., Klassen, L., & Stollenwerk, R. (1996). Focus on Spiritual Well-Being: Harmonious interconnectedness of mind-body-spirit—Use of the JAREL Spiritual Well-Being Scale: Assessment of spiritual well-being is essential to the health of individuals. *Geriatric nursing*, 17(6), 262-266.
- Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy.* Northwestern University Press.
- Hungelmann, J., Kenkel-Rossi, E., Klassen, L., & Stollenwerk, R. M. (1985). Spiritual well-being in older adults: Harmonious interconnectedness. *Journal of religion and Health*, 24(2), 147-153.

- Hunter, R. L. (2004). Plato's Symposium.
- Ickes, W., Stinson, L., Bissonnette, V., & Garcia, S. (1990). Naturalistic social cognition: Empathic accuracy in mixed-sex dyads. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 59(4), 730.
- Izard, C. E. (1992). Basic emotions, relations among emotions, and emotion-cognition relations.
- Janssens, L. (1977). Norms and priorities in a love ethics. *Louvain Studies*, 6(3), 207-238.
- Jackson, C. (1980). Ignatian spirituality. In *Washington, DC: Jesuit Conference*.
- James, W. (2013). The principles of psychology. Read Books Ltd.
- Jankowiak, W. R., & Fischer, E. F. (1992). A cross-cultural perspective on romantic love. *Ethnology*, 31(2), 149-155.
- Janssens, L. (1977). Norms and priorities in a love ethics. *Louvain Studies*, 6(3), 207-238.
- Jiyu, R. (1998). Why Has the Influence of Confucian and Daoist Thought Been So Profound and So Long-Lasting in China?. *Contemporary Chinese Thought*, 30(1), 35-44.
- Johnson, M., & Lakoff, G. (2003). *Metaphors we live by* (p. 10). Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Jones, E. E., & Archer, R. L. (1976). Are there special effects of personalistic self-disclosure. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 12(2), 180-193.
- Josiassen, A. (2011). Consumer disidentification and its effects on domestic product purchases: An empirical investigation in the Netherlands. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(2), 124-140.
- Jung, C. G. (1925). Marriage as a psychological relationship. *The development of personality*, 107.
- Jun, P. A. N. G., Tat, K. H., & Siqing, P. E. N. G. (2009). Effects of advertising strategy on consumer-brand relationships: A brand love perspective. *Frontiers of Business Research in China*, 3(4), 599-620.
- Kagan, J. (1972). Motives and development. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 22(1), 51.
- Kaku, M. (2016). *Hyperspace: A scientific odyssey through parallel universes, time warps, and the tenth dimension*. Oxford University Press.

- Kapferer, J. N. (1995). Brand confusion: empirical study of a legal concept. *Psychology & Marketing*, 12(6), 551-568.
- Kates, S. M., & Goh, C. (2003). Brand Morphing--Implications for Advertising Theory and Practice. *Journal of advertising*, 32(1), 59-68.
- Kedourie, Elie, 1985, *Nationalism*, 3rd edition, London: Hutchinson.
- Keeble, G. (1991). Creativity and the brand. *Understanding Brands*.
- Keller, S. (2005). Patriotism as Bad Faith*. *Ethics*, 115(3), 563-592.
- Kelley, H. H., Berscheid, E., Christensen, A., Harvey, J. H., Huston, T. L., Kim, E., Han, G., & McCubbin, M. A. (2007). Korean American maternal acceptance–rejection, acculturation, and children's social competence. *Family & community health*, 30, S33-S45.
- Kirk, J., Miller, M. L., & Miller, M. L. (1986). *Reliability and validity in qualitative research* (Vol. 1). Sage.
- Klaus, P., & Maklan, S. (2007). The role of brands in a service-dominated world. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(2), 115-122.
- Koob, P., & Roux, G. (1999). Women living with multiple sclerosis: Journeys in inner strength. In *Proceedings of the Tenth International Critical and Feminist Perspectives in Nursing Conference*.
- Kringelbach, M. L., & Berridge, K. C. (2009). Towards a functional neuroanatomy of pleasure and happiness. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 13(11), 479-487.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2003). Metaphors we live by. 1980. *Chicago: U of Chicago P*.
- Lamb, M. E. (1976). Interactions between two-year-olds and their mothers and fathers. *Psychological Reports*, 38(2), 447-450.
- Lamb, M. E. (1976). Proximity seeking attachment behaviour: A critical review of the literature. *Genetic Psychology Monographs*.
- Lewalski, Z. M. (1988). *Product esthetics: An interpretation for designers*. Design & Development Engineering PR.
- Levin, M. (2000). *Spiritual intelligence: Awakening the power of your spirituality and intuition*. Hodder & Stoughton.
- Levinger, G., & Peterson, D. R. (1983). *Close relationships* (pp. 265-314). New York: Freeman.

- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1990). Judging the quality of case study reports. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 3(1), 53-59.
- Keh, H. T., Pang, J., & Peng, S. (2007). Understanding and measuring brand love. In J. R. Priester (Ed.), *Proceedings of advertising and consumer psychology* (pp. 84-88). Santa Monica, CA: Society for Consumer Psychology.
- Kenny, D. A., & Acitelli, L. K. (2001). Accuracy and bias in the perception of the partner in a close relationship. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80(3), 439.
- Kerckhoff, A. C. (1974). The social context of interpersonal attraction. *Foundations of interpersonal attraction*, 61-78.
- Keutzer, C. S. (1978). Whatever turns you on: Triggers to transcendent experience. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 18(3), 77-80.
- Kirk, J., Miller, M. L., & Miller, M. L. (1986). *Reliability and validity in qualitative research* (Vol. 1). Sage.
- Kleine III, R. E., & Kernan, J. B. (1991). Contextual influences on the meanings ascribed to ordinary consumption objects. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(3), 311-324.
- Koenig, H. G. (2010). Spirituality and mental health. *International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies*, 7(2), 116-122.
- Koenig, T. L., & Spano, R. N. (1998). Taoism and the strengths perspective. *Social Thought*, 18(2), 47-65.
- Kotarba, J. A., Haile, B., Landrum, P., & Trimble, D. (2003). Inner strength and the existential self: improving managed care for HIV+ women through the integration of nursing and sociological concepts. In *Reorganizing Health Care Delivery Systems: Problems of Managed* (pp. 87-106). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Kringelbach, M. L., & Berridge, K. C. (2010). The functional neuroanatomy of pleasure and happiness. *Discovery medicine*, 9(49), 579.
- Kristeva, J. (1986). Freud and love: Treatment and its discontents. *The Kristeva Reader*, 240.
- Kristeva, J., & Roudiez, L. S. (1987). *Tales of love*. Columbia University Press.
- Kundera, M. (1988). *The Art of the Novel*, trans. Linda Asher (New York, 1988), 160.

- Kvale, S. (2006). Dominance through interviews and dialogues. *Qualitative inquiry*, 12(3), 480-500.
- Lacoeuilhe, J. (2000). L'attachement à la marque: proposition d'une échelle de mesure. *Recherche et Applications en Marketing (French Edition)*, 15(4), 61-77.
- Lampert, A. (1997). *The evolution of love*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Lane, J. A. (1987). The care of the human spirit. *Journal of professional Nursing*, 3(6), 332-337.
- Landy, D., & Sigall, H. (1974). Beauty is talent: Task evaluation as a function of the performer's physical attractiveness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 29(3), 299.
- Langner, T., Bruns, D., Fischer, A., & Rossiter, J. R. (2016). Falling in love with brands: a dynamic analysis of the trajectories of brand love. *Marketing Letters*, 27(1), 15-26.
- Laroche, M., Kim, C., & Zhou, L. (1996). Brand familiarity and confidence as determinants of purchase intention: An empirical test in a multiple brand context. *Journal of business Research*, 37(2), 115-120.
- Laski, M. (1961). *Ecstasy; a study of some secular and religious experience*. Cresset Press
- Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 2(3), 21-35.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Progress on a cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion. *American psychologist*, 46(8), 819.
- Lear, J. (1990). *Love and its place in nature: A philosophical interpretation of Freudian psychoanalysis*. Yale University Press.
- Leary, M. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). The nature and function of self-esteem: Sociometer theory. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 32, pp. 1-62). Academic Press.
- Lee, J. A. (1977). A typology of styles of loving. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 3(2), 173-182.
- Lennon, R., Rentfro, R., & O'Leary, B. (2010). SOCIAL MARKETING AND DISTRACTED DRIVING BEHAVIORS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS: THE

EFFECTIVENESS OF FEAR APPEALS. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, 14(2).

Levin, J., & Steele, L. (2005). The transcendent experience: conceptual, theoretical, and epidemiologic perspectives. *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*, 1(2), 89-101.

Levine, D., Marziali, E., & Hood, J. (1997). Emotion processing in borderline personality disorders. *The Journal of nervous and mental disease*, 185(4), 240-246.

Levine, S. B. (2006). *Demystifying love: Plain talk for the mental health professional*. Routledge.

Levinger, G. K., & Raush, H. L. (1977). *Close relationships: Perspectives on the meaning of intimacy*. Univ of Massachusetts Press.

Levy, M. B., & Davis, K. E. (1988). Love styles and attachment styles compared: Their relations to each other and to various relationship characteristics. *Journal of social and Personal Relationships*, 5(4), 439-471.

Levy, S. J. (1959). Symbols for sale. *Harvard business review*.

Lewandowski Jr, G. W., Nardone, N., & Raines, A. J. (2010). The role of self-concept clarity in relationship quality. *Self and Identity*, 9(4), 416-433.

Lewis, R. C., & Chambers, R. E. (1989). *Marketing leadership in hospitality. Foundations and practices*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Ley, D. C., & Corless, I. B. (1988). Spirituality and hospice care. *Death studies*, 12(2), 101-110.

Li, W. (2004). *Languages of Love and Parameters of Culture in Peony Pavilion and The Story of the Stone*.

Liehr, P. R. (1989). The core of true presence: a loving center. *Nursing Science Quarterly*, 2(1), 7.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1990). Judging the quality of case study reports. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 3(1), 53-59.

Litwak, E. (1960). Geographic mobility and extended family cohesion. *American sociological review*, 385-394.

Low, K. C. (2010). Values make a leader, the Confucian perspective. *Insights to a changing world*, (2), 13-28.

- Low, K. C. (2008). Confucian Ethics & Social Responsibility-The Golden Rule & Responsibility to the Stakeholders. *Ethics & critical thinking Journal*, (4), 46-54.
- Luckmann, T. (1990). Shrinking transcendence, expanding religion. *Sociological analysis*, 51(2), 127-138.
- Lutz, C. (1988). Ethnographic perspectives on the emotion lexicon. In *Cognitive perspectives on emotion and motivation* (pp. 399-419). Springer Netherlands.
- MacDonald, D. A. (2000). Spirituality: Description, measurement, and relation to the five factor model of personality. *Journal of personality*, 68(1), 153-197.
- Machleit, K. A., Madden, T. J., & Allen, C. T. (1990). Measuring and modeling brand interest as an alternative ad effect with familiar brands. *ACR North American Advances*.
- MacIntyre, A. (2003). Is patriotism a virtue? *Debates in Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Anthology*, 286-301.
- Maddi, S. R. (1967). The existential neurosis. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 72(4), 311.
- Maddi, S. R. (1970). The search for meaning. In *Nebraska symposium on motivation* (Vol. 17, pp. 134-183).
- Maloney, S. A., Pearson, M. L., Gordon, M. T., Del Castillo, R., Boyle, J. F., & Jarvis, W. R. (1995). Efficacy of control measures in preventing nosocomial transmission of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis to patients and health care workers. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 122(2), 90-95.
- Mandel, N., & Johnson, E. J. (2002). When web pages influence choice: Effects of visual primes on experts and novices. *Journal of consumer research*, 29(2), 235-245.
- Manrai, L. A., & Manrai, A. K. (1996). Current issues in the cross-cultural and cross-national consumer research. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 8(3-4), 9-22.
- Marsh, H. W. (1993). Academic self-concept: Theory, measurement, and research.
- Marsh, D., & Furlong, P. (2002). A skin not a sweater: Ontology and epistemology in political science. *Theory and methods in political science*, 2, 17-41.

- Marks, J., & Ames, R. T. (1995). *Emotions in Asian Thought: A Dialogue in Comparative Philosophy, With a Discussion by Robert C. Solomon*. SUNY Press.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological review*, 98(2), 224.
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American psychologist*, 41(9), 954.
- Marty, M. E. (1996). Religious dimensions of human rights. *Emory Int'l L. Rev.*, 10, 97.
- Martyn, D. F. (1952). The origin of the green line [OI] in airglow. *Journal of Geophysical Research*, 57(1), 144-145.
- Marsden, P. V., & Campbell, K. E. (1984). Measuring tie strength. *Social forces*, 63(2), 482-501.
- Maslow, A. (1967). Self-actualizing and Beyond. *Challenges of Humanistic psychology*. NY, 118-132.
- Matsumoto, D. (1999). Culture and self: An empirical assessment of Markus and Kitayama's theory of independent and interdependent self-construals. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 2(3), 289-310.
- Matsumoto, D., Kudoh, T., & Takeuchi, S. (1996). Changing patterns of individualism and collectivism in the United States and Japan. *Culture & Psychology*, 2(1), 77-107.
- Matsumoto, D., Yoo, S. H., & Fontaine, J. (2008). Mapping expressive differences around the world the relationship between emotional display rules and individualism versus collectivism. *Journal of cross-cultural psychology*, 39(1), 55-74.
- Mayeroff, M. (1971). *On caring*. New York: Perennial Library.
- McCracken, G. (1986). Culture and consumption: A theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods. *Journal of consumer research*, 13(1), 71-84.
- Mauk, K. L., & Schmidt, N. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Spiritual care in nursing practice*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- McCall, R. B. (1974). Exploratory manipulation and play in the human infant. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 1-88.

- McCracken, G. (1993). The value of the brand: an anthropological perspective. *Brand equity and advertising*, 125-139.
- McCracken, G. D. (1990). *Culture and consumption*. Bloomington and Indianapolis.
- McCann, D. W. (1995). Three-dimensional computations of equivalent potential vorticity. *Weather and forecasting*, 10(4), 798-802.
- McClintock, M. K. (1983). Pheromonal regulation of the ovarian cycle: enhancement, suppression, and synchrony. *Pheromones and reproduction in mammals*, 113-149.
- McCullough, M. E., & Worthington, E. L. (1995). College students' perceptions of a psychotherapist's treatment of a religious issue: Partial replication and extension. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 73(6), 626-634.
- McLean, K. C., & Thorne, A. (2003). Late adolescents' self-defining memories about relationships. *Developmental psychology*, 39(4), 635.
- McLeod, J. M., & O'Keefe, G. J. (1972). The socialization perspective and communication behaviour. *Current perspectives in mass communication research*, 121-168.
- McPherson, J. M., & Smith-Lovin, L. (1987). Homophily in voluntary organizations: Status distance and the composition of face-to-face groups. *American sociological review*, 370-379.
- McSherry, W., Cash, K., & Ross, L. (2004). Meaning of spirituality: implications for nursing practice. *Journal of clinical nursing*, 13(8), 934-941.
- Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self and society* (Vol. 111). University of Chicago Press: Chicago.
- Melewar, T. C., Meadows, M., Zheng, W., & Rickards, R. (2004). The influence of culture on brand building in the Chinese market: A brief insight. *Journal of Brand Management*, 11(6), 449-461.
- Mellen, S. L. (1981). *The evolution of love*. Oxford: WH Freeman.
- Mende, M., Bolton, R. N., & Bitner, M. J. (2013). Decoding customer-firm relationships: how attachment styles help explain customers' preferences for closeness, repurchase intentions, and changes in relationship breadth. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 50(1), 125-142.
- Merton, R. K., & Kitt, A. S. (1950). Contributions to the theory of reference group behaviour. *Continuities in social research*, 40-105.

- Meriac, J. P., Woehr, D. J., & Banister, C. (2010). Generational differences in work ethic: An examination of measurement equivalence across three cohorts. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(2), 315-324.
- Mesquita, B. (2001). Emotions in collectivist and individualist contexts. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 80(1), 68.
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human resource management review*, 1(1), 61-89.
- Mickley, J. R., Soeken, K., & Belcher, A. (1992). Spiritual well-being, religiousness and hope among women with breast cancer. *Image: The Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 24(4), 267-272.
- Mikulincer, M., Shaver, P. R., & Pereg, D. (2003). Attachment theory and affect regulation: The dynamics, development, and cognitive consequences of attachment-related strategies. *Motivation and emotion*, 27(2), 77-102.
- Miller, J. F. (1985). Assessment of loneliness and spiritual well-being in chronically ill and healthy adults. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 1(2), 79-85.
- Miller, J. G. (2002). Bringing culture to basic psychological theory--beyond individualism and collectivism: comment on Oyserman et al.(2002).
- Miller, W. R., & Thoresen, C. E. (2003). Spirituality, religion, and health: An emerging research field. *American psychologist*, 58(1), 24.
- Mische, P. (1982). Toward a global spirituality. *The Whole Earth Papers*, 16, 4-14.
- Mischel, W. (1973). Toward a cognitive social learning reconceptualization of personality. *Psychological review*, 80(4), 252.
- Moberg, D. O. (Ed.). (1979). *Spiritual well-being: Sociological perspectives*. University Press of America.
- Morgan, D. L., Ataie, J., Carder, P., & Hoffman, K. (2013). Introducing dyadic interviews as a method for collecting qualitative data. *Qualitative health research*, 23(9), 1276-1284.
- Morrow, D. F. (2003). Cast into the wilderness: The impact of institutionalized religion on lesbians. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 7(4), 109-123.
- Moschis, G. P., & Moore, R. L. (1979). Decision making among the young: A socialization perspective. *Journal of consumer research*, 6(2), 101-112.
- Muniz Jr, A. M., & Schau, H. J. (2005). Religiosity in the abandoned Apple Newton brand community. *Journal of consumer research*, 31(4), 737-747.

- Murray, S. L., Holmes, J. G., & Griffin, D. W. (1996). The benefits of positive illusions: Idealization and the construction of satisfaction in close relationships. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 70(1), 79.
- Naisbitt, J. (1996). Megatrends Asia: The eight Asian megatrends that are changing the world.
- Nandan, S. (2005). An exploration of the brand identity–brand image linkage: A communications perspective. *Journal of brand management*, 12(4), 264-278.
- Nathanson, S. (1993). *Patriotism, morality, and peace*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Neimeyer, R. A., & Neimeyer, G. J. (1983). Structural similarity in the acquaintance process. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 1(2), 146.
- Neisser, U. E. (1998). *The rising curve: Long-term gains in IQ and related measures*. American Psychological Association.
- Newman, J. W. (1957). Motivation research and marketing management.
- Nicholson, R. H. (2003). “All’s love, yer all’s law. *The Hastings Center Report*, 33(1), 10.
- Nisbett, R. E., Caputo, C., Legant, P., & Marecek, J. (1973). Behavior as seen by the actor and as seen by the observer. *Journal of personality and Social Psychology*, 27(2), 154.
- Nordlund, M. (2007). Shakespeare and the Nature of Love: Literature, Culture. *Evolution*, 312-33.
- Norris, C. M. (1982). Concept clarification in nursing.
- Novak, J. D., & Cañas, A. J. (2006). The theory underlying concept maps and how to construct them. *Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition*, 1, 2006-2001.
- Nygren, A. (1937). Agape and Eros: A study of the Christian idea of love; authorized translation by AG Hebert. Society for promoting Christian knowledge.
- O'Connor, B. P., & Gifford, R. (1988). A test among models of nonverbal immediacy reactions: Arousal-labeling, discrepancy-arousal, and social cognition. *Journal of Nonverbal Behaviour*, 12(1), 6-33.
- O'donovan, O. (2006). *The problem of self-love in St. Augustine*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Olson, J. K., Paul, P., Douglass, L., Clark, M. B., Simington, J., & Goddard, N. (2003). Addressing the Spiritual Dimension in Canadian Undergraduate

Nursing Education L'intégration de la dimension spirituelle au programme de baccalauréat en sciences infirmières des universités canadiennes. *CJNR (Canadian Journal of Nursing Research)*, 35(3), 94-107.

Ogbu, J. U. (1993). Differences in cultural frame of reference. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 16(3), 483-506.

Okazaki, S., Mueller, B., & Taylor, C. R. (2010). Global consumer culture positioning: Testing perceptions of soft-sell and hard-sell advertising appeals between US and Japanese consumers. *Journal of International Marketing*, 18(2), 20-34.

Oldnall, A. (1996). A critical analysis of nursing: meeting the spiritual needs of patients. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 23(1), 138-144.

Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 63(4_suppl1), 33-44.

Olson, P. H., Levinger, G., & Raush, H. L. (1977). Close relationships: Perspectives on the meaning of intimacy.

Omery, A. (1983). Phenomenology: A method for nursing research. *Advances in nursing science*, 5(2), 49-64.

Osborne, P., Segal, L., & Butler, J. (1994). Interview: Judith Butler: Gender as Performance.

Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of educational research*, 70(3), 323-367.

Oyserman, D. (1993). The lens of personhood: Viewing the self and others in a multicultural society. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 65(5), 993.

Oyserman, D., Kemmelmeier, M., & Coon, H. M. (2002). Cultural psychology, a new look: Reply to Bond (2002), Fiske (2002), Kitayama (2002), and Miller (2002).

P. Becerra, E., & Badrinarayanan, V. (2013). The influence of brand trust and brand identification on brand evangelism. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 22(5/6), 371-383.

Pang, B., & Lee, L. (2004, July). A sentimental education: Sentiment analysis using subjectivity summarization based on minimum cuts. In *Proceedings of the 42nd annual meeting on Association for Computational Linguistics* (p. 271). Association for Computational Linguistics.

- Pang, B., & Lee, L. (2005, June). Seeing stars: Exploiting class relationships for sentiment categorization with respect to rating scales. In *Proceedings of the 43rd annual meeting on association for computational linguistics* (pp. 115-124). Association for Computational Linguistics.
- Park, C. W., & Lessig, V. P. (1981). Familiarity and its impact on consumer decision biases and heuristics. *Journal of consumer research*, 8(2), 223-230.
- Park, C. W., & Lessig, V. P. (1977). Judgmental rules and stages of the familiarity curve: Promotional implications. *Journal of Advertising*, 6(1), 10-16.
- Park, C. W., & Lessig, V. P. (1977). Students and housewives: Differences in susceptibility to reference group influence. *Journal of consumer Research*, 4(2), 102-110.
- Parks, M. R., & Adelman, M. B. (1983). Communication networks and the development of romantic relationships An expansion of uncertainty reduction theory. *Human Communication Research*, 10(1), 55-79.
- Parks, M. R., & Floyd, K. (1996). Meanings for closeness and intimacy in friendship. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 13(1), 85-107.
- Pappalardo, J. K. (1999). The Role of Consumer Research and Consumer Advocacy in Defining and Promoting the Consumer Interest. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 18(1).
- Parse, R. R. (1981). Man-living-health a theory of nursing.
- Patzer, G. L. (2012). *The physical attractiveness phenomena*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Patterson, G. R. (1986). The contribution of siblings to training for fighting: A microsocial analysis. *Development of antisocial and prosocial behaviour*, 235-261.
- Pawle, J., & Cooper, P. (2006). Measuring emotion—Lovemarks, the future beyond brands. *Journal of advertising research*, 46(1), 38-48.
- Patient's Needs?. *Journal of gerontological nursing*, 11(10), 23-27.
- Peterson, E. A. (1985). The Physical... the Spiritual... Can You Meet All of Your
- Pesut, B., Fowler, M., Taylor, E. J., Reimer-Kirkham, S., & Sawatzky, R. (2008). Conceptualising spirituality and religion for healthcare. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 17(21), 2803-2810.
- Phillimore, J., & Goodson, L. (2004). The inquiry paradigm in qualitative tourism research. In *Qualitative research in tourism* (pp. 48-63). Routledge.

- Pichler, E. A., & Hemetsberger, A. (2007). 'Hopelessly Devoted to You'-Towards an Extended Conceptualization of Consumer Devotion. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Piedmont, R. L. (1999). Does spirituality represent the sixth factor of personality? Spiritual transcendence and the five-factor model. *Journal of personality*, 67(6), 985-1013.
- Pimentel, R. W., & Reynolds, K. E. (2004). A model for consumer devotion: Affective commitment with proactive sustaining behaviors. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 5(1), 1-45.
- Plack, C. J., & Oxenham, A. J. (2005). Overview: The present and future of pitch. In *Pitch* (pp. 1-6). Springer, New York, NY.
- Pleban, R., & Tesser, A. (1981). The effects of relevance and quality of another's performance on interpersonal closeness. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 278-285.
- Plutchik, R. (1991). *The emotions*. University Press of America.
- Polkinghorne, D. (1983). *Methodology for the human sciences: Systems of inquiry*. Suny Press
- Preissle, J., & Le Compte, M. D. (1984). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research*. Academic Press.
- Prentice, D. A. (1990). Familiarity and differences in self-and other-representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(3), 369.
- Prentice, D. A., & Miller, D. T. (2007). Psychological essentialism of human categories. *Current directions in psychological science*, 16(4), 202-206.
- Privette, G. (1983). Peak experience, peak performance, and flow: A comparative analysis of positive human experience. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 45(6), 1361.
- Radin, M. J. (1996). *Contested commodities*. Harvard University Press.
- Ralston, D. A., Gustafson, D. J., Elsass, P. M., Cheung, F., & Terpstra, R. H. (1992). Eastern values: A comparison of managers in the United States, Hong Kong, and the People's Republic of China. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77(5), 664.
- Rashotte, L. (2007). Social influence. *The Blackwell encyclopedia of sociology*
- Rayburn, C. A. (1996). Religion and spirituality: Can one exist independently of the other. *K. Pargament (Chair), What is the difference between religion and spirituality*.

- Reed, P. G. (1992). An emerging paradigm for the investigation of spirituality in nursing. *Research in nursing & health*, 15(5), 349-357.
- Reik, T. A. (1944). *Psychologist Looks at Love* New York: Farrar and Rinehart.
- Reis, H. T., & Shaver, P. (1988). Intimacy as an interpersonal process. *Handbook of personal relationships*, 24(3), 367-389.
- Reisinger, Y., & Crofts, J. C. (2010). Applying Hofstede's national culture measures in tourism research: Illuminating issues of divergence and convergence. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(2), 153-164.
- Reisinger, Y., & Turner, L. (2012). *Cross-cultural behaviour in tourism*. Routledge.
- Reker, G. T., & Peacock, E. J. (1981). The Life Attitude Profile (LAP): A multidimensional instrument for assessing attitudes toward life. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, 13(3), 264.
- Reker, G. T., & Wong, P. T. (1988). Aging as an individual process: Toward a theory of personal meaning.
- Renetzky, L. (1979). The fourth dimension: applications to the social services. In spiritual well-being. *Sociological Perspectives*. (edited by Moberg, D, pp. 215-254. Washington University press of America.
- Reymert, M. L. (1952). Feelings and emotions.
- Reynolds, W. B. (1984). Individualism vs. group rights: The legacy of Brown. *The Yale Law Journal*, 93(6), 995-1005.
- Renetzky, L. (1979). The fourth dimension: applications to the social services. In spiritual well-being. *Sociological Perspectives*. (edited by Moberg, D, pp. 215-254. Washington University press of America.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., & Ormston, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*.
- Roberts, K. (2005). *Lovemarks: The future beyond brands*. Powerhouse books.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Roof, W. C. (2003). Religion and spirituality. *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, 137-148.
- Rosado, C. (2010). What is spirituality? Memetics, quantum mechanics, and the spiral of spirituality. *Global Missiology English*, 1(6).

- Rosado, C. (1996). Will the Information Highway Have a 'Rest Area'? The Sabbath and Spirituality in the 21st Century. *Website URL*, <http://rosado.net/articles-sabbath.html>.
- Rosch, E., & Mervis, C. B. (1975). Family resemblances: Studies in the internal structure of categories. *Cognitive psychology*, 7(4), 573-605.
- Rose, N. (1990). *Governing the soul: the shaping of the private self*. Taylor & Frances/Routledge.
- Rosenblatt, P. C. (1977). Needed research on commitment in marriage. *Close relationships: Perspectives on the meaning of intimacy*, 73-86.
- Rosen, E. (1983). Was Copernicus A Neoplatonist? *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 44(4), 667-669.
- Rosenblatt, L. M. (1977). The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work: Implications for Research.
- Ross, J. L. (1994). Working with patients within their religious contexts: Religion, spirituality, and the secular therapist. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 13(3), 7-15.
- Rossiter, J. R. (2012). A new C-OAR-SE-based content-valid and predictively valid measure that distinguishes brand love from brand liking. *Marketing Letters*, 23(3), 905-916.
- Rothwell, R., Freeman, C., Horlsey, A., Jervis, V. T. P., Robertson, A. B., & Townsend, J. (1974). SAPPHO updated-project SAPPHO phase II. *Research policy*, 3(3), 258-291.
- Roux, G., Dingley, C. E., & Bush, H. A. (2002). Inner strength in women: metasynthesis of qualitative findings in theory development. *Journal of Theory Construction & Testing*, 6(1), 86.
- Roux, G. M., & Keyser, P. K. (1994). *Inner strength in women with breast cancer*. Charles Press, Publishers.
- Roy, C. (1984). Introduction to nursing: An adaptive model.
- Rubenstein-Montano, B., Liebowitz, J., Buchwalter, J., McCaw, D., Newman, B., Rebeck, K., & Team, T. K. M. M. (2001). A systems thinking framework for knowledge management. *Decision support systems*, 31(1), 5-16.
- Rubin, Z. (1970). Measurement of romantic love. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 16(2), 265.

- Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field methods*, 15(1), 85-109.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary educational psychology*, 25(1), 54-67.
- Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (1996). Psychological well-being: Meaning, measurement, and implications for psychotherapy research. *Psychotherapy and psychosomatics*, 65(1), 14-23.
- Saegert, S., Swap, W., & Zajonc, R. B. (1973). Exposure, context, and interpersonal attraction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 25(2), 234.
- Said, E. W. (2012). *Culture and imperialism*. Vintage.
- Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.
- Sarkar, A., Ponnampalath, A., & Murthy, B. K. (2012). Understanding and measuring romantic brand love. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 11(4), 324-347.
- Sarkar, A., & Sarkar, J. G. (2016). Devoted to you my love: Brand devotion amongst young consumers in emerging Indian market. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28(2), 180-197.
- Santas, G. X. (1988). Plato and Freud: Two theories of love.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. Pearson education.
- Schank, R. C., & Abelson, R. P. (2013). *Scripts, plans, goals, and understanding: An inquiry into human knowledge structures*. Psychology Press.
- Schefflen, A. E. (1973). *Communicational structure: Analysis of a psychotherapy transaction*. Indiana U. Press.
- Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential marketing. *Journal of marketing management*, 15(1-3), 53-67.
- Schmitt, B., & Zarantonello, L. (2013). Consumer experience and experiential marketing: A critical review. In *Review of marketing Research* (pp. 25-61). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Schlobohm, S., Zulauf, K., & Wagner, R. (2016). A Review of Brand Love: Conceptual Considerations and Their Relevance for Business. In *Let's Get Engaged! Crossing the Threshold of Marketing's Engagement Era* (pp. 343-348). Springer, Cham.

- Schneiders, S. M. (1989). Spirituality in the academy. *Theological studies*, 50(4), 676-697.
- Schutz, A. (1970). The problem of transcendental intersubjectivity in Husserl. In *Collected papers III* (pp. 51-84). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Schultz, J. A. (2006). *Courtly love, the love of courtliness, and the history of sexuality*. University of Chicago Press.
- Schwede, G., Hendrichs, H., & McShea, W. (1993). Social and spatial organization of female white-tailed deer, *Odocoileus virginianus*, during the fawning season. *Animal Behaviour*, 45(5), 1007-1017.
- Secomb, L. (2007). *Philosophy and love: From Plato to popular culture*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Secomb, L. (2007). Philosophy and Love: Conclusion.
- Secord, P. F., & Backman, C. W. (1959). Malocclusion and psychological factors. *The Journal of the American Dental Association*, 59(5), 931-938.
- Sedikides, C., & Brewer, M. B. (2015). *Individual self, relational self, collective self*. Psychology Press.
- Segal, M. W. (1974). Alphabet and attraction: An unobtrusive measure of the effect of propinquity in a field setting. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 30(5), 654.
- Shaver, P. R., Hazan, C., & Bradshaw, D. (1988). The integration of three behavioural systems. *The psychology of love*, 68-99.
- Shaver, P. R., & Hazan, C. (1988). A biased overview of the study of love. *Journal of Social and Personal relationships*, 5(4), 473-501.
- Shavelson, R. J., Hubner, J. J., & Stanton, G. C. (1976). Self-concept: Validation of construct interpretations. *Review of educational research*, 46(3), 407-441.
- Sheldrake, P. (2012). *Spirituality: A very short introduction* (Vol. 336). Oxford University Press.
- Sheldrake, P. (2013). *Spirituality: A Brief History*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Shelly, J. A., & Fish, S. (1988). *Spiritual care: The nurse's role*. InterVarsity Press.
- Shi, T. (2001). Cultural values and political trust: a comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. *Comparative Politics*, 401-419.

- Shimp, T. A., & Madden, T. J. (1988). Consumer-object relations: A conceptual framework based analogously on Sternberg's triangular theory of love. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Shocker, A. D., Ben-Akiva, M., Boccara, B., & Nedungadi, P. (1991). Consideration set influences on consumer decision-making and choice: Issues, models, and suggestions. *Marketing letters*, 2(3), 181-197.
- Shweder, R. A., & Sullivan, M. A. (1990). The semiotic subject of cultural psychology. *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*, 399-416.
- Simpson, J. A., & Campbell, L. (2013). *The Oxford handbook of close relationships*. Oxford University Press.
- Simmons, R. G., & Rosenberg, F. (1975). Sex, sex roles, and self-image. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 4(3), 229-258.
- Singelis, T. M., Triandis, H. C., Bhawuk, D. P., & Gelfand, M. J. (1995). Horizontal and vertical dimensions of individualism and collectivism: A theoretical and measurement refinement. *Cross-cultural research*, 29(3), 240-275.
- Silverman, D. (2015). *Interpreting qualitative data*. Sage.
- Sirgy, M. J. (1982). Self-concept in consumer behaviour: A critical review. *Journal of consumer research*, 9(3), 287-300.
- Swaminathan, V., & Moorman, C. (2009). Marketing alliances, firm networks, and firm value creation. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5), 52-69.
- Sivadas, E., & Machleit, K. A. (1994). A scale to determine the extent of object incorporation in the extended self. *Marketing theory and applications*, 5(1), 143-149.
- Skeggs, B. (1994). Situating the production of feminist ethnography. *Researching women's lives from a feminist perspective*, 72-81.
- Skousgaard, H. (2006). A taxonomy of spiritual motivation for consumption. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Slater, D. (1997). Consumer culture and modernity.
- Smelser, N. J. (1998). The rational and the ambivalent in the social sciences. *American Sociological Review*, 63, 1-16.
- Soble, A. (1989). Eros, agape, and philia: readings in the philosophy of Love.

- Sodestrom, K. E., & Martinson, I. M. (1987). Patients' spiritual coping strategies: a study of nurse and patient perspectives. In *Oncology Nursing Forum* (Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 41).
- Solomon, R. C. (1988). *About love: Reinventing romance for our times*. Simon and Schuster.
- Solomon, M. R. (1983). The role of products as social stimuli: A symbolic interactionism perspective. *Journal of Consumer research*, 10(3), 319-329.
- Song, W. (1985). A preliminary study of the character traits of the Chinese. *Chinese culture and mental health*, 47-55.
- Spash, C. L. (1997). Ethics and environmental attitudes with implications for economic valuation. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 50(4), 403-416.
- Sprecher, S., & Fehr, B. (2005). Compassionate love for close others and humanity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 22(5), 629-651.
- Spilka, B., & McIntosh, D. N. (1996). Religion and spirituality: The known and the unknown. *KI Pargament (Chair), What is the difference between religion and spirituality*.
- Stafford, L. (2011). Measuring relationship maintenance behaviors: Critique and development of the revised relationship maintenance behavior scale. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 28(2), 278-303.
- Steiger, N. J., & Lipson, J. G. (1985). *Self-care nursing: Theory & practice*. Brady.
- Steinbeck, J., & Ricketts, E. F. (1941). *Sea of Cortez: A leisurely journal of travel and research* (p. 258). New York: Viking Press.
- Sternberg, R. J. (1986). A triangular theory of love. *Psychological review*, 93(2), 119.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 17, 273-85.
- Strong, G., & Aron, A. (2006). The effect of shared participation in novel and challenging activities on experienced relationship quality: is it mediated by high positive affect?.
- Stoeffler, F. E. (1973). *German pietism during the eighteenth century* (Vol. 24). Brill Archive.
- Stoll, R. I. (1979). Guidelines for spiritual assessment. *AJN The American Journal of Nursing*, 79(9), 1574-1577.

- Stollenwerk, R. M. (1985). Hungelmann, J., Kenkel-Rossi, E., Klassen, L., & Stollenwerk, R. M. (1985). Spiritual well-being in older adults: Harmonious interconnectedness. *Journal of religion and Health*, 24(2), 147-153.
- Storm, T., & Storm, C. (1984). CANADIAN STUDENTS' BELIEFS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG LOVE, SEX, AND INTIMACY. *Social Behaviour and Personality: an international journal*, 12(2), 191-197.
- Stone, R. N., & Grønhaug, K. (1993). Perceived risk: Further considerations for the marketing discipline. *European Journal of marketing*, 27(3), 39-50.
- Sunnafrank, M. (1990). Predicted outcome value and uncertainty reduction theories: A test of competing perspectives. *Human Communication Research*, 17(1), 76-103.
- Sussman, M. B., & Burchinal, L. (1962). Kin family network: Unheralded structure in current conceptualizations of family functioning. *Marriage and Family Living*, 24(3), 231-240.
- Swaminathan, V., & Moorman, C. (2009). Marketing alliances, firm networks, and firm value creation. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5), 52-69.
- Swann, W. B., Griffin, J. J., Predmore, S. C., & Gaines, B. (1987). The cognitive-affective crossfire: When self-consistency confronts self-enhancement. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 52(5), 881.
- Swidler, A. (1980). Love and adulthood in American culture. *Themes of work and love in adulthood*, 120-147.
- Swidler, A. (2013). *Talk of love: How culture matters*. University of Chicago Press.
- Tagiuri, R. (1958). *Person Perception and Interpersonal Behaviour: Edited by Renato Tagiuri and Luigi Petrullo*. Stanford University Press.
- Tarssanen, S., & Kylänen, M. (2005). A theoretical model for producing experience—a touristic perspective. *Articles on experience*, 2(1), 130-149.
- Taylor, S. E., & Brown, J. D. (1988). Illusion and well-being: a social psychological perspective on mental health. *Psychological bulletin*, 103(2), 193.
- Taylor, S. E., Sherman, D. K., Kim, H. S., Jarcho, J., Takagi, K., & Dunagan, M. S. (2004). Culture and social support: Who seeks it and why?. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 87(3), 354.
- Tennov, D. (1979). Love and limerance: the experience of being in love in New York. *Stein and Day, New York*.

- Thera, A. (1964). The Piths in Buddhism.
- Thoits, P. A. (1995). Stress, coping, and social support processes: Where are we? What next?. *Journal of health and social behavior*, 53-79.
- Thompson, L. G. (1996). *Chinese religion: An introduction*. Cengage Learning.
- Thompson, M., MacInnis, D. J., & Whan Park, C. (2005). The ties that bind: Measuring the strength of consumers' emotional attachments to brands. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 15(1), 77-91.
- Thoresen, C. E. (1998). Spirituality, health, and science: The coming revival?.
- Thoresen, C. E., & Harris, A. H. (2002). Spirituality and health: What's the evidence and what's needed?. *Annals of behavioural medicine*, 24(1), 3-13.
- Tice, D. M. (1992). Self-concept change and self-presentation: the looking glass self is also a magnifying glass. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 63(3), 435.
- Tong, K. N. (1986). Original discussion of Chinese philosophy. *Taiwan: Student Publisher*.
- Travelbee, J. (1971). *Interpersonal aspects of nursing*. FA Davis Company.
- Triandis, H. C. (1989). The self and social behaviour in differing cultural contexts. *Psychological review*, 96(3), 506.
- Triandis, H. C. (1990). Cross-cultural studies of individualism and collectivism.
- Triandis, H. C., Marin, G., Lisansky, J., & Betancourt, H. (1984). Simpatia as a cultural script of Hispanics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 47(6), 1363.
- Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. (2000). Temporal construal and time-dependent changes in preference. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 79(6), 876.
- Tsai, J. L., & Levenson, R. W. (1997). Cultural influences on emotional responding Chinese American and European American dating couples during interpersonal conflict. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 28(5), 600-625.
- Tsai, J. L., Ying, Y. W., & Lee, P. A. (2000). The Meaning of "being Chinese" and "being American" variation among Chinese American young adults. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 31(3), 302-332.
- Tucker, P., & Aron, A. (1993). Passionate love and marital satisfaction at key transition points in the family life cycle. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 12(2), 135-147.

- Tuckett, A. G. (2005). Applying thematic analysis theory to practice: a researcher's experience. *Contemporary nurse*, 19(1-2), 75-87.
- Tweedie, J. (1979). *In the name of love*. Random House Incorporated.
- Urbany, J. E., Dickson, P. R., & Wilkie, W. L. (1989). Buyer uncertainty and information search. *Journal of consumer research*, 16(2), 208-215.
- Valle, R. S., King, M., & Halling, S. (1989). An introduction to existential-phenomenological thought in psychology. In *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology* (pp. 3-16). Springer, Boston, MA.
- Variations on a universal theme. In *Poster presented at the 101st convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Ontario*.
- Van Hook, M., Huguen, B., & Aguilar, M. A. (Eds.). (2001). *Spirituality within religious traditions in social work practice*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Vick, E. H. (1993). The corporation as a brand. *DIRECTORS AND BOARDS-AMERICAN EDITION*-, 17, 57-57.
- Vigneron, F., & Johnson, L. W. (2004). Measuring perceptions of brand luxury. *Journal of brand management*, 11(6), 484-506.
- Viroli, M. (1995). *For Love of Country: An Essay On Patriotism and Nationalism: An Essay On Patriotism and Nationalism*. Clarendon Press.
- Vlachos, P. A., & Vrechopoulos, A. P. (2012). Consumer–retailer love and attachment: Antecedents and personality moderators. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 19(2), 218-228.
- Walsh, F. (2010). Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. *Family process*, 49(3), 330-348.
- Wagner, R., & Ziegler, E. (1909). *Tristan and Isolde*. FA Stokes Company.
- Waisberg, J. L., & Porter, J. E. (1994). Purpose in life and outcome of treatment for alcohol dependence. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 33(1), 49-63.
- Walsh, K., & Gordon, J. R. (2008). Creating an individual work identity. *Human resource management review*, 18(1), 46-61.
- Walster, E., Walster, G. W., & Berscheid, E. (1978). Equity: Theory and research.
- Walster, E., Aronson, V., Abrahams, D., & Rottman, L. (1966). Importance of physical attractiveness in dating behaviour. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 4(5), 508.

- Walton, J. (1996). Spiritual Relationships A Concept Analysis. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 14(3), 237-250.
- Wallis, R. T. (1995). Neoplatonism.
- Wang, J., & Stringer, L. A. (2000). The impact of Taoism on Chinese leisure. *World Leisure Journal*, 42(3), 33-41.
- Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J., & Jackson, D. (1967). *Pragmatics of Human Communication*. New York: WW Norton.
- Weber, M. (2013). *From Max Weber: essays in sociology*. Routledge.
- Weiss, S. (1974). *U.S. Patent No. 3,803,738*. Washington, DC: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.
- Weiss, L. W. (1974). The concentration-profits relationship and antitrust. *Industrial concentration: The new learning*, 184.
- Wentzel, K. R. (1991). Social and academic goals at school: Motivation and achievement in context. *Advances in motivation and achievement*, 7, 185-212.
- Wentzel, K. R. (1994). Relations of social goal pursuit to social acceptance, classroom behaviour, and perceived social support. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 86(2), 173.
- Wiener, Y. (1982). Commitment in organizations: A normative view. *Academy of management review*, 7(3), 418-428.
- Whang, Y. O., Allen, J., Sahoury, N., & Zhang, H. (2004). Falling in love with a product: The structure of a romantic consumer-product relationship. *ACR North American Advances*.
- White, R. W. (1960, January). Competence and the psychosexual stages of development. In *Nebraska symposium on motivation* (Vol. 8, pp. 97-141). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1994). Emotion, language, and cultural scripts.
- Wiener, Y. (1982). Commitment in organizations: A normative view. *Academy of management review*, 7(3), 418-428.
- Williams, O. F. (2004). The UN Global Compact: The challenge and the promise. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 14(4), 755-774.
- Wilson, T. D., & Gilbert, D. T. (2005). Affective forecasting: Knowing what to want. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14(3), 131-134.
- Wong, P. T. (1998). *Implicit theories of meaningful life and the development of the personal meaning profile*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

- Wright, P. L. (1974). Research orientations for analyzing consumer judgment processes. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Wu, S., & Shaver, P. R. (1993, August). American and Chinese love conceptions: Variations on a universal theme. In *Poster presented at the 101st convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Ontario*.
- Wuthnow, R. (1978). Peak Experience: Some Empirical Tests. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 18(3), 59-75.
- Xiaohe, X., & Whyte, M. K. (1990). Love matches and arranged marriages: A Chinese replication. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 709-722.
- Yalom, I. D. (1980). *Existential psychotherapy* (Vol. 1). New York: Basic Books.
- Yang, J. (1999). Confucianism, institutional change and value conflict in Korea. *Korean social science journal*, 26(1), 209-236.
- Yang, K. S., & Ho, D. Y. (1988). The role of yuan in Chinese social life: A conceptual and empirical analysis. *Asian contributions to psychology*, 263, 281.
- Yao, X. (1995). *Jen*, love and universality—Three arguments concerning *jen* in Confucianism. *Asian Philosophy*, 5(2), 181-195.
- Yip, K. S. (2004). Taoism and its impact on mental health of the Chinese communities. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 50(1), 25-42.
- Yorburg, B. (1975). The nuclear and the extended family: An area of conceptual confusion. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 5-14.
- Young, C. A. (2006). *Soul power: Culture, radicalism, and the making of a US Third World left*. Duke University Press.
- Yum, J. O. (1988). The impact of Confucianism on interpersonal relationships and communication patterns in East Asia. *Communications Monographs*, 55(4), 374-388.
- Zarantonello, L., & Schmitt, B. H. (2013). The impact of event marketing on brand equity: The mediating roles of brand experience and brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 32(2), 255-280.
- Zinnbauer, B. J., Pargament, K. I., & Scott, A. B. (1999). The emerging meanings of religiousness and spirituality: Problems and prospects. *Journal of personality*, 67(6), 889-919.
- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *The Journal of marketing*, 2-22.

Turnitin Result

Submissions Inbox

Feedback Studio

University of Otago [NZ] | https://blackboard.otago.ac.nz/webapps/ip-turnitintool-88LEARN/student/inbox?assign_id=961&course_id=26192_1&content_id=2035877_1&course_batch_id=GRS_PHD&refres...

Shanshan Luo 2

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

Home

GRS_PHD Graduate Research Support for Doctoral Candidates

Assignments > Thesis Draft > Thesis Draft

GRS_PHD (Graduate Research Support for Doctoral Candidates)

Home Page

Course Information

Course Documents

Assignments

Discussion Board

Library Help

Web-Links, Books etc

Contacts

Tools

Thesis Draft

Submit

Submissions Inbox



Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 4

Part 5

Status	Start Date	Due Date	Post Date	Grade Total	Tools
Active	2018 Aug 17 23:59	2023 Dec 31 23:59	2018 Aug 18 23:59	100	 






This is where you can submit chapters or your whole thesis multiple times for checking by Turnitin

Search

Author / Paper title

Paper ID

Date Submitted

Shanshan Luo - thesis	1091011672	Mar 11th, 2019 2:09 pm					
-----------------------	------------	------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Submissions Inbox Feedback Studio Turnitin

https://api.turnitin.com/newreport_classic.asp?lang=en_us&oid=1091011672&it=1.8bypass_or=1

Turnitin Originality Report

Document Viewer

Processed on: 11-Mar-2019 2:23 PM NZDT
 ID: 1091011672
 Word Count: 9380
 Submitted: 1

thesis By Shanshan Luo

Similarity by Source	
Similarity Index	9%
Internet Sources:	5%
Publications:	4%
Student Papers:	2%

include quoted include bibliography exclude small matches download print mode: quickview (classic) report

2% match (Internet from 18-Feb-2019)
<https://anzmac2018.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ANZMAC2018-Proceedings.pdf>

1% match (student papers from 11-Sep-2017)
[Submitted to University College London on 2017-09-11](#)

1% match (publications)
[Abhiyan Sarkar, Juhl Gahlot, Sarkar, "Validating fashion brand centrality scale amongst young adults", Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal, 2017](#)

1% match (publications)
[Sreejesh S, Abhiyan Sarkar, Sudeepa Pradhan, "Examining the roles played by a store satisfaction-love framework in shaping the influence of store loyalty programs", Management Research Review, 2016](#)

1% match (publications)
[Sabrina M. Hegner, Anna Fenko, Anemiek Teravest, "Using the theory of planned behaviour to understand brand love", Journal of Product & Brand Management, 2017](#)

<1% match (Internet from 02-Nov-2017)
<http://epubs.scu.edu.au>

<1% match (publications)
[Ruchi Garg, Jaydeep Mukherjee, Soumendu Biswas, Aarti Kataria, "An investigation of antecedents and consequences of brand love in India", Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration, 2015](#)

<1% match (publications)
[University of Tennessee, Knoxville](#)

<1% match (student papers from 02-May-2016)
[Submitted to University of Newcastle upon Tyne on 2016-05-02](#)

<1% match (student papers from 22-May-2015)
[Submitted to University of Sheffield on 2015-05-22](#)

<1% match (student papers from 28-Aug-2014)
[Submitted to University of Warwick on 2014-08-28](#)

<1% match (Internet from 17-Aug-2018)
<https://epdf.tips/why-of-consumption-contemporary-perspectives-on-consumer-motives-goals-and-desir.html>

<1% match (Internet from 09-Nov-2018)
<https://anzmac.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/ANZMAC%202017%20Conference%20Proceedings.pdf>

<1% match (Internet from 07-Feb-2019)
<https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/29685/01/chapters1-2.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=2>

<1% match (publications)
[Hazel R. Markus, "Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation.", Psychological Review, 1991](#)

<1% match (Internet from 24-Jun-2017)
<http://researchbank.rmit.edu.au>

<1% match (Internet from 01-Mar-2019)

Appendix I Ethical Approval

Appendix II Consent form

Appendix III Transcribe

Appendix IV Coding