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LOVE *Ø* OF BRAND

A story of an on-going romance

Author

Berivan Amin
Malin Danielsson

Supervisor

Agneta Moulette

Examiner

Christer Ekelund

Abstract

Today, in a world of consumption where almost everything is branded, every consumer has a brand that they love, a so called *lovemarks*. Nowadays, it takes more than just a commercial to make consumers stay committed to a brand. Consumers need to relate on a more personal level. There lies a deep rooted love, consistent over long periods of time, making the luxury brand consumer's one the most loyal consumers in the world. Consequently, it is the consumers that decide what a *lovemarks* is, and why they go back to repurchasing that brand again, a kind of on-going romance between consumer-brand.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore why consumers develop emotional attachment and loyalty towards brands, leading to a long-lasting, devoted relationship between the consumer and the brand. The aim is to find out elements that are needed to love a brand consistently. The outcome of this study will provide a better look into the consumer's attitude towards *lovemark* brands.

A qualitative study has been performed on consumer attitudes towards their *lovemarks* brand, and the language they use when describing their motive to stay loyal to their brand of preference. Furthermore, the view of what elements are needed for them to develop emotional attachment towards that brand is explored.

The conclusion of this dissertation is that in order for consumers to develop loyalty and emotional attachment to brands, they need the elements of emotion, quality, trust, image, timeless fashion, and tradition. These elements combined, make the ultimate consumer that many brands want to have.

Keywords: Lovemarks, Brand Preference, Brand Love, Consumer Behaviour, Repurchase Intent, Emotional Attachment, Consumer Loyalty

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Berivan Amin

Malin Danielsson

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the first chapter of the dissertation, the background, problem statement, research question, purpose, , theorethical limitations and outline are presented.

1.1 Background

There are numerous brands in the world, however, it is the strong brands that have established a loyal customer base that stay dedicated to the brand. Brands are a complex mixture of functional benefits and emotional connections, but they are also identifiable entities that make specific promises of value (Keller, 2007). Previous studies have shown that strong brands create trust as well as emotional attachment and that they share common attributes (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012). Companies have noticed that the love for a brand is an important factor to maintain a good relationship with their consumers, therefore, they do emotional branding and incorporate it in their marketing strategies (Roberts, 2006). It is the core values of a brand that initially attracts consumers but it is the continuous determination for brands to stay loyal to their core values that makes consumers come back (Till & Heckler, 2009). Companies that want a sustainable consumer base have often problems with understanding the secret of maintaining their consumer base (Rowell, 2007). To find out why and what factors are necessary for an end user to fall in love with a brand, companies conduct brand audits.

Management theories/models such as the Kapferer Prism and Measurements of Brand Preference through brand recognition and brand recalls are often used in brand audits to get an overlook of the consumer perception of the brand (Keller 2007). Furthermore, measuring brand awareness, brand image and brand equity also give the companies a direction to what they should do to incorporate their brand identity into the end user's mind through relationship marketing (Keller, 2007). The interest among companies in exploring consumer shopping patterns to achieve sustainability has increased. Brand marketing theories concerning consumer attachment, as well as consumer attraction, have often been vague on the actual factors that evoke the actual emotion of LOVE.

According to previous research, consumers are likely to remain loyal to brands to which they are attracted to and that is the first step to a consumer-brand relationship (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011). Marketers incorporate vital elements in their marketing strategy to keep the attraction strong and extensive: but do the same elements matter from the consumers' viewpoint? One of the latest theories regarding consumer-brand relationship comes from a study conducted on the power of loved brands and explains that the elements of mystery, sensuality and intimacy are three characteristics that are needed to form love for a brand (Sayers & Monin, 2006). When a consumer falls in love with a brand, the consumer feels that the brand in some way ignites the imagination, pleases the senses and arouses a deep relevance (Sayers & Monin, 2006; Roberts, 2006). However, the question is if those factors alone build a long-term relationship with the consumer.

Furthermore, previous studies on consumer buying behavior are divided into two areas (Govind, 2011). The first is the *initial attraction* to purchase a product, and why/what attracts consumers to purchase a product in the first place. The second is the *repetitive purchasing behavior*, which this dissertation is more focused on (Govind, 2011). Previous studies on consumers repetitive purchasing behavior (Fang, Jianyao, Dick, & Huangting, 2012; Yann, Rod, & Philip, 2010; Song & Hur, 2012), have mostly been conducted in a quantitative manner, by sending out surveys to consumers online and then collecting the data. While, in this dissertation we use a qualitative method and collect the data by conducting in-depth interviews with consumers. Therefore, conducting a qualitative research on repetitive purchasing behavior gives our study more of a depth compared to studies conducted with quantitative methods using surveys. Conducting in-depth interviews in the area of consumer buying behavior can tell us more about the reasoning behind repetitive purchasing behavior that we feel previous studies on this topic lack.

Also, previous studies on repetitive purchasing behavior (Jensen & Hansen, 2006; Balester & Munera-Aleman, 2001; Didier & Cindy, 2010), have mostly been conducted on the 'regular market', concentrating on necessity goods such as food or household goods. The previous studies on repetitive purchasing behavior in the regular market (*ibid*), do not bring up the element of loyalty. The aim of this study is not only to

find out why consumers develop emotional attachment, but also why they stay loyal, which is lacking in the regular market.

In this study, we will focus on the luxury market, specifically on luxury brands, which consist of luxury products/goods. In a study that was conducted on luxury products (Melika & Muris, 2009), the consumers of luxury products thought that price was less of an importance than the actual quality of the product. To those consumers, price only exists only as a proof of good quality. Also, it is relatively fair to state that luxury brands provide consumers with relatively more image and non-functional benefits than regular products (Melika & Muris, 2009). In previous studies conducted on 'the luxury market' (Kuang-Peng, o.a., 2011; Cesare & Gianluigi, 2011; Song & Hur, 2011), it has been stated that consumers of luxury products are indeed loyal customers. However, studies have not been conducted on the reason *why* consumers develop loyalty and emotional attachment towards a product. Given our purpose to find out why consumers develop emotional attachment and loyalty towards a brand, the luxury market is suitable for our study.

Consumers of the luxury market are usually a small part of the population, where they can purchase luxury goods whenever they want. However, in present time consumers that are not wealthy are also purchasing luxury goods, by saving their money and treating themselves with luxury products (Song & Hur, 2012; Chadha & Husband, 2007). Consequently, the luxury market that used to be for the wealthy is now also available for ordinary people that splurge. People want to portray a certain status, and try to keep up with people with higher status (*ibid*). Luxury consumption, used to be rare, but now more people are wanting to 'up' their status and show off cars they are driving or clothes they are wearing (Nia, 2000). With more appealing advertising and celebrities, luxury brands are more desirable than ever and the pressure from society to look a certain way is (*ibid*). Portraying an image of being successful and rich, with power and status is appealing to many individuals. That is why there is also a huge market for counterfeits of luxury goods. However, consumers of luxury goods are very loyal to their brand (Cesare & Gianluigi, 2011), which is suitable to answer our research question.

Therefore, we feel that this topic has to be further researched in order to distinguish what elements play a role in creating Lovemarks. This research will primarily focus on the consumer aspect of lovemarks, and the angle from an end users mind set when loving a brand. Instead of focusing on the marketers' standpoint, the main focus of this dissertation will be on the consumer. This dissertation can be helpful for brands that have not figured out what elements that are needed to attract, as well as keep, their consumer base. It would be interesting find out the reason why consumers develop loyalty and emotional attachment towards a luxury brand, from a consumer's point of view. This study will provide a better understanding about consumers perspective on long lasting lovemarks, and what is needed to discover the secrets behind the mysterious love potion that have consumers spellbound. Join us on our journey to unlock the hidden vault of *Lovemarks*.

1.2 Problem Statement

The focus of this research will be on the consumer's perspective of lovemark brands, by investigating the language consumers use when they talk about luxury brands. Previous research, regarding factors needed to be a loved brand has been conducted through several ways (Roberts, 2006, Hwang & Kandampully, 2012; Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011). For example, the focus on the earlier research has mostly been about the factors that are needed for a consumer to get attracted to a brand (Weeler, 2012; Simintiras, Diamantopoulos, & Ferriday, 1997), and how it is approached from a marketing perspective (Keller, 2007; Kapferer, 2008). They have conducted brand audits to figure out what the consumers need by exploring their brand first, then concluding the end users through different measurements of brand awareness, brand image, and brand perception, among many others (Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey, 2005). Other research has been about the consumer's perspective about finding out consumer attraction towards brands using different models such as the Self Expansion Model (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011).

However, we find that most of the previous research (Fang, Jianyao, Dick, & Huangting, 2012; Yann, Rod, & Philip, 2010; Song & Hur, 2012), have been conducted by quantitative methods. Because it has been completed through quantitative methods it

has only scratched the surface of the complex question regarding the consumer-brand relationship.

Therefore, we feel that a study which dig deeper into the research is needed, in order to get into the subject more and really understand the consumer aspect of a lovemarks brand. That is why we want to conduct our research through a qualitative method to get a better understanding of the multifaceted consumer-brand relationship that we feel previous research lack. Earlier research have gotten to distinguish why a consumer on the firsthand is attracted to a brand (Nisel, 2001; Hammond, 2011; Nalty, 2012;), but we are more interested to why consumers keep repurchase that certain brand over again. An emotional attachment, that we feel can only be explained with in-depth interviews of lovemarks consumers. The long lasting, consistent consumer attraction that remains over long periods of time, is what we feel needs to be the focus of our dissertation, rather than focusing on marketer's perspective regarding lovemarks consumers.

Furthermore, in this study we focus on established luxury brands, the so called lovemark brands that tend to have a truly loyal customer base and the reason why they are so successful (Till & Heckler, 2009). Who are these consumers that stay loyal to those brands? Why do they purchase their lovemarks product over again? These are all questions that we have as a part of our study.

1.3 Research Question

WHAT ELEMENTS AFFECT CONSUMERS TO DEVELOP LOYALTY AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT TOWARDS A BRAND?

The objective of our dissertation is to:

- *Identify the key elements that are necessary for a product to become a loved brand (Lovemark).*
- *Identify the buying behaviour of consumers that stay loyal to their brand of preference by means of repurchase.*

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore what unites every lovemark consumer and what they have in common with each other. To find out what core elements are needed for a consumer to develop this strong emotional attachment that becomes in somewhat an on-going romance with their brand of preference. What is it that makes the consumer always go back to a certain brand? Even though, they try out other brands, they keep coming back to that specific brand again, or in some cases they just stick to that brand all together.

The outcome of this dissertation will provide a better look into the consumers attitude towards lovemark brands, as well as the language they use when describing their motive to stay loyal to their lovemarks.

1.5 Theoretical Limitations

This dissertation is limited to a few established theories and models used within the field of study and will be used to support the outcome of the face to face interviews with the respondents.

First, the Theory of Kevin Roberts the author of *Lovemarks* will be used as a guideline for our dissertation. The theory explains that the elements of mystery, sensuality and intimacy are the three characteristics that are needed to form love for a brand (Roberts, 2006). With the help of the Roberts Theory that explains how consumers have many senses that need to be satisfied for a consumer to form an attraction and love with a brand. We hope to determine a better understanding of the consumer needs to form a long lasting ongoing-romance with their brand of preference.

Second, with the help of The Brand Attachment Theory, we will analyse and explain how the brand is perceived in the customer's mind to get a deeper understanding of how a consumer gets emotionally attached to a brand, thus explaining the committed love developed (Keller, 2007).

Third, the Theory of Self Expansion will be used to further analyse the consumer mindset as well as distinguish the psychological importance of a lovemark. The theory emphasizes a central motive where every individuals seek to expand themselves and such expansion entails close relationships that include “others in the self” i.e. expanding to others perspective and identities (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011).

This study is limited to investigating the consumer’s angle on lovemark brands and what it takes for them to repurchase that brand over again, whilst maintaining a sustainable close relationship with the brand over a long period of time. This research will not study how companies create a lovable brand.

1.6 Outline

The structure of this dissertation consists of six chapters. The first chapter presents the background, problem, research question, purpose, theoretical limitations and the outline. In chapter two, the research method is reviewed and topics such as the research philosophy, research approach and research design is presented. In chapter three, the literature review is reviewed and a conclusion of the literature is presented. In chapter four, the empirical method is presented. The research technique, information collection, sample selection, credibility, transferability and conformability is discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion about generalizability. This is followed by chapter five, where the results from the case studies can be found. Chapter six is the final chapter of this dissertation, which presents an overall conclusion, summary of results, practical limitations and suggestions for additional research.

Chapter 2

Research Method

The second chapter of the dissertation presents the methods used in this study. In this chapter, the research philosophy, research approach and research design are presented.

2.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy contains important assumptions about the way which people view the world and relates to the development of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). There four views on research philosophy and those are; positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism.

The *positivistic* view is derived from natural science and is characterized by testing of hypotheses developed from existing theory through different measurement of observable social realities. Therefore, the view of positivism is to observe the reality in an objective way and to generalize (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). The view of *realism* relates to scientific enquiry and implies that there is a reality independent of human thoughts and beliefs. The philosophy suggests that what the senses show us as reality is the truth (*ibid*). The *interpretivist* view is almost the opposite of positivism because it does not aim to generalize (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006). The focus of interpretivism is on understanding the meanings and interpretations of social actors to understand their reality from their point of view (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). The *pragmatic* view does not take emotions and ideas into consideration, but focuses on the truth and results. It focuses on practical research and integrating different perspectives to help interpret the results (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007).

I this dissertation we focus on the philosophy of interpretivism, because we have chosen to interview a group of individuals that make sense of situations based on their individual experience, memories and expectations. This perspective is appropriate in the

field of human behavior. Each circumstance is unique and each individual has a different characteristic, therefore, the results of our dissertation cannot be generalized. Moreover, interpretivism aims to get a deeper understanding in specific cases about human behavior (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006), and is useful to our research question on consumers buying behavior regarding lovemarks.

2.2 Research Approach

In this study we have used an abductive reasoning, which is a mixture of a deductive and an inductive approach. The objective of an abductive approach is to discover new things, other elements and other relationships (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). We have also conducted our study from a subjective point of view, which we think is appropriate for this study.

2.2.1 Abductive Approach

In the study conducted by Dubois and Gadde, (2002), deductive approaches are explained as developing propositions from existing theory and testing them in the real world, while inductive approaches rely on grounded theory, where it is systematically generated from data. The two approaches are also brought up in other research (Kovács & Spens, 2005), apart from Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, (2007). Our study will use a mixture of these two approaches, and our objective with our interviews with an abductive reasoning is to ‘neither follow the pattern of pure deduction, nor of pure induction’ (Kovács & Spens, 2005).

According to Kovacs and Spens (2005), in abductive reasoning, the case presents a plausible but not logically necessary conclusion, and instead of focusing on generalizations, the abductive approach is concerned with the particularities of specific situations, which can also lead to suggesting general rules (ibid). We have chosen to conduct interviews on a selective group of people, therefore we cannot generalize the answers given in this study. For that reason the abductive approach is suitable for this study. An abductive reasoning entails that, the original framework is modified, partly as

a result of unanticipated empirical findings, but also of theoretical models and new concepts, resulting from the confrontation with reality (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

2.2.2 Subjectivism

One of the aspects of ontology we use in this study is the view of subjectivism. Ontology, according to Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, (2007), describes our view on the nature of reality, if it is an objective reality that really exists, or only a subjective reality created in our mind. We see the world as a social construction, and our subjective evaluation we use our respondents opinion and attitude towards their lovemark brand.

2.2.3 Qualitative Method

Qualitative research is to study things in their natural setting, and then attempt to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). It is based on meanings expressed through words, and pictures (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010), in addition to being seen as something we interpret and try to understand. It also explains what is beyond the obvious, while seeking to find out about peoples meanings (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Why we chose to conduct a research of a qualitative nature, is because it examines the underlying meaning, while focusing on the content. Understanding the overall context is also an important part, which aims to discover, raise and highlight the context in the study (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). For this reason, a qualitative research is not limited to a structure, however the qualitative analysis is limited to our subjective ability to understand and interpret the material (Fejes & Thornberg, 2009). This means that, we will not see what is expected, but demonstrate what the data material shows (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Therefore, our study is exploratory, and focuses on the content of the interviews in a subjective way, as well as looking at the overall picture with an interpretive analysis, while prioritizing the validity. Given our purpose, of researching through deep personal interviews, this method is suitable for our study.

2.3 Research Design

The three main research designs are; exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). The *exploratory* research design is adaptable and flexible, which makes it more of an advantage when investigating a new area of research or a topic from a new angle (*ibid*). The *descriptive* research design is often used when accurately describing a situation, event or person. However, it can also be a part of an explanatory or an exploratory research design (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). The most frequently used design is the *explanatory* approach, which is frequently used when researching how variables are connected to each other. In way it is used to compare and describe events with each other (Yin, 2008; Robson, 2002; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007).

2.3.1 Exploratory

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the repetitive buying behavior of luxury brand consumers, by conducting in-depth interviews with the individuals. Our main research question is to find out why consumers develop strong loyalty and attachment towards luxury brands. Exploratory research design investigates a new area of research and does not follow directly from an existing study (Robson, 2002; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). Our purpose is to explore, analyze, interpret and understand our respondents, with the help of in-depth interviews.

The study will be exploratory, creative and not structured to a certain theory. Moreover, while conducting an exploratory research design, one must be willing to change direction as a result of new data and new insight that occurs (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). Based on our research question, our research design is exploratory, since our research wants to gain better understanding of why consumers develop loyalty and emotional attachment towards luxury brands. Hence, the exploratory research design is used in this dissertation to investigate the respondents.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Within this chapter of the dissertation brand and luxury brands are defined, and explained. A description of consumer behaviour and theories concerning consumer buying behaviour, in regards to this study are also explained. Later on, the term Lovemarks is defined. Finally, a summary of the literature is presented.

3.1 Brand

In order to understand the modern meaning of what a brand entails, it is essential to understand the different aspects of the brand, such as the brand identity, core, image, personality, equity, awareness, and preference, which will be described and discussed.

Brand is associated with a product or service which has certain qualities or characteristics that make it special or unique (Mallik, 2009). In the book *Principles of Marketing*, it is described as a name, term, sign symbol or a combination of these that identifies the maker or seller of the product (Kotler & Armstrong & Wong, 2010). David Ogilvy describes brand as follows (in Keller, 2007, p 18):

Brand is a complex symbol. It is the intangible sum of a product's attributes, its name, packaging and price, its history, reputation, and the way it's advertised. A brand is also defined by consumer's impression of people who use it, as well as their own experience

Another way of saying that is that in the factory Revlon makes cosmetics, but in the stores, Revlon sells hope (Keller, 2007). This means that a brand makes specific promises of value, and helps consumers to recognize the brand much easier than a non-branded product (Kotler, Armstrong & Wong, 2010). Nevertheless, the brand is not the product, but it gives the product meaning and defines its identity, and that is why every brand has its own unique identity, image, equity, history and set of core values. With building a brand, manager's ultimate goal is to gain brand loyalty from their consumers, not price loyalty or bargain loyalty. From a business point of view, brand loyalty means profitability, and that is why companies in today's market try to brand themselves

(Kapferer, 2008). To better understand consumer behavior regarding brand and the love that the consumers have for that brand, it is important to understand the various aspects of a brand that influence the end users.

Brand identity is defined as consumers' perception of a brand and reflects a set of associations the consumers hold in their minds when thinking of a brand (Didier & Cindy, 2010). The brand identity answers questions: What features would the brand have as if it was a person? What is the brand culture, physical features, values and personality? For example, Chanel's identity is portrayed as being sophisticated and elegant (Gautier, 2011), and those are a set of *core values* that are consistent with Chanel's brand identity, which Chanel's consumers relate to (Bott, 2007). According to Jean-Noel Kapferer (Kapferer, 2008 p, 104) brand identity consists of:

1. Personality- *Features of brand, if it was a person*
2. Physique- *Product features, symbols & attributes*
3. Culture- *Set of values and principles*
4. Relationship- *The way the brand connects to its consumers*
5. Reflection- *Image of the brand's consumers*
6. Self-Image- *Internal mirror of consumers as users of the brand*

The Kapferer Prism of Brand Identity is a model that shows what a 'brand' consists of. It is a visual to understand the concept of a brand. It is the whole packaging of a brand displayed in a model. It helps people to better understand what a brand is and all of its attributes. Down below in Figure 1, you can see the prism to better understand the concept of 'a brand'.

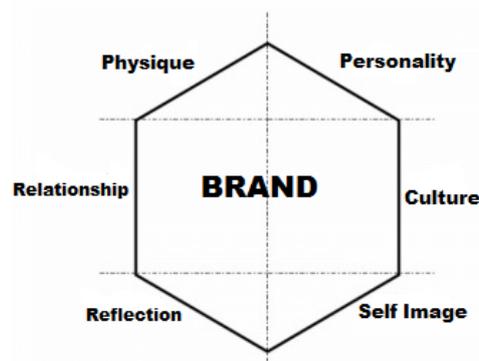


Fig. 1- The Prism of Brand Identity

The Kapferer Prism of Brand Identity is a useful tool to better understand the consumers, regarding their brand of preference. The Prism of Brand identity is often used in marketing and brand audits to better understand why a consumer gets attracted to a brand (Kapferer, 2008). The Prism describes the brand as a whole how a brand is built and is divided into six parts. Questions about self-image, reflection, relationship, culture, physique and personality not only give us the information of a brand identity, but also a better understanding to why consumers are attracted to the brand in the first place. Furthermore, does the brand identity affect future purchases? That is why it is important to first look at the brand itself, in order to understand why it is the consumer's lovemark in the first place. The Prism of Brand Identity has been used in many earlier researches regarding consumer's relationship with brands (Kapferer, 2008; Keller, 2007).

The *Brand Central Core* represents the essence of the brand and contains the associations that must remain constant over time. The core elements are timeless and belong to the timeless foundation of the brand identity (Keller, 2007). In the case of the brand Cacharel, the company shifted the brand core towards meeting the desires of today's market, rather than going back to the brand's original core values. That led to Cacharel's consistent loyal consumer base no longer wanting to buy the brand, because they could not relate to the new core values (Rowell, 2007). In short, the development of core values is synonymous with the development of the brand and should not be underestimated (Urde, 2003).

Brand Image is the consumers' perception of the brand, and the associations they hold in their minds when thinking of a brand. (Mallik, 2009; Weeler, 2012; Till & Heckler, 2009). When a brand is well established in memory, it is easier to attach associations to the brand and affects consumers' response to the brand (Esch, Lagner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006). Brand awareness is related to the brand image and refers to the strengths of the brand in memory and how easy it is for the consumers to remember the brand (Roberts, 2006).

Brand Equity is the intangible value that a brand adds to the product. This means that, the value added cannot be accounted for by the product's price or features (Mallik, 2009). Hence, why building brand equity is an important part of branding, for the reason

that it is suppose to bring several advantages to a company. For example, high brand equity levels are known to lead to higher consumer preferences and purchase intentions (Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey, 2005). Another definition, based on the consumers perspective, which define brand equity as the value of a brand to the consumer. Finding out what value a lovemark brand has to consumers, is key to better understand how it affects future purchases. Basically, brand equity stems from the confidence that consumers place in a brand, than they do in its competitors. This confidence, translates into consumers' loyalty and their willingness to pay a premium price for the brand (Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma, 1995; Aaker, 1996).

Brand Preference occurs when consumers favor the brand over competing brands. The most recent literature (Mallik, 2009; Kotler, Armstrong, & Wong, 2010; Keller, 2007; Kapferer, 2008), suggests that brand preference results of consumers:

- Knowing the brand
- Understanding the uniqueness of the brand
- Understanding that the brand is superior to other brands

In view of these aspects, the previous research regarding brand identity, brand image, brand central core, brand equity and brand preference, tells us why consumers would relate to a brands values, or why consumers might identify themselves in a brands identity and image, as well as why consumer favor the brand over competing brands. However, what researchers like Weeler (2012), Keller (2007), and Kapferer (2008), among many previous research, does not tell us, is exactly why consumers choose to stay loyal to brands, and it does not give a better understanding to why consumers get emotionally attached to brands, or why consumers go back to their lovemark brand after purchasing other brands. Why do consumers have a consistent love for brands? Is one of many questions a brands identity, brand core, brand equity does not answer. All of these brand aspects do not give us a better understanding to why consumers develop a consistent long-lasting romance with their lovemark. Given our purpose, it is important to understand what a brand is, and knowing all of its aspects, because it gives us an insight to the actual brand and how consumers relate to the brands identity, image, central core values and the brands equity. However, because it does not answer our

research question, we will not be using these brand theories as a model, but it will only be used as a guideline in this study.

3.2 Luxury Brands

Luxury is a quality that can be defined in different ways. Some would say that luxury is time off from work, being with the family or being healthy. Thus, it is important to have a clear definition of the word luxury, for the purpose of this study targeting luxury brands. Luxury goods are often associated with high-end products such as cars, diamonds, jewelries, or massive square foot of properties (Fennel, 1978). That is one way of measuring luxury. Another way to define luxury is when someone is able to afford and purchase whatever they want (*ibid*). As for the use of basic products, consumers expect that what they bought work as expected and promised, look good and last. These expectations will increase even more in terms of luxury goods, since the global market is growing and more brands refers themselves as “luxury” brands (Fennel 1978). According to Dubois, Laurent & Czellar (2001), luxury is a strong word. It can elicit both positive and negative feelings by people. People have a lot of opinions on luxury; they associate it with exclusive, quality, good taste, class, as well as flashiness and bad taste. Rich consumers usually have a positive attitude towards the concept of luxury; they feel like luxury is a big part of their life and lifestyle. The people that are critical are the ones that are less familiar with the concept, in addition to being insecure and less fortune. The culture of luxury by definition can be described as a cult: an exclusive cult that has a large and loyal following (Chadha & Husband, 2007). In this study we focus on luxury brands, which consist of luxury goods that are in the luxury market.

Luxury Goods is defined as, the more the owner uses or displays a particular branded product, it brings prestige on the owner. These goods are often expensive and exclusive, such as Cartier watches, Hermes handbags, Polo shirts, Versace suits and Mercedes Ben cars (Nia, 2000). The appeal of luxury goods can be a result of their perceived premium quality, recognizable style, reputation, and limited accessibility. In the perceptions of the owners, these characteristics signify emotional and symbolic values (Kuang-peng, o.a., 2011).

Luxury Brand is defined as a brand for which a majority of the products are luxury goods (Heine, 2011), or according to *The Cult of The Luxury Brand* (2007), a modern set of symbols that consumers buy to redefine their identity and social position (Chadha & Husband, 2007). The characteristic of luxury brands is that they are well known and have a well-established prestige. Usually those brands have been around for many years, and with the benefit of time have built a strong brand identity, equity and have a loyal following. Those strong and popular luxury brands tend to have a stable central core and have been around for many years (Bott, 2007). In a way, luxury brands evoke exclusivity, and have well-known brand identity, enjoy high brand awareness, perceived quality and retain sales levels, as well as customer loyalty (Melika & Muris, 2009). Because of these attributes, luxury brands as possessions help to shape the owner's identity, this according to the various research that have been conducted regarding consumer behavior in regards to luxury brands (Kuang-peng, o.a., 2011; Fang, Jianyao, Dick, & Huangting, 2012; Chadha & Husband, 2007). Furthermore, a luxury brand is defined as a branded product that is carefully crafted, unique, and conspicuous. Researchers on luxury brand such as Holbrook, (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), explains quality being the key to satisfying the consumers' need to fulfill functional value, also the experience which involves fantasies, feelings and fun. In addition, Holbrook highlighted how this value could affect an individual's identification and behaviour. Lastly, he pointed out that there is a dimension of symbolic meaning (Holbrook, 1999). According to Melika & Muris, (2009, p 231):

An individual's preference for shopping in clothing stores where the combination of status, store type, atmosphere, merchandise, price, quality, branding and fashion combine to create a particular prestige level

When a person endorses a specific luxury brand through repurchase, that person is communicating desire to be associated with the kind of people he/she perceives to consume that brand (Melika & Muris, 2009). In addition, it is important to state when the word luxury brand is mentioned throughout this study, it refers to brands that produce luxury goods.

3.3 Consumer Buying Behavior

Given our purpose, researching the consistent love for a brand, examining consumer buying behavior is relevant to this study. Why do consumers get attracted to brands? What makes them go back to that brand after using other brands? These are all questions that are relevant with consumer's psychological behavior, thus different theories that gives a better understanding towards the consumer attitude towards brands is looked at.

3.3.1 Roberts Theory of Senses

The most recent theory regarding lovemarks is made by author Roberts, Kevin (2006) the author of *Lovemarks- the future beyond brands*, the theory is based on senses, and the notion that every brand want to be loved and that every consumer wants a lovemark. He further explains that, to form love for a brand, many senses needs to be satisfied, and that elements of mystery, sensuality and intimacy are needed for a brand to be a lovemark.

In the book, *Lovemarks- the future beyond brands*, he describes that *Mystery* is something that draws the consumers in, and reveals a story they can connect with. In addition to that consumers need *sensuality*, meaning the product is not just a visual or its logo it has to connect through a deeper level than just the visuals (Roberts, 2006). Most brands do not consider all of the senses to engage consumers but the real lovemark brands that are well known and loved include these in their branding strategy. Lastly, the element of *intimacy* and getting personal with the consumers is essential to figure out what effect a brand has on consumers on a personal level. All of the three senses combined explain why consumers develop deep emotional attachment towards a brand. The theory further explains that consumers are driven by emotion and not by reason and the importance of including all of a human different senses it vital to form a lovemark (Roberts, 2006). Other research regarding lovemarks conducted by Sayers & Monin, (2007) have used the theory of senses to better understand the meaning of a lovemark to consumers.

What is a lovemark? *Lovemarks* is what happens when a brand becomes not irreplaceable, but irresistible, a brand that creates, not loyalty for a reason, but loyalty

beyond a reason, beyond price and attributes. The emphasis being on emotional branding and that consumer senses need to be pleased in order for them to love a brand. Not only does the theory base on senses, but it also states that consumers make 80% of their decisions based on emotion and that those emotions develop strong brand loyalty, as well as brand attachment (Roberts, 2006).

Nevertheless, this theory has been used in previous research regarding consumer buying behavior, for example the study conducted by Sayers & Monin, (2007). However, this theory only gives an insight to the initial attraction to a brand, and what kind of senses need to be fulfilled in order for consumers to love a brand, it does not give a better understanding to the element of consistency. It only tells us about how a brand can become a lovemark from a marketing perspective. Yes, in order to create a lovemark all of the consumers senses need to be satisfied, but why they have an long-lasting relationship with a brand that consist of loyalty and deep emotional attachment is not mentioned. Therefore this theory also used as a guideline for our dissertation, while finding out the elements needed to make a brand irresistible in the long-term.

3.3.2 Self Expansion Theory

The Theory of Self Expansion emphasizes a central motive whereby individuals expand their selves to be more than they are, by acquiring perspective, resources and identities to enhance their ability to achieve goals (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011).

This suggests that a consumer can identify himself in a relationship with a brand based on adequacy between his own personality (Didier & Cindy, 2010). In addition, the fundamental premise of the theory is that, consumers purchases are partly driven by a desire to construct self-concepts and communicate them through wearing and using branded products (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012). Furthermore, it explains that consumers are more devoted to brands with which they feel commonalities to, and to brands that express important aspects of their identity (ibid). The theory has been used in previous research, in regards to consumer buying behavior (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011; Hwang & Kandampully, 2012; Didier & Cindy, 2010), therefore, given our research purpose on consumers buying behavior, this theory is relevant. To further analyze consumer's development of loyalty and emotional

attachment towards brands, it is useful to look at the initial purchase intention, whether it is the brand image, brand values, or whether it is to express oneself identity through brands i.e. self-expansion.

In order to understand the long-term relationship between consumer-brand, it is important to explore the self-expansion theory, which mostly explores the reasoning for purchase, but not reasoning for long-term commitment to the brand. However, relating to a brand and repurchasing a brand has not been explored in the long-term. It has been used when researching initial attraction to the brand affect exploring the long-term aspects. However, whether consumer's behavior through self- expansion affects loyalty and attachment, have not been conveyed in the previous studies. The theory is an important aspect when consumers purchase brands, due to the fact it affects why consumers obtain certain brands, therefore, the Theory of Self-Expansion is relevant for this study.

3.3.3 Brand Attachment Theory

Brand Attachment is viewed as a long-lasting, commitment inducing bond between the brand and the consumer. In the social developmental literature in psychology, attachment refers to a bond between a person and a specific object (Esch, Lagner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006). Previous research by Esch, Lagner, Schmitt and Geus (2006) conducted in this matter suggest that; attachment relations are formed first early in childhood and that the formations process continues throughout lifetime (ibid). They further explain that people form attachments to several things, such as friends, pets, places, objects and celebrities. Brown stated the following (in Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 201, p.299):

Consumers do fall truly, madly, deeply in love with products and services. They have to have them; they are passionate about them; they get a quasi-erotic charge from examining, exhibiting and expending money on them

According to the theory, a child shows separation anxiety and distress as soon as a parent or significant other no longer is present. In this case, it would be on the attachment to brands, and if the consumer shows feelings of regret and sorrow when the object is no longer available. Similarly, brand attachment results in a desire to be with the person one is attached to, both now and in the future. This means that brand

attachments, i.e. bonds, connections and identifications with the brand strongly predict how often the brand was purchased in the past and will be purchased in the future (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002; Esch, Lagner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006). Similar psychological research done by Chaudhuri & Holbrook, (2001), show that commitment to a brand saves a customer the cost of seeking new relations with other brands.

3.3.3.1 How attachment leads to Brand Loyalty

For a consumer to be considered truly loyal to a brand he should not only buy that brand in a repeated manner, he should also develop positive attitudes towards it. Researchers that have been looking into brand loyalty, suggest that brand commitment and true loyalty requires the customer to form an emotional bond with the brand (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011; Olivier, 1999). For example, prior work suggests that strong consumer-brand relationships enhance consumers brand loyalty, durability of brands, and consumer's willingness to pay a premium price (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012). Thus, there is a link between brand attachment and how it leads consumers to be loyal to a brand. Whilst, also not forgetting that trust is a key concept in the field of consumer-brand relationship, and stems from loyalty and attachment, and without trust there is no stable and lasting relationship (Didier & Cindy, 2010; Louis & Lombart, 2010).

It is widely considered that loyalty is one of the ways the consumer expresses his/her satisfaction with the performance of the product or service received and that leads leading to repurchase intention (Balester & Munera-Aleman, 2001). In addition, consumers that are emotionally to a brand exhibit greater commitment to it, and intense emotions such as love toward a brand promote long-term relationship with that brand (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012).

3.4 Conclusions of the literature review

The theories mentioned in this dissertation are used as a guideline for our study. However, the theories will not be limited to a structure or a model, because the importance is in the respondent's answers which we will analyze. To understand why consumers develop loyalty and emotional attachment towards brands, this study will

look at the mentioned theories and how the answers given are relevant for consumers when purchasing and repurchasing their lovemark brand, in addition to what it takes to be a lovemark brand.

The Roberts Theory of Senses will give an insight to whether the consumer's lovemarks do indeed provide the consumers of the brand with the elements of sensuality, mystery and intimacy. The Theory of Self Expansion will give a better understanding to the consumers need to expand their identity and how they feel that their brand of preference provides them with that notion. Furthermore, the Theory of Brand Attachment will also be of an importance, to how consumers develop strong brand attachment, and how that manifests into being very loyal to brand while trusting the brand.

In this context, the study explores the link between the actual brand identity, pleasing the senses with the elements of mystery, sensuality and intimacy, Self Expansion theories as well as Brand Attachment and loyalty to find out the consumer love for their brand. It attempts to answer the questions:

- Why do you love a brand?
- Why are you loyal to the brand?
- What kind of feeling does the brand provide you?

Consequently, it is the consumers that decide what a lovemarks is and why they stay loyal to the brand. Moreover, the intention is to explore the chosen respondents for this study, analyze their answers and attitude towards the brand that they love and stay committed too. Our aim is to find out what key elements are needed to develop loyalty and emotional attachment towards a brand from the consumer's perspective, and not from a marketer's perspective.

Therefore, there is no use for developing a model to go by in this study. Given our purpose, to explore, analyze, interpret and understand our respondents, then looking at which theories fit the respondent's answers. In this way, the study will be exploratory and creative and not structured to a model or a certain theory.

Chapter 4

Empirical Method

The fourth chapter of the dissertation presents the empirical method. Research technique, information collection, sample selection, credibility, transferability and conformability are discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion about generalizability.

4.1 Research Technique

The study was conducted in a qualitative manner, based on personal interviews that were conducted face to face. First, we gathered the primary data from an adult population that has stayed loyal to their lovemark brand. That was determined with the help of in-depth interviews, where we interviewed our respondents to gather information. In this case, the industry/market we have focused on is the luxury market, especially luxury brands that sell luxury goods. Because, luxury brands tend to have a loyal customer base (in Knowledge at Wharton, 2008; Song & Hur, 2012; Roumeliotis, 2012), and we wanted to explore the deep emotional attachment and loyalty those consumers have for their lovemark brands. Brands, such as Chanel, and Burberry, are a few of the luxury brands that are brought up in this study among many other luxury brands.

In order to make the analysis and study consistent, the interviews were aimed at those who had been loyal to luxury brands more than several occasions, and who re-purchased their products over again, to the point of developing emotional attachment and loyalty for the brand. Therefore, the qualitative approach was very suitable. The specific brands themselves were not of an importance in this case. We only used the brands as tools to find out the buying behavior and attitude towards their lovemark brands. Therefore, brands were used as instruments to better understand the consumer's attitude, in regards to a sustainable consumer-brand relationship.

4.2 Information Collection

Primary data was used to answer the research question. We collected the primary data by conducting qualitative interviews with an adult population that tend stay loyal to their brand of preference. The research was conducted with personal interviews conducted in a semi-structured way, in this way the interviews were about 30 minutes long, depending on what the respondents had to say.

The authors have access to literature, scientific articles and previous research covering the topics of this paper. There are a number of previously done researches concerning Lovemarks and consumer behaviour patterns that the authors have gathered. However, the connection between the love for a brand and a sustainable loyalty for a brand is somewhat vague. The Equipment used when collecting the information were IPHones, Google Docs and Microsoft Office.

Furthermore, the expenses for conducting this research was kept low and limited to the cost of printing and transportation cost to meet up with the respondents for the interviews. Theory and secondary data was collected by the use of computers, library and scientific articles therefore there was no hindrance for conducting this research. However, the respondents took their time to be a part of our dissertation and were interviewed for approximately thirty minutes each. They were generous enough to make time out of work and be away from their families to answer our questions. Therefore the cost of time should also be mentioned.

4.3 Sample Collection

In this dissertation a non-probability technique was used, with beforehand selected respondents for the in-depth interviews.

For our interviews we choose people that we already know or have some kind of relationship with. We know that they have a certain lifestyle and shopping behaviour and by doing that, we saved time on looking for respondents. Due to the fact that we know the respondents, we felt that they were honest with us. If we would have chosen random respondents, they might have given us answers that were not true or more

excessive than needed. This was the main reason when choosing our respondents. We wanted the respondents to give us the most honest answers possible. Some of them are really good friends of ours, some are friends of friends and some other people that we knew had an exclusive taste.

4.3.1 Interviews

The interviews were conducted in a personal level in a semi-structured way. The participants for this study were selected to an adult population from the ages of 25-65 years old. We wanted to interview consumers that have experience with the brand and purchased it for long periods of time, therefore we did not choose to incorporate young consumers under 25 years old. The goal was to get 6-8 respondents for the interviews, we interviewed 7 people. The respondents we interviewed were seven women from the ages 27-57 years old. The seven women were precisely 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 45 and 57 years old. The seven respondents could all afford to maintain their lifestyle of purchasing luxury brands. The interviews were conducted face to face in beforehand set up meetings that were scheduled one month in advance. The seven women were selected on the base of their shopping behaviour, meaning if a respondent answered that they had not stayed loyal to a brand they would not be included in the research, in that way we seeded out those whom this research was not aimed at. Therefore we had set up questions of qualification, to seed out those respondents whom this study was not aimed at.

The respondents were interviewed late April and early May in Malmö and in Göteborg. Four of the respondents, were interviewed in Göteborg, two in Malmö and one respondent was interviewed in Lund. The seven women were interviewed on seven separate days. The recording devices used for the interviews were iPhones, which we used to record the respondents for approximately thirty minutes each, then we wrote it down on Word documents.

We conducted our interviews in a semi-structured way, which means that it was not structured. The interviews were open with some topics and general questions as a guideline to assist us during the interviews. Our questions revolved around a list of

topics and questions that were used as guideline when interviewing the respondents. Both the content and the order of the topics, varied from interview to interview, since it was semi-structured. With the help of looking at the different theories, we made a list of themes that would be helpful to answer our research question. By reading the different theories we could see that by exploring different topics to start the interviews. Our questions revolved around the topics of brand loyalty, emotional attachment, trust and identity. Those themes, according to us could be useful in finding out why consumers develop loyalty and emotional attachment towards a brand. As mentioned earlier, the only part of the interview that was structured was in the beginning of selecting suitable respondents for our study. We had structured questions to make sure respondents were qualified for this study. This way we would weed out respondents which this study was not aimed at. The questions were as follows:

- *What kind of brand is your lovemark, low price, or luxury?*
- *Is price an issue for you when purchasing goods from your lovemark brand?*
- *How many times have you purchased that brand?*
- *Have you purchased other brands/ substitute brand besides your lovemark brand? And have you gone back to your lovemark brand after purchasing other brands?*

These questions were only used in the beginning of the searching phase for our respondents. When finding our seven respondents, we conducted the interviews in a semi-structured way. We choose people that we already know or have some kind of relationship with. By doing that we saved time on looking for respondents.

The problem with our interview sample in this dissertation is that we cannot generalize because of under coverage. We only had seven respondents that were available for this study, and all of the respondents happened to be females. Although, there are also males with the same buying behavior in regards to luxury brands, we did not find any available for the study. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize with such a small sample size, consisting only of women. The main difficulty with conducting the interviews in a semi—structured way was that it was time costly. It took a lot of time to plan the beforehand set-up meetings, due to the respondent's schedules. Since we interviewed the seven individuals separately, it took more time and effort to interview them. It took

up to 30- 50 minutes to get them to open up and give us insightful and important information. The positive thing was, since we already knew them they had already built up a trust, and let us be more personal with the questions. We recorded it with iPhones than wrote down each session on Word , which took more several hours to complete. Although, it was time costly the insightful information we gathered made it worthwhile.

4.4 Credibility, Transferability and Conformability

Our aim was to understand the specific situation, illuminating reality and understand the concept, rather than generalize or make casual determination and see the world as a social construction (Nayab, 2011). Our role as researchers was to get them to open up to us, trust us, confide in us and get them to talk about their truth about their love for their brands. For the data to be credible, it is important to look at how well the results are consistent with the population, also if the data reflect reality in a credible manner (Christensen, Engdahl, Gräas, & Haglund, 2010). Our sample size was small and consisted of seven female respondents, therefore we cannot generalize. However, the data reflected the respondents own reality and own truth, which makes it credible for them. Furthermore, in a qualitative study the credibility is determined mainly by how systematic one have been on collecting and analyzing the data (*ibid*). We did not draw any hasty conclusions and made sure we gathered all the required data.

By recording the respondent's attitude, experiences, and insight of their lovemark brands, we could get them to express their own thoughts on what they feel is needed for them to stay loyal, and develop strong emotional attachment to their brand. Our role as researchers was to record such observation. The answers we received from our respondents with the in-depth interviews, is subjective, because we cannot generalize. The answers we received from our respondents are therefore credible, because it is their local truth. It is what they perceive to be their own truth, which makes it trustworthy and valid. The respondents we choose are people that we already know and we know have a certain lifestyle. We felt that they were very transparent and honest with us and this was the main reason when selecting our respondents, rather selecting random people. We wanted the respondents to give us the most honest answers possible.

Chapter 5

Results

In this chapter the results from the case studies are being presented and analyzed. Elements that each of respondents had in common with each other, such as emotion, quality, timeless fashion, image, trust, and tradition can also be found in this chapter. Finally, a conclusion of the case studies and an interpretation of the material are presented.

5.1 Case studies

The case studies were conducted from personal, in depth interviews with seven people the ages of 27-57. The in-depth interviews showed that the respondents' answers were very similar to each other in regards to loyalty and emotional attachment towards their lovemark brand. The elements of emotion, quality, trust, tradition, timeless fashion, image and lastly identity, were all mentioned by the seven respondents. We found out that a number of elements like emotion, identity, trust, and image is brought up in the previous theories, however, elements that were not mentioned in the theories were quality, tradition, and timeless fashion.

5.2 Emotions

Emotions and feelings control our life every day, these can consist of good or bad feelings. When it comes to luxury shopping it is good feelings. People that buy luxury goods, buy them for different reasons but many are similar. They can feel happy, sexy, beautiful, satisfied or powerful when they buy a luxury product. When it comes to our respondents they have many things in common, but especially one thing, they feel better after the purchase of their lovemark brand.

When asked about how they feel when purchasing their lovemark brand, the respondents answered in a very similar way, and expressed emotions of feeling extremely happy, excited and satisfied, amongst many other feelings. Helen, who works as a skin therapist, explained that when she purchases a product from the brand Donna

Karan, she feels excited, happy, beautiful, chic, and satisfied with the purchase. She describes it as a gift that keeps on giving; in this case she refers it to the brand giving her positive emotions. She describes the emotions that she gets before, during, and after the purchase as *priceless*.

“It is like a kick of emotions. You decide to buy a handbag, then you look it up for days and then finally purchase it, it feels...it feels, really good” - Negar, 34, Accountant.

“I feel happy, luxurious, stylish, classic, expensive and gorgeous”- Mikaela, 27, Soccer Wife.

“The happiness I get when I buy a new handbag is awesome, absolutely love the feeling”-Emma, 30, Economics.

“I get so happy wearing a Burberry trench coat, no better feeling”- Sara, 28, Model

The respondents mention that, one of the reasons they purchase their brand is because they experience different emotions, especially emotions they seek out to get. The brand they purchase fulfills what they want to feel, whether it is feeling pretty, powerful, or sexy. One of the respondents, Vicky, purchases the Louboutin shoes to feel sexy, and describes the brand as having a real sex appeal to them, hence, she buys the brand to feel certain way, in her case feeling sexy. Respondent Mikaela felt special and pretty when wearing a Chanel item. She further explained that when she purchases a Chanel item it is connected to success and beauty. All of the respondents also explained that they felt powerful, and successful when purchasing the brand. The fact that they can afford to purchase and show off luxury brands made the respondents feel powerful, successful and unique. The words unique and special were brought up by the seven respondents.

“I feel like a powerful woman when I can afford things that everyone else does not have”-Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager

“I always feel excitement when I am going to buy e.g. a new bag or bracelet. After the purchase I feel satisfied, happy and successful”- Emma, 30, Economics

“When I get to wear a silk blouse and a suit from Armani, then I feel luxury. The knowledge of the fantastic silk fabric is amazing. It is light, caressing you and I feel beautiful”.... I definitely get the luxury feeling and feel attractive”- Liv, 57, Insurance Company.

“I feel unique and rare. It gives me a boost in status, it makes me feel feminine, it makes me feel successful and I get a better self-confidence” -Helen, 45, Skin Therapist.

We found out that there is not just one specific emotion, but several emotions and feelings. The emotions emerging from a consumer purchase, such as excitement, happiness, satisfaction, amazing, successful, or desire we all mentioned in the interviews. Seven out of the seven respondents sought out to purchase the brand to feel the emotions they sought out to receive. Accountant Negar explained that just like she purchases food because when she feels hungry and then eat it to get full; she purchases a Louis Vuitton bags to feel elegant and classic from a brand that is elegant and classic.

“I purchase Donna Karan dresses to feel more feminine with myself. Whenever I want to feel sexy and feminine I purchase a DKNY dress.”- Helen, 45, Skin Therapist.

In regards to the theory of Roberts (2006) *Lovemarks- the future beyond brands*, mentioning that mystery draws the consumers in to buying a product and they also need sensuality. After the interviews we did not get the feeling that they need *mystery*. It was other connected with other things and feelings. *Sensuality* on the other hand you could recognize. The product is means more to the consumers than the visual. Robert (2006) also mentioned *intimacy* as a fact. The combination of these three should explain the emotional attachment towards the brand. We think that you could infer the last two, sensuality and intimacy to our respondents. Consumers are also driven by their emotions, not by reason and it is important to include all senses to form a lovemark for a consumer. The theory based on senses is not all, a consumer does make 80% of their decisions based on emotion and those emotions help the consumer to develop a loyalty towards a brand (Roberts, 2006). As it was mentioned in the theory, consumers that are emotionally connected with a brand tend to have a better commitment to the brand. Intense emotions such as love toward a brand encourage a long-term relationship with that brand (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012).

In addition, when asked about loyalty and attachment, the respondents explain that emotions are an important element for them to love a brand, however, they further explained it is not the only reason, but one of the many reasons for re-purchase. In a way, the theory of senses is relevant, because emotions are such an intimate part of a human and in order for the consumers to connect with a brand there needs to be stimulations of the senses (Roberts, 2006), which the respondents felt was one of the reasons for the purchase of the brand and feeling connected to the brand. Sara, described that she needs to feel special and stylish all the time and that is why she re-purchases the brand Burberry over again.

“I want that special feeling of wearing a Burberry coat all the time. That stylish feeling, just like a drug addict needs to feel high, I want to feel stylish all the time, and I spend a lot of money on Burberry”- Sara, 28, Model.

5.3 Quality

The quality was a very important fact through all the interviews. They bought the brands because of the quality and they rather pay extra and get the good quality from the luxury brands. Quality was the reason why they kept coming back and stayed loyal to their lovemark brand. The brands need consistent delivery of premium quality for all their products to contain their consumers. Seven out of the seven consumers mentioned quality as an element that was necessary for them to purchase and repurchase the brand again.

“When you pay a higher price you will get what you pay for. Better quality and style” [...] And they have such a good quality that most of them still look new. That is something that you will not find in the low price market. This demonstrates again, that you are paying for the quality”- Mikaela, 27, Soccer Wife.

“You pay for quality”- Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager.

“You cannot find that quality when you buy a low price product, it is impossible”- Emma, 30, Economics.

“Definitely the quality! The clothes last longer because of the quality. I do not have to buy new things every month if I do not want to and the clothes are timeless”- Liv, 57, Insurance Company.

“The brand is known for making good and quality handbags, it is not something new right? If you look at the history of Luis Vuitton, it has a history of making nice and practical bags”- Helen, 45, Skin Therapist.

“I buy the bag for the quality, and the price is to me just an indication of how good of a quality it is”- Negar, 34, Accountant.

“The seams and fabric of the coats is incredible, good quality shows”- Sara, 28, Model.

The respondents also mentioned that they gained trust for the quality of the brand. Meaning, the longer the respondent had the brand the more they trust the quality of the items. Helene explained that she trusts that the brand will deliver on quality. They described that quality is a reason for them to repurchase a brand. When asked about why they trust the brand seven out of the seven respondents answered that the quality of the brand is an important part in the trust.

“Super good quality, sustainable, have had it for many years”- Negar, 34, Accountant.

“The quality is really good and I only have good experience from all of my purchases over the years”- Emma, 30, Economics.

All of the respondents explained that they can trust the quality of the items they purchase; therefore it affects their purchases in the future in a positive way. It makes it easier for the respondents to re-purchase their lovemark brand, when they know the quality will be good. Therefore, it makes it easier for them to re-purchase their lovemark brand again, rather than trying out new brands and not knowing the quality of the brand. Negar explained that she had decided to try out another brand instead of her lovemark brand, to then later be disappointed with the quality of the new brand. Also, because other brands had disappointed her in quality, she explained that it would be better if she

re-purchased her lovemark brand again. Not only Negar, but all of the other respondents explained that in similar ways. Furthermore, the respondents explained that their loyalty grew much more because of the trust in the quality of the brand. The element of quality was not mentioned in the theories, the theories only discussed that trust leads to loyalty, but not what makes consumers to trust a brand, or what makes consumer to stay loyal to the brand. The explanation of the theories explain that for a consumer to be considered truly loyal to a brand he should not only buy that brand in a repeated manner, he should also develop positive attitudes towards it. In addition to suggesting that brand commitment and true loyalty requires the customer to form an emotional bond with the brand (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011; Olivier, 1999). However, what the element is that makes consumers to develop an emotional bond and loyalty towards brands were not mentioned. Because all of the respondents explained the same in the in-depth interviews, we feel that is an extremely important element to why luxury brand consumers stay loyal to their brand. The respondents simply trust that the items will last them a long time, therefore it is worth the price they pay for it. As one of the respondents explained that she would rather buy one expensive handbag that will last for years , then seven cheap bags that last for a couple of months.

“I would happily pay 8000 kronors for a Louis Vuitton bag knowing it will last a long time. Or I could buy 7 bags from Zara each costing around 500-900 kronors and it would only last for several months. That’s just stupid [...] I buy the bag for the quality, and the price is to me just an indication of how good of a quality it is”-Negar, 34, Accountant.

5.4 Trust

Trust is connected with the quality as well. People do trust luxury brands because of the quality and that makes them trust the brands (Balester & Munera-Aleman, 2005). If you can choose to buy a garment from a brand that you have used before and never got disappointed, always been pleased, then you will buy from that brand again because you trust it (*ibid*). Many brands in the luxury business do not have an aggressive marketing of its products, they do not have to. They expose their brand fashion shows, magazines and events. They know that the people that want to buy a product from them know

where to find them and when they do, they will not be disappointed (Louis & Lombart, 2010; Ballester & Alemán, 2005).

“I have always felt pleased with the brand, I have never been let down by them”- Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager.

“They have e.g. a t-shirt collection for skin cancer where the t-shirt says protect your skin and it is an absolutely amazing t-shirt for a good purpose [...] The brand is a well-known brand and it has been on the market for a long time, which is one of the reasons why I trust them”- Emma, 30, Economics.

“I trust my brands because of their quality. The style, elegance and that they are good products makes me trust them”- Liv, 57, Insurance Company.

The luxury brands that our respondents have as their lovemark, have been around for many years and have had the time to build up a strong brand and identity. That benefits them on the market today and the fact that they have many loyal consumers. The strong and popular luxury brands tend to have a stable central core since they have been around for many years (Bott, 2007). Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) have done research that showed that a stable commitment to a brand helps the consumer to save on the cost of seeking after a new relationship with another brand. You can see that by our respondents, they already trust their lovemark brand. Why should they try a new one that might not keep the standard that they are used to? Therefore, trust is the key concept when it comes to consumer-brand relationship. That comes from loyalty and attachment, and without trust there is no stable or lasting relationship to build on (Didier & Cindy, 2010; Louis & Lombart, 2010).

5.5 Image

When you buy a luxury product, it comes with a certain image. You can say that you buy an image as well as a product. How we look is important, especially in the “luxury world”, people care more how they look and they can afford to spend money on their looks. They pay for a feeling, feeling beautiful, successful and perfect. Many people

want to have their own image and they work hard to get it. Some luxury brands have limited production on their goods to ensure the exclusivity and sometimes you even have to be on a waiting list, which is luxury, for some people.

Once more, seven out of the seven respondents mentioned the element of image as an important element for them to purchase their lovemark brand. Mostly, the image they want to portray themselves, and with the help of the brand obtain the image they feel portrays them the best. The element of *image* was practically brought up in every answer given from the nearly 30 minute long interviews with each of the respondents.

“I buy that brand because I feel it represents who I am [...] I feel I need to stand out and show who I am. Just like when you create a character in a book, you get to create the persons personality and character. In real life, I feel that I create an image of an elegant woman [...] It represents my personality”- Helen, 45, Skin Therapist.

”Every one, that knows something about fashion, recognizes the shoe by the red soles. When you buy Louboutin shoes I would say that you also buy an image, only successful women wear them [...] That is also a way of showing the world that you are successful of what you are doing [...] People are shallow and judge you by how you look, it is important to look good so the first impression is good and then you can show how you are as a person”- Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager.

“Stylish, discreet brand, they usually do not have a large logo that brag”- Liv, 57, Insurance Company.

The fundamental premise of Hwang & Kandampully (2012) is that, consumers purchases are partly driven by a desire to construct self-concepts and communicate them through wearing and using branded products. It also explains that consumers are more loyal to brands that they feel commonalities to, and to brands that express important aspects of their identity (ibid).

“That is one of the reasons I love them actually, people look at me when I wear them and think, Oh I wish I could walk in those beautiful shoes”- Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager.

“The design and craftsmanship is perfect, I love perfection”- Mikaela, 27, Soccer Wife.

This can be linked to the Theory of Self Expansion, which suggests consumers can identify themselves in a relationship with a brand based on adequacy between his own personality (Didier & Cindy, 2010). The respondents expressed clearly before answering the actual questions several times that it is them, it represents who they are and that because it is them they feel more connected with the brand.

The respondents expressed that is important for the brand to represent who they are, their image and personality. This way, the respondents explained that they loved the brand even more, because they felt the brand was a part of who they are. Respondent Negar explained that she sees herself as an elegant woman and that Louis Vuitton represents being elegant. The respondents also explained that they want to convey a certain image, an image they feel they have, or an image they want to have. Either way they re-purchase their lovemark brands because of it fits in with their personality and image. Therefore, the Theory of Self Expansion is relevant. Nonetheless, the theory is not the only reason for consumers to develop a deep emotional attachment towards a brand, as we later will discuss it is all of the elements combined that makes them develop such strong attachment and loyalty.

5.6 Timeless Fashion

When it comes to fashion, everything changes very fast. You can buy an expensive garment and then after two months it is not modern anymore. Our respondents valued the fact that their luxury brand had a classic style and the clothes that they bought were timeless, they could wear them season after season without being unfashionable. They rather buy some expensive products that can last instead of buying many cheaper ones, even if money is not a problem for our respondents.

“Their products are never out of fashion and you can use them season after season [...] They have kept the old design with their handbags and I love that. You get a really beautiful handbags and history”- Mikaela, 27, Soccer Wife.

“I stay faithful to the classic brands. I only buy wearable and timeless clothes. It is easier to match and I can always find some clothes that fit me”- Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager.

“Marc Jacobs is a classic brand with a twist sometimes, the fashion is fun [...] I prefer the classic look but I still want to look modern so the brand fits my style, or my style fits the brand” Emma, 30, Economics

Respondents Sara expressed that her lovemark brand compared to regular brands were timeless and could be worn plenty of times without going out of style. That according to the other respondents worth the money they paid for it. No theory has discussed the element of timelessness and long-lasting, as a factor for the consumers to re-purchase the brand. Apart from the quality, timeless fashion was mentioned as a reason for them to pay such a high price, and stay loyal to the brand. They re-purchase their lovemark brands because they know they know they will get value for their money.

“That’s why I bought it again. Because the Louis Vuitton style is so classic, you can never go wrong with a timeless handbag like a Louis Vuitton”- Negar, 34, Accountant.

5.7 Tradition

People are bound by tradition; it is a part of who we are. We might have seen something from when we were young or maybe we were surrounded by our whole life, of course we would go that direction when we get to choose by ourselves. Many people who buy luxury brands have been brought up with it near or in their vicinity. It may have been a dream, a longing that someday I will own a product of that particular brand by myself. It is usually a legacy of craftsmanship when it comes to luxury brands. That is often based from the original design. You should be able to recognize the style and design without seeing the brand logo. A well-known luxury brand has such a special design so it allows the costumers to recognize the brand and style of their products.

“Since I was little I have admired her since of fashion and I use to love to play dress-up when I was there as a child. My grandmother had some Chanel and Christian Dior

handbags, which were probably my first experience with a luxury brand”- Mikaela, 27, Soccer Wife.

“Since that day I wanted to have my own, just like hers. It took me a while but it was worth the wait for me”- Emma, 30, Economics.

“I am never going to forget the feeling I had when I had my first pair of Louboutins in my hands”- Vicky, 29, Marketing Manager.

“When I was first dating my husband and we used to go out and eat I would always bring my small Louis Vuitton handbag with me [...] My mother used to have a Louis Vuitton travelling bag, when we used to travel she would always bring that bag”- Negar, 34, Accountant.

Esch, Lagner, Schmitt and Geus (2006) have previously done research on in this. They suggested that attachment relations are formed first early in childhood and that the formations process continues throughout lifetime. That can easily be connected to our respondent’s answers. Many of them had the first contact with their lovemark at a young age and they still love the brand. If a brand is well established your memory, it is easier for you to attach associations to the brand and that also affects you to response to the brand (ibid). Brand awareness is associated with the brand image and refers to the strengths of the brand in the memory and how easy it is for the consumers to remember the brand (Roberts, 2006). This can also be connected to the interviews because all respondents have strong memory of their first purchase and their first memory of the brand.

5.8 Summary of the results from the case studies

The results from the in-depth interviews, regarding the consumer attitude to their lovemark brands were very similar to each other. As a result, we drew a conclusion of what it takes to be loyal and emotionally attached to brands, from a consumer perspective. What makes the consumers have an on-going romance with their lovemark brand?

All of the respondents felt some type of emotion when purchasing and using the brand. It left the respondents feeling happy, sexy, excited, chic, elegant, luxurious, feminine,

satisfied, and successful, among many other feelings. The emotions were one of the reasons for purchase and repurchase. Furthermore, it was expressed that the element of emotions were one of many elements needed to stay loyal to the brand and developing deep emotional attachment towards the brand. In order for the consumers to stay loyal to the brand, the word trust was mentioned as well. The respondents trust that the brand will deliver in quality, and that the brands image fit their own image and identity. It was explained by all of the respondents to that their lovemark brand represents who they are.

Trusting the brand makes it easier for the consumer to re-purchase the brand, instead of looking for other substitute brands that will not deliver in the quality. In addition, a majority of the respondents have had a past experience with the brand, whether it was because of their parents having the brand, or if a memory was attached to the brand. Hence, element of tradition and history enhanced the loyalty and attachment they had for the brand. They could relate to the brand in a better way, because of the tradition of the brand existing in their lives for a long period of time. They “know the brand“, because they grew up with family members using it or because it was given to them as gifts growing up. Therefore, when a respondent have memories attached to the brand they feel more connected and emotionally attached to the brand.

It was explained, that there are many other luxury brands that produce the same quality or deliver the same image they searched for, However, the respondents clearly answered that it was the all of the elements combined that made them to be such loyal and devoted consumers.

As one of the respondents Sara explained, “It is the perfect brand. It has everything I need”. Subsequently, in order for them to love a brand consistently, it has to give them the elements of emotion, quality, trust, self-image, timeless fashion, and tradition.

All of these elements combined according to the respondents, make for a loved brand that will be re-purchased over again. According to the respondents, the brand has become a part of them, which will always be there. For example, Helen feels like she is a simple and stylish woman, therefore she has connected with the brand Donna Karan, which gives an image of all of those attributes. What makes the bond stronger is when

the respondent has had an history, a tradition of the brand in the family. On top of that, because the brands are luxury brands, the quality has assured them to trust to the brand.

During all the interviews, three new elements were mentioned; Quality, Timeless Fashion and Tradition. Those three elements were expressed as important for them to develop loyalty to the brand, while tradition also made them develop emotional attachment to the brand. These elements are the key elements, which are not brought up in previous studies and theories. These three new mentioned elements affected and enhanced the loyalty and attachment the respondent have for their brand. Memories of the brand and past experience with the brand made the respondents develop a deep emotional attachment to the brand. Hearing the respondents bring up past memories of the brand, we could understand that it was because of those memories the brands had a special place in their hearts. This new element of tradition and having experienced the brand in the past was according to our interpretation, a vital element for the consumer's developing attachment.

Overall, it was clear that all of the existing elements that were mentioned in the theories such as emotion, trust and image. Emotion could be linked to the Roberts theory of senses that brought up sensuality and intimacy, and that a consumer does make 80% of their decisions based on emotion and those emotions help the consumer to develop a loyalty towards a brand (Roberts, 2006). Trust could be linked to The Brand Attachment Theory, which brought up how trust is needed for a consumer to be loyal to a brand. However, the reason for the consumer trusting the brand was not mentioned in the theory, as we found out through our interviews the new elements of quality, and timeless fashion was a part of the reason for consumers trusting the brand.

In conclusion, the new elements, *quality*, *timeless fashion* and *tradition*, combined with the existing elements that could be found in the theories, *emotion*, *trust* and *image*, combined made the respondents develop deep loyalty and deep emotional attachment to their lovemark brands. During the 20-30 minute, in-depth interviews with our respondents, we could see a similarity between their answers in what they brought up. To better understand how similar the respondents attitudes and thought were on their lovemark brands, we have put together a table of what the respondents brought up in the long discussions.

In Table 1, you can see the similarity in the interviews, regarding subjects that were brought up.

Table 1- Common topics in all of the interviews

	Emotions	Quality	Trust	Image	Timeless Fashion	Tradition
Sara	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Negar	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Helen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vicky	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Liv	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mikaela	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

In Table 2, below, elements from the interviews that could be linked to the theories are presented. A star in the box means that a link was found in each theory.

Table 2- Elements that were related to the theories

	Self-Expansion Theory	Brand Attachment Theory	Roberts Theory of Senses
Emotions			★
Trust		★	
Image	★		

Down below, the three new elements that could not be found in any of theories are presented. These new theories were vital to developing strong brand loyalty and a strong emotional attachment. Figure 2, presents the three new elements of quality, timeless fashion and tradition.

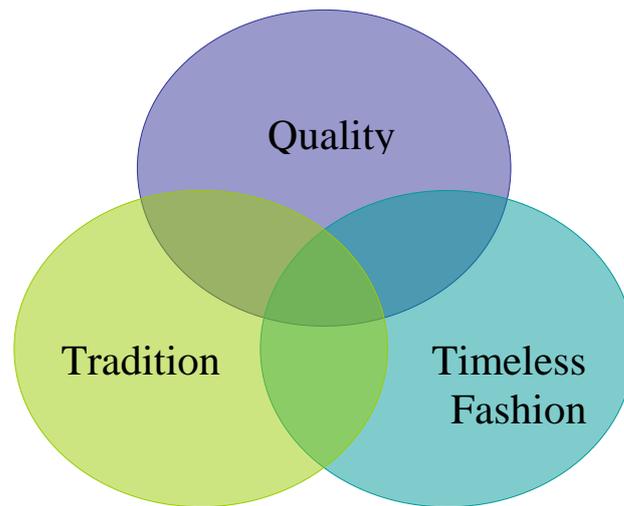


Fig. 2- The Three New Elements

The collected data from the interviews was very insightful and interesting. At first, we expected the collected data to vary in results, with a wide set of outcomes. Each respondent started out answering the questions in different ways. In the beginning they mentioned that it looked good or felt a certain way. However, as the interviews went on the respondents started to discuss more deeply about the reason for developing loyalty and emotional attachment. Moreover, the results were very similar after 45 minutes into the interviews. This confirmed what we believed; that with using a qualitative approach we found more extensive data that could not be found in previous studies. If our interviews were short in time, we would not have gathered the most important data. Our, interview time was very long with each respondent, hence the valuable information we gathered. In a way, if this study was conducted in a quantitative way we would not have found the data we have now.

Furthermore, it was interesting to find that some of the common elements we gathered from the data could be found in the theories such as; *The Self-Expansion Theory*, *Brand Attachment Theory* and *Roberts Theory of Senses*. As mentioned earlier, four of the common elements were found in the different theories, and three elements were newly discovered that no previous study on repetitive buying behavior have brought up.

We also found that the age of the women was not of an importance in dealing with the repetitive buying behavior. Every respondent from the ()age of gave very similar answers. The most important revelation was that the consumers developed attachment and loyalty over some period of *time*. What we gathered from the data was that as time went by, they developed stronger loyalty and stronger emotional attachment towards the brand. The elements of tradition, quality and timeless fashion were vital for the respondents to actually develop loyalty and emotional attachment to the brand and the essence of time made the bond stronger. As one of the respondents Negar said;

“When I first bought the handbag I had not developed any strong attachment or loyalty to it [...] After 6-7 years of buying the same brand I have love it more and I felt like that was my favorite brand ” - Negar, 34, Accountant.

The essence of time was very important to all of the elements, especially tradition, timeless fashion and quality of the brand. The longer the respondents had the brand as a ‘lovemark’, the more their developed loyalty and attachment grew. All of the seven women had re-purchased their lovemarks for several years.

However, the gathered information was from interviewing a small sample size of only females. Yes, the respondents had a lot of elements in common with each other, but then again, we cannot be sure if the results would have been the same with a larger sample size. Maybe the data would not be the same if we had interviewed fifty women, or maybe it would. We realize that the sample size is small therefore we cannot generalize and assume that every female luxury consumer feel the same way. Also, we did not have the chance to interview males in our research.

In conclusion, listening to all the interviews for approximately 3 hours and 20 minutes combined, we could understand why our respondents have such deep loyalty and

emotional attachment towards their lovemark brands, and why they re-purchase the brand and not choose other brands. The in-depth interviews gave us a better insight to the ultimate consumer that every brand wants to have. The respondents spend a lot of money on their lovemark brands, and will do so for many years to come. The previous research, did not answer why exactly why consumers are so committed to brands for so many years; it only gave us a vague insight on repetitive buying behavior. We found three new elements, which according to us are what sets the consistent luxury lovemarks consumers apart from the regular consumer. They have history invested in the brand, like a relationship they trust the brand to deliver in quality, and rely on the elements brought up in the results to re-purchase it for years to come.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter a summary of the results and a conclusion can be found. In addition to this, one can also find discussion, limitations, practical implications and suggestions for future research.

6.1 Summary of Results

This dissertation aimed to find out answers to the research question and research objectives, stated as follows:

WHAT ELEMENTS AFFECT CONSUMERS TO DEVELOP LOYALTY AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT TOWARDS A BRAND?

- *Identify the key elements that are necessary for a product to become a loved brand (Lovemark).*
- *Identify the buying behaviour of consumers that stay loyal to their brand of preference by means of repurchase.*

The investigation of this dissertation was to explore the attitudes and thoughts of lovemarks consumers, given our purpose there was no need to develop a model to go by. We performed the study using a qualitative method, in form of in-depth interviews with seven of our chosen respondents that have been loyal and committed to luxury brands, for a long period of time.

The same elements regarding lovemarks brands have been received from the perspective of the consumer. Three new elements and four existing elements were found in our research and three of the elements could be found in the existing theories. The elements of emotion, quality, trust, image, timeless fashion and tradition, are factors to not only love the brand but to develop loyalty and deep emotional attachment to the brand. Findings from the interviews have shown to be very similar to each other, almost identical at some point. However, the findings from the interviews did not all fit in the

previous theories. As mentioned, three new important elements as quality, timeless fashion and tradition were vital elements for the respondents to develop loyalty and emotional attachment according to the consumers. We found out that over time the loyalty and emotional attachment enhance even more. This means that the repetitive buying behavior of the respondents enhanced strongly over time and made the loyalty stronger. During the interviews the three new elements quality, timeless fashion and tradition were overwhelmingly factors that made the respondents *develop* emotional attachment and loyalty towards the brand.

The existing elements that were brought up by the respondents could be found in the existing theories. The elements of *emotion*, *trust* and *image*, could be linked to some of the theories that were found in Robert's Theory of Senses, The Theory of Self Expansion and The Theory of Brand Attachment.

6.2 Conclusion

Given our purpose to explore what is needed for consumers to develop emotional attachment and loyalty towards brands, it was important to look at previous research on consumer behaviour. Previous studies on consumer behaviour have mostly been conducted in a quantitative manner. This means that, the previous research has been general and conducted through surveys with not to specific questions. We wanted to know what factors would be needed according to consumers in order for them to be loyal and emotionally attached. As mentioned earlier, studies on the luxury market conducted with a qualitative method were lacking. Therefore, we looked into the different theories that were used in previous research, especially theories used in consumer behaviour research.

Our method was of a qualitative nature because we wanted to know more about loyalty and emotional attachment towards brands from a consumer's perspective. We wanted to explore consumer attitudes without dealing with surveys that would just ask generalized questions. We wanted to know from personal interviews, which gave us more data on what loyal and emotionally attached consumers think about their lovemarks.

By using a qualitative method and conducting it in a non-probability way, we analyzed the data and could answer our research question. We had set up the interviews with the help of the previous theories, choosing topics that we could further discuss with the respondents. Although, it was a long process and the sample collection small, we found elements that all of the respondents had in common.

The red thread was the six elements that almost every respondent mentioned in the interviews. The elements of emotion, quality, trust, image, timeless fashion and tradition were all necessary to develop loyalty and emotional attachment. Furthermore, the essence of *time* was also something we noticed. The longer they loved the brand, the stronger the relationship got.

6.3 Limitations and Practical Implications

The aim of this study was to explore the perspective of consumers, in regards to luxury lovemark brands. To better understand their attitudes on loyalty and emotional attachment towards their brand of preference. This study was limited to only consumers that are loyal and are emotionally committed to their luxury lovemark brands, which was determined by how long they had purchased the brand and the level of commitment, and emotions invested in the brand itself.

However, this study does not intend to generalize on all loyal and committed lovemarks consumers of luxury brands, because we have only chosen a selective group of people to examine, does not mean it applies to all consumers. Earlier theories have suggested what consumers need to get attracted to brands, and how it is approached from a marketing perspective rather than a consumer's perspective.

The analysis and conclusions from this dissertation may be of some value for companies that want loyal consumers that are committed to their brands. To understand exactly *why* a consumers prefer certain brands and not purchase other brands. The value of this dissertation lies in that it can be helpful for brands that have not figured out what elements that are needed to not only attract, but keep their consumers for a long time. This study will provide a better understanding on the consumers perspective, which marketers and companies can take advantage of.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

To make it possible to generalize, it would be interesting to conduct this study on a larger scale, with more respondents to then be able to generalize. The respondents for this study were seven women that answered and expressed their attitudes in very similar ways. Therefore it would be interesting to conduct a study with a larger scale of respondents to see if the same topics and same elements would be brought up. For example, if the elements of emotion, quality, trust, image, timeless fashion and tradition are mentioned by future respondents. Furthermore, it would be interesting to explore how a larger scale of respondents would affect the results and perhaps new elements would emerge. In this study we interview seven women, therefore, it would also be interesting to conduct the survey on a male population, and how it would affect the results in comparison to a female population. Perhaps, new elements would emerge or maybe the results stay the same.

Therefore, for the case studies, more consumers and a variety of consumers could be studied. As mentioned a more diverse study in gender or scale, would be interesting to investigate. Males might have different needs in order for them to stay loyal to brands, or what elements are needed for them to develop a sustainable emotional attachment towards brands. Will the results be the same if the study is conducted on males? Are there any differences in male consumers and woman consumers, regarding luxury lovemark brands? Do they need the same elements as the women need to be loyal to brands? These are all questions that would be interesting to investigate in the future.

This study could also be conducted on regular brands, and it would be interesting to find out the level of consumer loyalty in the luxury market compared to the regular market. Would price be an issue for regular consumers? Will the consumer loyalty be the same for regular brands?

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Appendix 1

Questions for the in-depth interviews (English)

Intro questions to qualify respondents/ to seed out respondents for the study.

What kind of brand is your lovemark, low price, or luxury?

Is price an issue for you when purchasing goods from your lovemark brand?

How many times have you bought that brand?

Have you purchased other brands/ substitute brand besides your lovemark brand? And have you gone back to your lovemark brand after purchasing other brands?

Brand Identity Questions in correlation to “One-Self”

Why do you buy that brand?

How do you relate to your lovemark brand?

What motivates you to buy luxury products?

How do you express yourself?

How do you feel when you buy a product from that brand?

Questions of Brand Loyalty & Brand Trust

Why do you re-purchase the brand?

Can you tell us why you have gone back to repurchasing your lovemark brand after purchasing other brands?

Explain how you are loyal to the brand.

Why do you trust your brand?

Which brands do you stay faithful to, why?

What makes you come back and buy the same brand over and over again?

Can you feel that you “trust” the luxury brands more than others? If yes, why is that?

Questions of Emotional Attachment

How do you feel when you buy a product from that brand?

Explain what you feel for your brand?

Why do you love your brand?

What kind of feelings do you get when you wear/use your brand of preference?

Can you tell us about the experience when you first heard of the brand?

What is needed for you as a consumer to love a brand?

Appendix 2

Questions for the in-depth interviews (Swedish)

Introduktions frågor för att kvalificera respondenterna till studien.

Är märktet du köper ett lyxmärke eller ett vanligt märke?

Är priset viktigt för dig när du köper lyx märken?

Hur många gånger har du köpt det märket?

Har du köpt andra märken? Och har du gått tillbaka till ditt lovemark märke efter du provat på andra märken?

Frågor om Identitet

Varför köper du det märket?

Hur relaterar du till ditt lovemark märke?

Vad motiverar dig att köpa lyx produkter?

Hur känner du dig efter du köpt en produkt från märket?

Frågor om Märkes Lojalitet & Tillit

Kan du berätta varför du har gått tillbaka till ditt lovemark märke efter du provat på andra märken?

Förklara hur du är lojal mot märket?

Varför litar du på märket?

Känner du att du litar på market mer än andra märken? Förklara.

Frågor om Känslor

Hur känner du dig när du köper en vara från det märket?

Förklara hur du känner för själva märket och vad det står för.

Varför älskar du det märket? Förklara.

Vilka typer av känslor får du när du använder market?

Vad behövs, för en konsument som dig att älska ett märke?