INTEGRATED BRAND LOVE MODEL: CASE STUDY PREMIER
LEAGUE FAN CLUBS IN THAILAND

By

MARISSA CHANTAMAS

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MARTIN DE TOURS SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Assumption University

Bangkok, Thailand

November, 2016

INTEGRATED BRAND LOVE MODEL: CASE STUDY PREMIER
LEAGUE FAN CLUBS IN THAILAND

by

MARISSA CHANTAMAS

A Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR IN PHILOSOPHY

IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MARTIN DE TOURS SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Assumption University

Bangkok, Thailand

November, 2016

MARTIN DE TOURS SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS
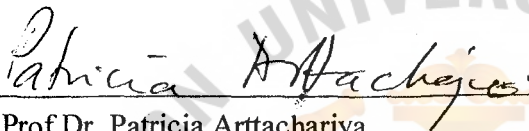
Ph. D. in BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY

This Study by :   Ms. Marissa Chantamas

Entitled :

"Integrated Brand Love Model: Case Study Premier League Fan Clubs in Thailand"

has been approved as meeting the dissertation requirement for the:

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

_____

Asst.Prof.Dr. Patricia Arttachariya
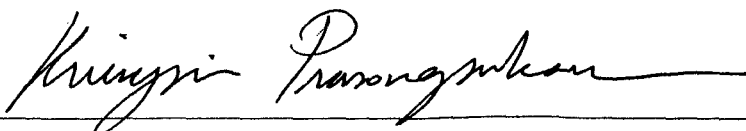Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

_____

Asst.Prof.Dr.Chatpong Tangmanee
Member (MOE)

_____

Asst.Prof.Dr.Theingi
Dissertation Committee Member

_____

Asst.Prof.Dr.Krisda Tanchaisak
Dissertation Committee Member

_____

Asst.Prof.Dr.Kriengsin Prasongsukarn
Dissertation Advisor

Date of Defense: November 10, 2016

MARTIN DE TOURS SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
Ph.D. IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY

Form signed by Proofreader of the Dissertation

I, ___Sumit Sharma___, have proofread this dissertation entitled
___INTEGRATED BRAND LOVE MODEL : CASE STUDY___
___PREMIER LEAGUE FAN CLUBS IN THAILAND.___

and hereby certify that the verbiage, spelling and format is commensurate with the quality of internationally acceptable writing standards for a PhD in Business Administration.

Signed

(___A. Sumit Sharma___)

Contact Telephone Number/Email address ___081 634 2853/sumitshr@au.edu___

Date: ___Oct 10, 2011___

Date _October 10, 2016_

ABAC SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
Ph.D IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Declaration Of Authorship Form

I, ... _Mansin Chantimas_ ...... [please print name]

declare that this dissertation and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

[title of dissertation] _INTEGRATED BRAND LOVE MODEL: CASE STUDY PREMIER LEAGUE FAN CLUBS IN THAILAND._

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for the PhD degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this dissertation has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this dissertation is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the dissertation is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. Either none of this work has been published before submission, or parts of this work have been published as: [please list references in separate page]:

Signed: _____ Date _October 10, 2016_

ABAC SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
PHD IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Student Name: _Marina Chantsmas._
ID: _521-9820_

ADVISOR'S STATEMENT

I confirm that this dissertation has been carried out under my supervision and it represents the original work of the candidate.

Signed:

Kriengsin Prasongh.

Advisor

Date

October 10, 2016

ABSTRACT

The traditional view that brands relate to consumers in terms rationally, emotionally, and symbolically needs to be revisited because the consumer brand experience is embedded in the context of the virtual brand communities. As a consequence this research explores the brand love impact of identification to the brand and others mediated by engagement. The Social Identity Theory is used to explain how the identification to the brand and the other members of the community serves as antecedents to brand love. The Consumer Culture Theory is used to explain the mediation effect of engagement. The Self-Expansion Theory is used to explain the brand love construct.

The first major theoretical contribution of this study is the confirmation of the nomological network for brand love having identification antecedents mediated by engagement in the context of virtual brand communities. The second contribution is the exploration of the relationship between consumer brand identification and the psychological sense of community. The third contribution of the study is the exploration of the impact on traditional marketing communications on brand love. The fourth contribution is the study of the mediation effect of engagement explained by the Consumer Culture Theory. And, the final theoretical contribution is the study of the impact of engagement in the context of sports. The study utilizes the case of the English Premier League fan clubs in Thailand. In terms of managerial contribution this study provides a guideline for managing virtual brand communities.

The questionnaire was developed with three additional steps were added to ensure content validity. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) reveals five dimensions of brand love as opposed to the previous theory. This is an additional contribution of this research. The hypothesis testing showed support for the nomological net for the construct brand love with identification antecedents mediated by engagement. The findings show that it is the value of the brand that brings the people together while engagement strengthens brand love. Traditional marketing communications tools are still effective in brand building. For the managerial contribution this would mean providing more co-creation activities and products for consumers to engage and express their brand love.

3

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all I would like to thank Rev. Bro. Dr. Bancha Saenghiran, Rector Magnificus of Assumption University, for trusting me with the opportunity to study and consequently complete this degree. I also thank Dr. Uree Cheasakul, the present Dean of the Martin de Tours School of Management and Economics (MSME) and Dr. Cherdpong Sibunruang, the former dean, for their kind support throughout my study.

This dissertation would never have been completed without my advisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Kriengsin Prasongsukarn. My most sincere appreciation is also dedicated to the committee members Asst. Prof. Dr. Patricia Arttachariya, Asst. Prof. Dr. Krisada Tanchaisak, Asst. Prof. Dr. Thiengi, Asst. Prof. Dr. Chatpong Tangmanee, and Dr. Mayuree Aryupong. On this opportunity I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Nopphon Tangjitprom, Program Director, and Asst. Prof. Wiyada Nittayagasetwat, Assistant Program Director, for always supporting my dissertation. In addition I thank Vilai Vilaivarangkul, the program secretary, for her infinite patience. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the faculty members, who taught me during my studies especially the late Dr. Robert Ho, whose guidance has been invaluable for me.

In addition I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Jirayut Poomontree, who provided the necessary advice for SPSS and AMOS. At this point I would also like to thank my supervisors throughout the period of my study, who have been very understanding in particular, Dr. Suwanna Kowathanakul, Chairperson, Department of Marketing, MSME. I would also like to thank Dr. Wittaya Charoensri, OHRM Director, and his staff for their kind advice and understanding during the course of my study.Next I would like to thank the experts who lend their support in the translation of my questionnaire and improvement of the items. I also would like to thank Jantana Tangsongwut for helping with setting up the online survey. Almost last but certainly not least, I would like to thank all of my friends whose continuous support helped me through the toughest of times.

For my spiritual guidance I thank Rev. Bro. Dr. Amnuay Yoonprayong and A. Glen Chatelier, who have always prayed for my soul. Finally, I would like to thank God for not giving up on me throughout this most trying time of my life.

2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER III:RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER V: PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, & FUTURE RESEARCH

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

GENERALITIES OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction to the Study

Fournier (1998) stated that central to a strong consumer-brand relationship is love. Since it was first coined by Ahuvia in 1993, the brand love construct has received great interest by researchers (Langer, Bruns, Fischer, & Rossiter, 2016; Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2013; Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010; Caroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Whang, Allen, Sahoury, & Zhang, 2004). To date there is still no consensus on its definition. Part of thedefinition issue stems from its similarity to other relationship constructs including brand attachment (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005), brand connectedness (Winterich, 2007); and brand passion (Bauer, Heinrich, & Martin, 2007). As a consequence brand love antecedents encompass a range of factors that include the brand-related components such as the hedonic and symbolic nature of the product (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) and brand anthropomorphism (Rauschnabel & Ahuvia, 2014). Consumer-related antecedents of brand love include the consumer identification with the brand (Merunka, 2013; Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010) and personality of the individual (Rauschnabel, Ahuvia, Ivens, & Leischnig, 2015; Reimann & Aron, 2009). These studies acknowledge that there is a connection between the individual and the brand. However, the social perspective of the brand relationship has yet to be further explored within a comprehensive theoretical framework, which is reiterated by Albert and Merunka (2013) in their suggestion that the brand love construct needs to have an established nomological framework.

Previous researchers including Albert and Merunka (2013), Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, (2010) and Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) have explored brand identification as an antecedent of brand love. However, this is insufficient to explain the dynamics of the social aspect of identification in consumer brand relationships. Furthermore, this relationship perspective needs to be explored in terms of engagement (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). Van Doorn et al. (2010) and De Valck, Bruggen, and Wierenga (2009) however expressed concern that current engagement studies still lack comprehensiveness. Brodie et al. (2011) proposed that engagement is highly contextual. It is driven by a motivational state with differing levels of intensity that evolves from iterated experience over time. As a consequence this study explores engagement as the mediating construct from identification to brand love in virtual brand communities. This proposition is rooted in the Consumer Culture Theory, which views consumption as imbued in context symbolism where the exchange is part of the social relationship. In addition the consumer is an active participant in creating meaning with the brand (Arnould& Thomson, 2007). Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) recommended that brand engagement should be explored within the nomological networks that incorporate the constructs of brand love and brand experience. Consequently, this study explores the relationship between brand love and engagement that is rooted in the virtual brand community, which is viewed as the crux of the modern consumer brand relationships. The context of the virtual brand community is critical to explaining the engagement phenomenon as discussed in the following section.

The brand community, which is the forerunner of virtual brand community, comprises of the social relationships between those who admire the brand (Muniz &

Schau, 2005). As explained by Laroche, Habibi, Richard, and Sankaranarayanan

(2012) brands fulfill the psychological and social needs of consumers. With the

proliferation of the Internet, this relationship sometimes may occur between those

who don't know each and are not in the same geographic area, hence the inclusion of

the word virtual into brand community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Academics and

marketers alike have come to study these virtual brand communities as an important

contributor to a meaningful relationship between brands and consumers (Heere,

Walker, Yoshida, Ko, Jordan, & James, 2011; Cova & Pace, 2006).

As a consequence marketers today recognize that their brands are being

"hijacked" as consumers take brand communications into their own hands

(Wipperfurth, 2005). With more savvy customers, who communicate more among

themselves, marketers need to seek ways to create value through collaborating with

them in creating marketing programs (Dholakia & Vianello, 2009; Schau, Muniz, &

Arnould, 2009; Lusch & Vargo, 2006). The context for collaboration through

engagement is found within virtual brand communities (Algesheimer, Dholakia, &

Herrmann, 2005).It is believed that through this participation in such communities

consumers will strengthen their identification with the brand and create a stronger

relationship with it along with its other users (He, Li, & Harris, 2012; McAlexander,

Schouten, & Koenig, 2002).

However, pivotal in understanding the process in which virtual brand

communities create such benefit for markets is the understanding of the membership

mechanics. It is found that there is no difference in the membership characteristics

between communities that offer face to face interaction and those that are computer

mediated or virtual brand communities (Cova & Pace, 2006). In addition Laroche,

Habibi, Richard, and Sankaranarayanan (2012) found that the sense of membership

was not hindered by the lack of physical interaction. Therefore, of particular interest

to researchers are those communities that connect through the social media platform

such as Facebook, which allows connecting to customers to be done effectively at a

low cost (Laroche, et al., 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This ledLaroche et al.

(2012) to study the virtual brand community characteristics in particular those social

media based communities. The research found that the virtual brand community

characteristicshad an impact on engagement, trust and consequently brand loyalty. As

a consequence the following section will briefly explain these characteristics derived

from the traditional community, which set the premise of this study.

The traditional brand community has the three fundamental characteristics that

strengthen this in-group identification and unity, which are a shared consciousness,

shared rituals, and moral obligations (Cova & Cova, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

Thefirst characteristic of shared consciousness defines a sense of belonging to the

group, which spawns two related concepts of legitimacy and oppositional loyalty

(O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Legitimacy explains the degree

to which a member is knowledgeable about the brand thus differentiating true

members from the rest creating a hierarchy within the group (Muniz & O'Guinn,

2001). Oppositional loyalty reflects the discrimination of people using other brands

(usvs. them) (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005). Fournier and Lee (2009) explained that this

oppositional loyalty could be observed in the way Apple users reject Microsoft.

The second characteristic of rituals and traditions encompass the sharing of meaning that is created within the community. This includes activities and symbols that identify the community. In addition the sharing of brand stories from user experience helps to create and sustain the community (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & Schau, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). These stories also serve as powerful product or service reviews that work in favor of the brand.

The third characteristic of shared sense of moral responsibility is defined as the feeling of duty that a member has for the group or specifically for certain members (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). This determines what group members will do with consideration on its impact on other members (Szmigin & Carrigan, 2006). These actions include recruiting new members, retaining existing members, as well as sharing product knowledge and experiences (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) reported that in their study of Saab owners, the members helped one another by recommending dealers and assisting with technical information. These actions of reciprocation are critical in sustaining the brand community (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005).

As mentioned earlier Laroche et al. (2012) studied virtual brand communities in the context of social media. The researchers developed a model using the three characteristics of brand communities defined by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) as influencers of co-creation practices defined by Schau et al. (2009), which in turn has an impact on the brand trust that ultimately leads to brand loyalty. The findings indicate that virtual brand community participation has a positive impact on brand loyalty. This is in line with previous studies revealing that after joining virtual brand

13

communities, customers show major increases in the frequency of their purchase behaviors, and in some cases become brand evangelists (Dholakia & Vianello, 2009; Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005). These favorable brand outcomes of customer membership in virtual brand communities are derived through social interactions, which is the main premise of this study (Dholakia, Bagozzi, & Pearo, 2004; McKenna & Bargh, 1999). Laroche et al. (2012) stressed the importance of the social and emotional connection that drives the positive results on the brand. The facilitation of online communication and engagement creates a sense of belonging and attachment to the group (Blanchard, 2007). Thus, it is important to study how the process of engagement and developing a sense of belonging to the group plays a role in creating favorable outcomes for the brand. Anchoring the research in a sociological perspective, the sense of belonging or identification is explored using the Social Identity Theory while the engagement factor is explored using the Consumer Culture Theory. Brand love would be explained using the Self Expansion Theory. The selection and application of the theories is explained in detail in Chapter II.

In support of this perspective Fournier and Lee (2009) proposedthat the timing is right for brands to build communities because people are constantly in need for a sense of connection especially in times of economic crises. However, despite growing interest and the acknowledgement of the importance of virtual brand communities, the metrics measuring its success are still non-existent. Researchers have suggested that it is still important to find out how the different tools of marketing communications work alongside virtual brand communities (Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Hermann, 2005; Balasubramanian & Mahajan, 2001). In regards to the success and importance of such communities, questions remain because many of the initial studies into the

field are concentrated on niche underdog brands like the Apple Newton or marginalized brands like Harley Davidson (Muniz & Schau, 2005) (for more details see Table 1.1). Therefore, it is interesting to explore brands that have mass appeal, which is in this case is the English Premier League.

Table 1.1: Virtual Brand Community Studies

Product Category	Product	Authors (Year)
Branded Products	Harley-Davidson Motorcycles	Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006)
		McAlexander et al. (2002)
		Schau and Muniz (2002)
		Schouten and McAlexander (1995)
	Jeep vehicles	McAlexander et al. (2002)
	Saab cars	Muniz and O'Guinn(2001)
		Schau and Muniz (2002)
	Hummer SUV	Luedicke (2006)
	Ford Bronco SUV	Muniz and O'Guinn (2001)
	Apple computers/technology	Belk and Tumbat (2005)
		Muniz and O'Guinn (2001)
		Schau and Muniz (2002)
		Schau and Muniz (2005)
Branded Entertainment	Star Trek	Kozinets (2001)
	Xena: Warrior Princess	Schau and Muniz (2002)
	Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers	Schau and Muniz (2002)
	Warhammer	Cova, Pace, and Park (2007)
Organization/ Members-based	Car Clubs	Algesheimer et al., (2005)
	Gay community	Kates (2004)
	Charities	Hassay and Peloza (2009)
	Universities	McAlexander, Koenig, and Schouten (2005)
		McAlexander et al., (2006)
Sport-based communities	Sports organizations	Devasagayam and Buff (2008)
		Dionisio et al., 2008
		Heere et al., (2011)
		Richardson and Turley(2008)
Fashion	Fashion brands	Ko and Kim (2011)
Virtual Brand Communities in Social Media	Virtual Brand Communities in Social Media	Laroche, Habibi, Richard, and Sankaranarayanan (2012)

The concept of virtual brand communities as a collection of admirers of the brand means that those who make the effort to join the community are not just simple users of the brand. People join social media to fulfill the needs of being connected or belonging with those who share their norms, values, and interests (Laroche et al., 2012; Gangadharbhatla, 2008). As a consequence, group members must not only identify with one another. They too must contribute to the survival of the group and by extension the brand, which provides the context for the group itself. Self-Expansion Theory explains the allocation of resources because the brand is a part of the self. Consequently brand love is a concept that can explain this phenomenon as proposed by Aaker (1997) and Fournier (1998). Heinrich, Albrecht, and Bauer (2012) supports this view explaining that love can be expressed as the social relationship and the emotional state of the individual. Elaborating on this, Ahuvia (2005) explained that things people love including brands shape the definition of their sense of self.

1.2 Context of the Study: Sports Marketing - The English Premier League

Sports have come a long way and have been established as a real business organization managed professionally (Shilbury, Quick, & Westerbeek, 2003). As a result they need professional marketing in order to develop strategic branding plans to target the potential fans (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). Baker, McDonald, and Funk (2016) found in their study that sport brands were similar in nature to non-sport brands. This supports the view proposed by Day, Gordon, and Fink (2012) that sports can be used as a research context for theory development to explain non-sports phenomena.

Sports teams in particular iconic football clubs such as Manchester United and Liverpool rival the top brands for consumer affection (O'Reilly, 2005; Heller, 2002). According to Kleinman (2001) any organization that creates a relationship with its audience or consumer can be considered a brand. In the context of sports the name of the team is the most precious asset in generating profitability for the business (Richelieu, 2004). Like other types of brands sports teams create their brand equity through their performance (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005).

As a result this study uses the case of the English Premier League football fan clubs because virtual brand communities have become key engagement channels. This is because virtual brand communities have become places where consumers learn more about their brands and improve their relationship with the brands (Kozinets, 1999). Also Thai fans prefer information about their teams in their own local language, which is part of the reason the Premier League football fan communities have a huge following with visits of at least once a week.

As suggested by Kim and Trail (2011) sports marketing needs to shift the emphasis from seeking new customers to maintaining existing customers. The idea that it is more profitable to keep existing customers applies to sports marketing in the same way it does for other industries. Secondly, in an effort to keep existing customers, sports marketing can benefit from the relationship perspective that will assist in fixing relationships that are about to break down with disgruntled or unsatisfied fans. Third, as Hunt and Morgan (1994) have explained that in the past,relationship marketing was limited because of the cost in trying to maintain relationships with a large number of partners. The authors argue that with the advent

of new technology this so-called cost has reduced significantly. Fourth and finally, as Fournier (1998) suggested people may be willing to have a relationship with an inanimate object. This should be more prevalent in sports marketing. This is because sports teams tend to have the characteristics that are more conducive in creating relationship with the fans. For instance sports teams usually have some sort of a personality such as confidence, spirited, honest, reliable or tough (Kim & Trail, 2011). These characteristics are values that fans can easily identify with.

Existing research work (Gladden & Sutton, 2009) only states that it is important for sports marketing to embrace the relationship paradigm. However, it fails to point out the key issues that need to be addressed for a good relationship to be fostered (Kim & Trail, 2011). Another key point that the authors identified as lacking in current research is the understanding of how relationship marketing affects the sports consumption behaviors. While the work of Kim and Trail (2011) attempts to identify the affect of relationship quality on sports consumption behavior such as word of mouth, media usage, purchase of licensed merchandise, and attendance of games. It does not take into consideration the antecedents of the relationship quality. Their model does suggest an interesting perspective in understanding the impact of relationship on sports consumption behavior. It is an interesting field because many leading global brands sponsor these teams. However their sponsorship appears only in the form of a logo on a T-shirt, advertising in the arena, and the usage of players for advertising or events.

Virtual brand communities are also found among sports enthusiasts and the investigation of such communities is still limited. Some studies conducted on

university sports teams were conducted by Heere et al. (2011); Devasagayam and Buff (2008); Dionisio, Leal, and Moutinho (2008); Holt (1995). Conversations in brand communities open a range of new opportunities that brands can leverage from the sport teams they support. This provides new avenues for exploring sponsorship opportunities thus it is important to view this from the professional sports perspective.

There are only limited efforts in studying sports brand communities. Sports consumer research usually focuses on the individual. However, the co-consumption that is the type of activity seen in brand communities (Madrigal, 2000) is more realistic since watching sports is more of group consumption.

Smith and Stewart (2009) explained that sports consumption is similar to other patterns of consumption. Thus the findings in this regard can be applied to other categories. Smith and Stewart (2009), Armstrong (2002), Fink, Trail, and Anderson (2002) identified consequences of sports viewing as self-esteem, sense of community, and personal identity. This can be explained since sports offers the opportunity for more communication between people, promotes a collective identity with fans, provides symbols fans can identify with and offer a reason for harmony and solidarity in membership (Gladden, Milne&Sutton, 1998). Also sports teams create a sense of togetherness, fan club loyalty, and pride (Johnson, Groothuis & Whitehead, 2001) through personality such as confidence, spirited, honest, reliable or tough (Kim & Trail, 2011).

Social Identity Theory has been used to explain the process that fans identify with sport teams (Gwinner &Swanson, 2003). This is because identification allows

fans to vicariously participate in groups (Turner, 1984; Katz & Kahn, 1978). The sense of oneness with group enhances self-esteem (Hogg & Turner, 1985; Tajfel, 1978). The self-esteem can be further strengthened by emphasizing negative information and downplaying the positive information of out-group, while minimizing negative information and promoting positive information of in-group (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). As a result the success or misfortunes of the team becomes part of the person's success or failure. In addition the fans' loyalty tends to be long-term and have consequences in driving time and financial commitment by fans (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). Consequently to study these factors the brand love scale developed by Batra et al. (2012), which incorporates all of these elements, is used in this research.

However, most research conducted on sports brand communities are ones where the members have a direct possibility to get involved with the game and other members physically or are at least in the same geographical location (Heere et al., 2011). This study is different in the sense that it is an effort to study fans, who totally rely on virtual brand communities to connect. This is because the Thai fans are at least some 9,000 kilometers away from the stadiums that their favorite teams play in England. This will be particularly useful in testing the variable psychological sense of community, which Madrigal (2000) said is an interesting aspect to explore in research. In addition the English Premier League is the most popular league in Thailand according to Siam Sports Research. The Siam Sports site boasts a unique (UIP) view averaging 350,000 per day with 2.3 million views per day during the season competition. Also each team has specific branding strategies, which make them in essence true brands with all the necessary brand elements.

The English Premier League teams have made a bid to strategize capturing the Asian market (Solberg & Turner, 2010). This move has been successful due to the trans-nationalization of media, which has allowed for the proliferation of broadcasts leading to a sizeable following in Asia. The Internet has opened even more avenues for fans to keep up with their favorite team. As many as 50% of Thai fans watch their favorite teams on line. This data is obtained from the Global Web Index Audience Report (GWI) Q1 covering 90% of the global Internet audience in 32 countries with a sample size of 40,000 respondents. The GWI study reported that 3 out of 10 Premier League Fans interviewed would promote a product online simply out of love for the brand. This makes the English Premier League virtual brand communities an interesting topic of study. Twitter even has an interactive map that shows that the fans in Asia especially Malaysia, Vietnam, and Thailand are very active. For instance the news of Jose Mourinho leaving Chelsea was a trending topic on Twitter particularly in Thailand where about 20% of the Premier League fans support the team.

The second reason is the fact that every two years, four of the English Premier teams will play each other in a knockout competition with venues in places like Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, China, Singapore. In Vietnam a fan ran after the team's entourage gaining the sympathy of the players, who agreed to meet him. Joy and Sherry (2005) studied the value of an imaginative, embodied, and emplaced self in the pursuit of pleasure. The English Premier League understands this concept consequently having the teams come to play in Asia. This brings the teams closer to the people to maintain their fantasy because a long-distance love affair with the teams may fizzle out if the teams remain out of reach.

The third is the cultivation of a good relationship through sponsorship. For instance the sponsorship of Everton by Thai Beverage Plc. is the longest running deal in the Premier League. Everton supports Chang in their grassroots football programs creating a strong bond between the team and Thais, who are already very passionate for football. (Recently the people of Liverpool went up in arms against Chang because they do not want to see their team promoting the sales of beer.) This bond has even grown stronger when Leicester City, now owned by a Thai, has clinched the championship. This relatively unknown team is now a darling among Thai fans some of whom have ditched their once favorite teams like Liverpool or Manchester United after their relatively dismal performance in the 2015 – 2016 season. This is inline with the study by Stayman and Deshpande (1989), which found that consumers negotiate their cultural identities through their consumption. Thus, the sponsorship of English Premier League teams by Thai companies brings the teams closer to the Thai audience increasing the identification playing right into the Thai passion for football.

The final reason that the English Premier League is so appealing is because it is a dream come true. For avid fans one thing on the bucket list is to watch their beloved team play in their home stadium, which is a truly branded experience. It is an amazing experience that fans certainly dream about. It is not a far-fetched statement because according to the Independent UK, Airtel mobile phone services in Bangladesh created an ad where a 20 something Manchester United supporter daydreams about his team during meetings, his mind drifting to the next match as he has dinner with his girlfriend, and celebrating a winning goal inside a lift causing people to smile.The tagline of this ad is "Always on My Mind", which is a key insight in explaining engagement that leads to brand love. These insights are crucial for the

development of the questionnaire items to be used. Numerous papers have studied

these experiences created from the interactions with locations that have specific

meaning includingESPN zones (Kozinets et al., 2004), Las Vegas (Belk, 2000), and

Nike Town (Sherry, 1998).

English Premier League teams have embraced social media as a means for

connecting to fans. While television broadcasts may have been critical to get the fans

hooked, social media is crucial for their engagement with team news and match

analysis. For instance Manchester United has partnerships with telecom providers in

42 countries and television providers in 54 countries. Some fans reported hanging out

with fellow supporters said that they had connected through the social media

supporting the team. This can be explained through the process that virtual brand

communities together with its activities create a culture that is embodied by the values

of the team, which brings the members together (Joy & Li, 2012).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The research gaps identified from previous studies lead to the five research

problems examined in this study. The first is the exploration marketing

communications tools role in building relationship with brands. The second research

problem is the use of empirical studies in studying the phenomenon of brand value

creation in virtual brand communities. The third research problem is anchoring the

brand love construct in the context of virtual brand communities to establish the

nomological framework. The fourth research problem is the exploration of the

engagement process in the virtual brand communities. The fifth research problem is

the study of engagement and brand love in the virtual brand communities that have

mass appeal. Each research question would be explained in the following section.

Keller (2009) emphasized the fact that building brands in modern marketing is

about making choices from the explosion of different means of communications

available to the marketers. Marketing communications directly or indirectly help to

build brands. It does so by informing, persuading, and reminding consumers about a

brand's products and services. It is the central means of reaching customers

(Gronroos, 1994). In line with this view a new perspective to marketing

communication is needed (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). This is why virtual brand

communities have become an important communication channel that facilitates

engagement. Therefore, the first research problem is the exploration of the role of

marketing communications tools including virtual brand communities in building

relationship with brands.

The English Premier League is an interesting subject because it is a major

business at a global scale. Research has indicated that like other types of brands,

sports brands stand to gain from increased brand equity (Boyle & Magnusson, 2007;

Ross, 2007). McCarthy, Rowley, Ashworth, and Pioch (2014) gave four reasons that

studying this league is an interesting research topic. Firstly, the top 20 clubs have total

revenue of 4.4bn Euros. Each club had an average revenue growth of 114 million

British pounds. Secondly, the fan base is very strong resulting in continuous support

of the teams' commercial activities. Thirdly, football related content is a major

content for online discussion. And finally, there has been a rapid growth in the

number of websites providing information about football teams in addition to the

official websites created by the teams themselves. In this vein, research by Brown (2008) follows the development of a fan-based community for Manchester United one of the top teams in the English Premier League. Pongsakornrungsilp and Schroeder (2009) explored the process of value co-creation among fans of English Premier League teams using the Service Dominant logic perspective. The methodology used is netnography, which is popular among studies of virtual brand communities. However, there is still a lack of empirical studies in explaining the processes and the brand love consequences in virtual football fan club communities. Thus, the second research problem is the use of empirical studies in explaining the brand value creation processes in the virtual brand community.

Brand love is one of the constructs measuring the consumers' relationships with brands. Previous research on brand love has centered on its definitions, identification of constructs, antecedents, and consequences (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Despite the work of Batra et al. (2012) aiming to develop the construct from grounded theory, there is no foundation in terms of theoretical underpinnings. Thus, there is still the need to anchor this construct in theory that describes the relationship between the antecedents and any other intervening factors needed to explain brand love within the context of brand communities, which is the second research problem. Therefore, the Social Identity Theory is used to explain the identification antecedents, while Consumer Culture theory is used to explain engagement, and finally the Self Expansion Theory is used to explain brand love. Thus, the third research problem is the establishing brand love nomological framework in virtual brand communities.

Consequently, the third research problem is confirmed by Fournier (1998) rsearch that a brand should have a strong relationship with the consumer. This relationship may be akin to love, which is described as a rich affective grounding, which is supported by Ahuvia (2005). McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig (2002), and He, Li, and Harris (2012) recognize that participation in virtual brand communities would enhance brand centered identity and customer brand relationships. Brand identification involves emotional attachment with the brand therefore consumers would evaluate the relationship more favorably (He, Li, & Harris, 2012). The authors suggest that future research should identify the outcomes of brand identification. This includes brand championship, resistance to negative information, and support for marketing activities, which are conceptually part of brand love as posited by Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012). This is similar to the Brand Relationship Quality developed by Fournier (1998) as a multi-faceted construct to better explain the various types of relationships that consumers can have with brands. Fournier (1998) explained the relationship between customers and the brand as having six dimensions: 1. Self-concept connection 2. Commitment or nostalgic attachment 3. Behavioral interdependence 4. Love/passion 5. Intimacy 6. Brand-partner quality.

So far the studies on the brand communities still need to decipher the best means in building such a "virtual brand community" and converting the members into the brand's fervent supporters (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Fournier, Dobscha, & Mick, 1998). Participants in virtual brand communities experience different levels of knowledge and participation (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Kozinets, 1999). Fournier, Dobscha, and Mick (1998) and Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) state it is still not clear

when and why consumers respond to certain relationship building efforts. As Schau, Muniz, and Arnould (2009) identified in their recommendation for further research, it is important to define which of the "practices or constellation of practices" will yield the desirable outcomes to the brand and under what conditions. Furthermore, Brodie, Juric, and Hollebeek (2011) also suggest that studies should be made on how to make the virtual brand communities sustainable and self-managing as part of the brand experience. It is expected that a good brand experience can build brand loyalty and brand evangelism (Schmitt, 2009). Thus Schmitt (2012) proposed a model of Brand Experience distinguishes five brand-related processes: identifying, experiencing, integrating, signaling, and connecting with the brand. Schmitt (2012) then explained that there are three layers of engagement starting from the innermost circle of object-oriented engagement, to self-centered engagement, and the outer most circle of social engagement. Thus it can be said that engagement is a consequence of experience. Consumer Culture Theory can be used to explain this phenomenon. Consequently, the fourth research problem is the exploration of the engagement construct in the context of virtual brand communities.

The numerous studies previously conducted with the goal of measuring the impact of consumer interactions in virtual brand communities have concentrated on brands catering to niche groups with specific interests such as Harley Davidson, technology products, or certain entertainment shows with specific audiences such as sci-fi, or gays (Nambisan & Watt, 2011; Dholakia, Bagozzi, & Paero, 2004). Therefore, it would be interesting to examine if similar results will be found in virtual brand communities in other types of groups that targets a more mass audience. A particular area of research that still has only few studies in terms of relationship

27

marketing in the virtual brand communities is sports despite its high level of

engagement and value (Kim & Trail, 2011). Thusthe fifth research problem is the

study of the engagement and brand love in the context of sports, which are brands

with mass appeal.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To investigate the identification antecedents affecting brand love using the

   Social Identity Theory (SIT).

2. To identify the effects of engagement as explained by the Consumer Culture

   Theory on brand love.

3. To develop a framework forbrand love consequences of the identification

   antecedents mediated by engagement explained by Self-Expansion Theory.

1.5 Research Questions

This research aims to study brand relationships from the sociological perspective.

Consequently this study examines how brands have become a critical element in

projecting the self-image of individuals and hence determining their choices of

community membership and ensuing level of participation (Escalas & Bettman,

(2005); Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, (2003); Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, (1993); Belk,

(1988); Sirgy, (1982). Thus Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann (2005) express

optimism that virtual brand communities would offer a fresh and effective means for

brand building. McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig (2002), and He, Li, and Harris

(2012)recognize that participation in virtual brand communities would enhance brand

centered identity and customer brand relationships. Thus, brand identification

involves affective attachment with the brand therefore they would evaluate the

relationship more favorably. He, Li, and Harris, (2012)suggest that future research should identify brand identification outcomes such as brand championship, resistance to negative information, and support for marketing activities.While a wealth of research abounds in the use of identification theories in explaining the influence of groups on perceptions and behavior, there are still limited studies in virtual brand communities (Heere et al., 2011). Therefore, this study proposes a comprehensive theoretical framework to explain the sociological approach to consumer brand relationships with brand love consequences. Fans are active participants within the context of the virtual brand communities where they feel a connection with other fans driving the need for explicit expressions of the passion for team that goes beyond just the context of the sports to every aspect of their life. As a result this study is designed to answer the following research questions in the context of sports specifically in Premier League virtual football fan club communities.

1. What relationship do the identification antecedents explained by the Social Identity Theory have on brand love?

2. What are the consequences of engagement on brand love as explained by the Consumer Culture Theory?

3. How does engagement within the context of football fan clubs virtual brand community mediate the relationship between identification antecedents of brand love explained by the Self Expansion Theory?

1.6 Scopeand Limitations of the Research

This study explores brand love consequences of engagement and identification in the context of Premier League fans virtual communities. As Brodie et al., (2011)

explained engagement that may occur in actual virtual brand community settings that are more dynamic and iterative in nature. However due to the limitations of resources and availability of a case where the community can be tracked from inception over time, the study is a cross-sectional research. It is recognized that ideally a longitudinal study, would yield a better understanding of how engagement causes the change in the individual's level of brand love. However, the use of SEM, a powerful statistical tool that can be used to study the relationships between variables formed by latent factors, should be sufficient in providing empirical evidence that Brodie et al., (2011) stated was still lacking in the study of engagement in virtual brand communities.

The study was conducted in the online Premier League football fan club communities as suggested by Belk (1988) that the data collection should be done in the natural setting of the phenomenon being studied. However, the Premier League football fan clubs may have a higher level of involvement when compared to other type of communities. A preliminary study conducted to determine the context of the research showed that the frequency of the competition (at least one match a week during the season) creates the necessary content to drive fans to visit the community and engage with the brand. Therefore, the findings in the study should not be generalized to other types of communities that may have different levels of content production and engagementwithout further research.

The final limitation is the selection of the research methodology. As suggested by Joy and Li (2012) consumer experience should be studied using multiple data sources and triangulate methods. This is in line with the suggestion by Arnould and Thompson (2005) that consumers' have multiple realities that are shaped by their

consumption experiences. However, the survey methodis selected because it has been used by many previous researchers (Albert & Merunka, 2013; Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study proposes a comprehensive mechanism for the development of brand love in the setting of virtual brand communities, which are more prevalent and brands have experimented in using them to foster relationships with consumers rooted in a sociological perspective. As a consequence the contribution of this study can be divided into theoretical and managerial contributions. The first theoretical contribution is the development of a theoretical framework consisting of the Social Identity Theory, Consumer Culture Theory, and Self Expansion Theory. From this theoretical framework a conceptual framework explainingbrand love within this nomologicalframework would be developed. This study explores the identification and engagement impact on brand love concept, which is based firmly on the relational paradigm, which result in consumers attributing human characteristics and feelings to brands (Aaker, 1997; Fournier, 1998). Although brand love has become a subject receiving considerable interest, most of the research has been conducted to define its various dimensions (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Some have also studied the antecedents and consequences but there is still no effort to study it within the environment of virtual brand communities. The uniqueness of this study is the incorporation of both consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community (identification to other community members), which is relevant in the context of virtual brand communities. Thus, the first contribution is the development of a framework in developing brand love in the virtual brand communities.

As explained in the previous paragraph, this research is an attempt to better understand the process in building a strong bond between members with the brand community. A means to measure this bond is the psychological sense of brand community, which is feeling of being part of the community despite limited and in some cases, in the absence of physical interaction. Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008) found that consumers who had a high psychological sense of brand community were more likely to engage in activities like WOM, preference of the brand over competitors, interest in brand-related events, and interest in the history of the brand, which are concepts that make up brand love. The study by Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) identified that sense of community is not an antecedent of brand identification but this research hypothesizes that it takes on an opposite path particularly in the situation of virtual brand communities. Thus, the second contribution of this research is the exploration of how brand identification plays a role in developing a psychological sense of brand community since people are first united by the common interest in the brand before joining the virtual brand community.

The third contribution is to better understand how marketing communications plays a role in developing brand love. The research by Marzocchi, Morandian, and Bergami (2013) found that consumer brand identification had more of an effect on brand trust, which is a more cognitive aspect of brand loyalty thus arguing that advertising might be better in providing information about the brand than brand communities. Thus, the overly zealous hopes that brand communities will replace other marketing activities and communication tools may not be true. The authors stated that brand communities are suitable tools for CRM, which is also supported by Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008). Their research found that regardless of actual

32

social interaction, consumers still could identify with the brand and have a psychological sense of brand community, which is explained as the result of brand creation by other marketing communication tools like advertising. This paper aims to establish whether the building of brand identity can be made through traditional marketing communication tools and its relative impact on brand love.

The fourth contribution is the understanding of the consumer engagement process in virtual brand communities by using the Consumer Culture Theory to explain the phenomenon. Brodie et al., (2011) suggested that it might be interesting to study whether the consumer engagement plays a role or not in the success of the virtual brand community (Carlson, Suter, & Brown, 2008; Kozinets, 1999). The researchers suggested there is a gap that can be studied which is the intensity of this engagement that may occur in actual virtual brand community settings that are more dynamic and iterative in nature. The key issue is that the engagement in the virtual brand communities has the purpose for creating value for both the users and the brand. This value is a critical component of brand love that makes it distinctive from similar constructs such as satisfaction or loyalty.

The fifth contribution is the study of impact of consumer engagement in the case of sports (Heere, Walker, Yoshida, Ko, Jordan, & James, 2011; Devasagayam & Buff, 2008; Dionisio, Leal, & Moutinho, 2008; Richardson & Turley, 2008; Holt, 1995). This process of consumer identification and psychological sense of brand community has yet to be studied in the context of sports, which is the type of activity seen in virtual brand communities (Madrigal, 2000).

Themanagerial contribution of this study is the provision of a guideline for marketers in developing suitable means of managing virtual brand communities to maximize the benefit to business. This is made through the understanding that in the context of virtual brand communities, brand love may be an important outcome of joining such communities (Belk & Tumbat, 2005; Muniz & Schau, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Fournier, 1998). The level of brand love expressed has been introduced as the concept of brand cult, wherein the brand is akin to religion (Belk & Tumbat, 2005; Muniz & Schau, 2005). The understanding of what drives consumers to express their love in ways that are profitable to the brand is a valuable insight for marketers. In addition insights would be provided on guidelines on developing avenues for supporting consumers in their expression of brand love. This would include recommendations regarding the method for recruiting members into the virtual brand community, the use of brand communications in building the brand, the creation of activities to foster engagement that leads to brand love consequences, and means in promoting brand love expression. Also recommendations regarding the co-creation activities that consumers may be involved with in promoting value for the brand can be developed. This would be particularly important to the Thai football industry because the Thai Premier League is still in its infancy. The league has a good future potential, which can be developed from the key learnings derived from the English Premier League. Finally the key learning from the study may be used to apply to other fan-based communities of celebrities or net idols. Like the football teams these celebrities and net idols have their drama and stories that can drive engagement among their followers. Stokburger-Sauer and Teichmann (2014) have suggested that it would be interesting to study how celebrities actually improve or devalue brands they represent through their social media activities.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Prior to proceeding to the literature review and the development of the research framework used in this study, the definitions of the important terms are discussed.

Brand Love

Brand love is defined as the idiosyncratic multi-dimensional construct encompassing social, emotional, and behavioral components expressed in a long-term brand relationship by a satisfied customer, who is passionate about the brand.

Consumer Brand identification (CBI)

CBI is identified as the individual's sense of having personal identity embodied by affiliation with the brand.

Engagement

Engagement is a motivation driven multi-dimensional construct comprising of positive cognitive, emotional, and brand-related activity with differing levels of intensity embedded within the context of the experience in the virtual brand community as part of the expression of the individual's own self-conceptspecific to the category stimulus.

35

Psychological Sense of Community (PSC)

The Psychological Sense of Community (PSC) is defined as the feeling of bonding as members of the same group in a community that does not face-to-face social interaction.

Virtual brand community (VBC)

Virtual brand community is defined as a community formed by like-minded supporters of a brand based on their social relationship rather than geographic proximity.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Chapter II addresses the theoretical frameworks upon which this research is structured.This chapter forms the basis to create a model for understanding brand love in virtual brand communities. The first section expands upon theBrand Relationship Quality perspective first proposed by Fournier (1998), which explains the relationship between consumers and brands. The idea of the consumer brand relationshipis further explored using the Self-Expansion Theory (McLaughlin-Volpe et al., 2005), which will be used to explain the dimensions of brand love used in this study. The second section explains the identification aspect using the Social Identification Theory (Tajfel, 1982), which demonstrates how the self-identity is crystalized through group identification processes. Engagement defined as positively valenced cognitive, emotional and brand-related activities (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014), will be explained in the context of the Consumer Culture Theory. The relevant empirical studies that have formed the foundation of this research will be discussed throughout this chapterto support each of the constructs laying the ground work for the development of the Conceptual Framework in Chapter III.

2.1 Literature Related to Relationship Quality and Brand Love

Based on the relationship marketing view, it is important to find a new construct that takes into consideration the long-term nature of a relationship and at the same time promoting consumer behavior that is desirable to the company. Fournier (1998) stated that at the core of a strong quality consumer-brand relationship is love.

37

So far the consumer relationship quality studies have spawned two broad streams of research. The first stream of research is based on the idea of relationship as an exchange while the second one incorporates the emotional element. Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990) spawned the first stream of research. These authors proposed the idea of relationship quality as the overall satisfaction and trust in the seller to provide continuously good performance. In this tradition, Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997) defined the relationship quality as the level of relationship developed to fulfill the consumer's needs while that relationship lasts. The dimensions generally studied are satisfaction (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; De Wulf et al., 2001), trust (Hennig-Thurau, 2000) and commitment (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Of particular interest to this research is second stream of study, which incorporates the emotional component. The following section traces the development of these studies that lead to the development of the brand love construct.

2.1.1 Theories Related to Relationship Quality and Brand Love

The theories subsequently discussed in the development of brand love would be Commitment-Trust Theory, Attachment Theory, Relationship Quality, Triangular Theory of Love, Self-Inclusion Theory, and Self Expansion Theory. Previous research by Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2013) also attempted to use theories to explain brand love. However, the researchers only discussed two theories, Self Expansion Model and Attachment Theory, in their study.

Morgan and Hunt (1994) developed a theorycomprehensively integrating the dimensions of relationship quality. The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing adds commitment to the existing satisfaction and trust dimensions

38

proposed by Crosby et al. (1990). The main proposition of this theory is that commitment and trust are the fundamentals of a successful relationship.

Expanding on this view Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2011) explained that the Attachment Theory is based more on trust, dependability, and consistency of the response. The researchers argued that attachment should include the emotional elements such as the need for stimulation thus seeking brands that provide novelty in new experiences, insights, and perspectives.

This is answered in the second stream described as the social aspect of relationship quality research that takes the social and emotional elements into consideration (Heinrich, Albrecht, & Bauer, 2012).Expanding on the social aspect of the consumer brand relationship, researchers have proven that brands can be a key element of self-concept (Graeff, 1996; Belk, 1988; Sirgy, 1982) while the emotional aspect of the relationship can be expressed as a demonstration of love and commitment (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004).

Integrating both social and emotional aspects, Fournier (1998) developed the Brand Relationship Quality as a multi-faceted construct to better explain the various types of relationships that consumers can have with brands having 6 dimensions explained as follows:

1. Love and passion is the "rich and affective recollection of love" that varies in intensity from warmth and affective to obsessive dependency. This is the core of the strong brand relationship.

2. Self-connection with the brand is described as the ability of the brand to align to the individual's personality.

3. Interdependence is defined as the mutual dependency that occurs between the brand and the consumer.

4. Commitment to the brand is the feeling that the consumer experiences as a responsibility and emotional bond that entails the willingness to make an effort to keep the relationship with the brand.

5. Intimacy is described as the breadth and extensiveness of the knowledge that a consumer has about the brand and its performance.

6. Brand partner quality is a direct function of the quality of the brand performance, reliability of the brand's messages and compliance to relationship regulations that will dictate the belief in an acceptable future behavior of the partner in a relationship.

According to Fournier (1998) the elements of love/passion and self-connection enrich the original definition of brand loyalty. Thus Fournier (1998) concluded that it was necessary to regroup the six facets into three main dimensions, namely attachment which comprises of love/passion and self-connection, behavioral ties which is made up of interdependence and commitment, and supportive cognitive beliefs which includes intimacy and brand partner quality.

Of interest in this research is the emotional attachment dimension further developed by Thomson, MacInnis, and Park (2005), which is referred as a related construct to brand love by many studies (Yasin & Shamim, 2013; Batra et al., 2012; Sarkar et al., 2012; Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2012; Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen,

2010).Interdependency Theory and related theories such as the Social Exchange Theory can explain the dimension of attachment (Loureiro, 2012). The Interdependency Theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) posits that a relationship is maintained by maximizing value of the rewards and reducing costs, which are categorized as emotional, social, instrumental, and opportunistic. In every relationship there must be an outcome, which may be derived from comparison with past relationships or current observations. As a consequence, this comparison results in the satisfaction and commitment determining the relationship based on the quality of alternatives available for the individual to choose from. These theories lay the foundation for the development of the modern brand love construct.

Brand love is a concept that has been developed through predominantly two research streams. The first stream of researched developed the concept by anchoring it in the definition of human love (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009; Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2008; Thomson et al., 2005; Shimp & Madden, 1988). Shimp and Madden (1988) first introduced the concept as consumer-object love. The Triangular Theory of Love (Sternberg, 1986) was used to develop this concept. This is the most cited theory for laying the foundations of brand love. The theory defines love as comprising of three components namely intimacy, passion and decision/commitment. This is the reason most brand love definitions will be fundamentally composed of these dimensions. Later researchers like Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2008) still continue to use conceptualizations from human love models. Therefore, the models developed in this vein of research result in the development of brand love dimensions that are similar to the interpersonal love.

The second research stream started with Aron and Aron (1986) proposed the idea of Self-Inclusion Theory of brand love, which incorporated identification as an antecedent to brand love.This led to the research by Ahuvia (1993) and later works by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) that explored this construct separate from human romantic love constructs. Based on this theory Ahuvia (1993) interpreted that to be loved the brand had to be both real and desired. Ultimately it has to be integrated into the individual's sense of self (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Later this led to the development by Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012) of a prototype of brand love that was derived from grounded theory.

Further refining the role of identification in explaining brand love, the Self-Expansion Theory (Aron & Aron, 1986) was developed from the existing theories by postulating that people are motivated or have the desire to incorporate others including brands into their self-concept. When the brand is included as part of the self, the bond that connects them becomes closer. Emotional attachment will grow as the relationship between the self and the brand evolves. In time people will develop a positive feeling of "oneness" with the brand viewing that the brand and its resources are their own (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci (2010) expanded on this theory by postulating that as consumers feel an emotional attachment to the brands they would allocate resources as part of this process of self-expansion. They explained that these resources include social resources, financial resources, and time resources. Social resources include actions such as defending the brand and oppositional loyalty (Park et al., 2010; Johnson & Rusbult, 1989). Financial resourcescan be defined as the willingness to pay a premium for the brand (Park et al., 2010; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). The

time resource allocation can be explained by the willingness to participate or get involved in the brand communities or activities organized by the brand (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). Park et al. (2010) explained that when a person is attached to a brand there is a movement from the egocentric to a more reciprocal brand relationship that involves the sharing of resources with the brand. Thus, it stands to reason that consumers who are highly attached to the brand would prefer the brand and engage in activities that will ensure that the relationship is continued (Park et al., 2010; Aron, Aron & Smollan, 1992; Aron & Aron, 1986).

2.1.2 Definitions of Brand Love

The construct of brand love has received a great deal of attention from researchers (Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2008; Ahuvia, Batra, & Bagozzi, 2007). However, they still have to reach a consensus on the definition of this construct. This section will trace the various definitions of this construct and some of its related concepts.

Branden (1980) explained that love is the profound need to find things that motivate humans to go on living. Thus, all the action taken henceforth is driven to protect this object of love. This goes to prove that love is not reserved to only human-to-human relationships. In fact it is an extension of the Resource Exchange Theory (Whang, Allen, Sahoury, & Zhang, 2004). Brinberg and Wood (1983) explained that love is the expression of affectionate regard or warmth, or comfort. It is particularly idiosyncratic since the value is closely tied to the individual. This definition serves as an interesting starting point for the study of brand love. The Triangular Theory of Love (1986) proposed by Sternberg, which is the most cited theory on the topic,

explained that the construct has three components namely intimacy, passion, and decision/commitment.

Shimp and Madden (1988) posited that brand love is a description of consumer emotions and behaviors, which exceed mere brand loyalty. Holbrook (1997) explained that romanticism makes the experiences of brand consumption more enriched. Thus a favorable experience with the brand can lead to this so-called "love". Ahuvia (2005) focused brand love as a reflection of self-identity thus emphasizing the congruence to true and ideal self of the individual by exploring "object love" in creating identity narratives. Simply put the brands people love, shapes the sense of self of the individual (Ahuvia, 2005). Later Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) defined brand love as an emotional and passionate relationship between a satisfied customer and a brand. Most researchers have a similar conclusion that brand love generally consists of a combination of emotion and passion. Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012), further refined the definition of brand love as a specific affective state derived from a satisfied long-term consumer-brand relationship with multiple inter-related cognitive, affective and behavioral elements. Consequently, combining the various definitions this study would define brand love as the idiosyncratic multi-dimensional construct encompassing social, emotional, and behavioral components expressed in a long-term brand relationship by satisfied customer. The dimensions of brand love are discussed in the following section.

2.1.3 Dimensions of Brand Love

The different conceptualizations of the construct range from being a uni-dimensional construct to multi-dimensional constructs. Brand love has been proposed

to have from 1 (Rossiter, 2012; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) to as many as 11 dimensions (Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2008). Studies have been developed from different perspectives. The following section will trace the development of brand love from the two major perspectives – brand love developed from the interpersonal love theory and brand love developed independent of personal love constructs.

Shimp and Madden (1988) first introduced the term "consumer-object love" that was based on the Triangular Theory of Love developed by Sternberg (1986). The researchers created a new model based on the original Triangular Love Theorycomprising of three components namely liking (which replaces intimacy proposed by Sternberg (1986), yearning (which replaces passion proposed by Sternberg (1986)), and decision/commitment. The authors propose that decision is the individual 's response to the liking and yearning resulting in a short-term commitment. The commitment dimension itself is the person's repeat purchase over a long period of time. These three dimensions represent the psychological process of motivation, emotion, and cognition.

Shimp and Madden (1988) proposed eight possible relationships –non-liking, liking, infatuation, functionalism, inhibited, desire, utilitarianism, succumbed desire, and loyalty (Shimp and Madden, 1988). Non-liking [L(-)Y(-)D(-)] represents no particular feeling rather than dislike. The authors proposed that it will usually happen in two situations. First, will be for product categories that consumers have low involvement. Second would be for product categories for which consumers have already established a strong loyalty with a certain brand and the others only have non-liking relations with the consumer. Liking [L(+)Y(-)D(-)] represents a level of

45

"affinity" but lacks the motivation or yearning to acquire it. There is a possibility of purchase but lacks the commitment component for repeat purchase. Infatuation [L(-)Y(+)D(-)] has a strong "yearning" or the desire to consume the product or service. This will be further enhanced in the cases where there is strong peer pressure to adopt the product. The authors suggest that this would be found more in brands that cater to symbolic needs that fulfill the self-enhancement, role position, group membership, or ego identification. Functionalism [L(-)Y(-)D(+)] is a purely based on functional needs to solve some sort of a problem or resolve some sort of a conflict. There is an absence of attachment and yearning for it. Inhibited Desire [L(+)Y(+)D(-)] is a condition when consumers may not purchase the product despite liking and yearning because there is some strong inhibition in acquiring it for instance insufficient money or pressure from external factors such as family or peers. Utilitarianism [L(+)Y(-)D(+)] is a common situation second to non-liking relationships where in consumers like and are committed to consuming the brands without any passionate feelings attached to it. Succumbed Desire [L(-)Y(+)D(+)] is a situation that may difficult to conceptualize in consumer-object relations. But the authors explain that it may occur in the situation that the consumer is pressuredby external forces to consume the product. Loyalty [L(+)Y(+)D(+)] this is the ideal relationship where the consumer has a strong intimate feeling for the brand and yearn for the purchase of the brand and is committed for a continued period of time. The authors propose that the relationship's increasing commitment follows an S-curve pattern that shows the commitment starting to grow slowly in the beginning and accelerating as the time goes by and levels off in the end.

Later researchers proposed a view of brand love that incorporated other related constructs most cited of which is the identification of the self to the object of love.Aron and Aron (1986) proposed the idea of Self-Inclusion Theory of brand love. This theory posits that to be loved one must become part of the other (brand). One such conceptualization of brand love was developed by Ahuvia (1993), which fueled the interest of researchers into studying this phenomenon. The author argued the love for brands and interpersonal love should be developed separately. Thus Ahuvia (1993) developed the idea that the brand's level of integration with the individual's self-concept determines the feeling of love a consumer has for the brand. Whang, Allen, Sahoury, and Zhang (2004) developed the concept romantic love with objects, a similar concept, based on love attitude styles by Lee (1977). The dimensions are eros (passion), ludus (desire/fun), storge (friendship/partnership), mania (hold in high regard, want to love and be loved in return), agape (altruistic love), and pragma (practical/convenient).

Further developments of brand love included constructs that reflected brand specific consequences. Thomson, MacInnis, and Park (2005) proposed three dimensions of passion, affection, and connection in their development of the emotional attachment to brands scale, which is a uni-dimensional construct. Another study by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) stated that brand love consisted of 5 facets namely passion, attachment, positive evaluations of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand and declarations of love for the brand. This brand love scale consisted of 10 items. However, critics have argued that the proposition by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) of brand love as a uni-dimensional scale is unlikely since the various facets explored appear to carry different meanings (Albert &Merunka, 2013).

Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2008) proposed the idea that brand love comprises both cognitive (idealization) and emotional (affective proximity) components that go beyond the cognitive comparison between brands. This firmly differentiates the concept of brand love from a more cognitive comparison construct like satisfaction. The authors believed that a multi-dimensional scale would better reflect the complexity of the concept (Albert & Merunka, 2013). As a result of their investigation, Albert, Merunka, and Valette Florence (2008) found seven first order dimensions of uniqueness, pleasure, intimacy (proximity), idealization (interpersonal items), duration (long relationship), memories (important persons or events), and dream (present in consumer's mind) with two additional second order factors namely passion (linked with idealization and pleasure) and affection (duration, dream, memories, intimacy, and uniqueness). They developed the measurement scales from their two exploratory studies integratingthree additional interpersonal love scales the Triangular Theory Love Scale (Sternberg, 1997), Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986), and the Romantic Love Scale (Rubin, 1970).

Table 2.1 : Development of Brand Love and Related Constructs

Source : Developed for this study

Authors	Definition	Measure	Strength	Critiques
Shimp and Madden (1988)	Consumer-object love Three components namely liking, yearning, and decision/ commitment. It represents psychological process of motivation, emotion, and cognition resulting in 8 possible combinations.	Conceptual paper	S-curve pattern for commitment that levels off in the end. Provides 8 possible scenarios that can be applied.	Relies on Sternberg (1986) Replaced liking for intimacy and yearning for passion because these two are related to decision making.
Whang, Allen, Sahoury, and Zhang (2004)	Lee's (1977) love attitude styles includes eros, ludus, storge, mania, agape, and pragma.	Based on Lee's (1977) love style typology 18 items were developed for these six dimensions.	Findings correspond to the three dimensions of intimacy, passion, and commitment identified by Sternberg (1986).	Argument against the term romantic consumer-product relationshipSarkar et al. (2012).
Thomson, Park and MacInnis (2005)	Emotional attachment consists of three sub-dimensions passion, affection, and connection	Uni-dimensional scale with a total of 10 items measuring the three sub-dimensions.	Developed based on the Attachment Theory. Attachment and connectedness predict separation distress, which is further explored in Batra et al. (2012).	Uni-dimensional scale may not reflect the nuance of the brand love construct (Sarkar et al., 2012).
Caroll and Ahuvia (2006)	Brand love consists of passion, attachment, positive evaluations of the brand, positive emotions in	Uni-dimensional Rating 10 items Use 5 point Likert	First scale to separate from interpersonal love.	Previous research indicates that love is a multiple dimensional construct.

		scale		Items appear to be different constructs. Albert, Merunk,and Valette-Florence (2008) Questionable construct validity Rossiter, Langner, Fischer (2012)
Albert, Merunk,and Valette- Florence (2008)	Identified first order dimensions of uniqueness, pleasure, intimacy (proximity), idealization (interpersonal items), duration (long relationship), memories (important persons or events), and dream (present in consumer's mind) with two additional second order factors namely passion (linked with idealization and pleasure) and affection (duration, dream, memories, intimacy, and uniqueness).	Multi-dimensional Rating 22 items Use 10 point Likert scale	(1) Items identified in our two exploratory studies and (2) Items used in the Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield and Sprecher, 1986), the Triangular Theory Love Scale (Sternberg, 1997), and the Romantic Love Scale (Rubin, 1970).	The results show functional quality, brand loyalty, attachment and emotion, and hedonic aspects of the brand were associated with lower levels of love, which is rather counterintuitive. (Batra, Ahuvia, Bagozzi, 2012)
Batra, Ahuvia, Bagozzi (2012)	Seven distinct elements namely: (1) passion driven behaviors; (2) self-brand; (3) positive emotional; (4) anticipated separation; (5) long-term; (6) positive attitude valence; and (7) strongly held attitudes that are regarded with high certainty and confidence.	Multi-dimensional Rating 28 items Use 7 point Likert scale	Developed using grounded theory Reflective scale of brand love	Some researchers like Rossiter, Langner, Fischer (2012) argue that it should be a formative scale. They also question the construct validity.

Rossiter, Langner, Fischer (2012)	An emotional stateexperienced only by a minority of consumers, and then mainly with highly involving "experiental" products or services.	Contrastive measure	High content validity without using psychometrics. Simpler scale.	Arguable definition of the construct : contradicting definition of brand love, lack of content validity, source quoted (Hatfield and Rapson, 2000) disavows the definition resulted, thus no evidence to support claim. Ahuvia, Bagozzi , Batra(2013)
Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2011)	Brand romance and brand love are conceptually different.	Brand romance has three dimensions including pleasure, arousal, and dominance or cognition using a 12 item scale.	The first study to use Self-Expansion model to brand relationships.	Criticized regarding the validation methodology used by Sarkar et al. (2012).
Sarkar, Ponnam, and Murthy (2012)	Intimacy and passion based on Sternberg (1986). Romantic brand love is related to the experiential or hedonic element of brand purchase behavior.	Multi-dimensional Rating 8 items (4 each) Use 5 point Likert scale	Valid and reliable 8 items for two factors measuring brand love.	Criticized by Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2013) that these constructs overlap with the passion driven behaviors and positive emotional connection (Batra et al., 2012) and affection, passion, and connection (Thomson et al., 2005).

Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012) developed a prototype of brand love that was derived from grounded theory in response to Albert, Merunka, and Valette Florence (2008).The authors reasoned that brand love is deep and enduring making the brand irreplaceable. By extension when the brand is no longer available the consumer would suffer. This model assumes that brand love is a second order construct comprising of seven distinct dimensions namely: (1) passion driven behaviors that can be described by the strong feelings of using the brand, investing resources into it, and a history of taking such actions; (2) self-brand integration is the ability of the brand to express the consumer's actual or aspired identity as well as being capable of providing for life's deeper meaning and intrinsic rewards, and frequent thoughts about the brand; (3) positive emotional connection is more than just positive feelings but encompasses a positive sense of attachment and feeling intuitively right about the choice; (4) anticipated separation distress is a feeling of sadness should the brand no longer exist; (5) long-term relationship is the willingness to use it in the future and having a long-term commitment to it; (6) positive attitude valence; and (7) strongly held attitudes that are regarded with high certainty and confidence.

2.1.4 Rationale for the Dimensions of Brand Love in this Study

The common dimensions of the reviewed brand love dimensions from previous studies are compared in this section to explain those consequently used in this study. Based on Oliver (1999) brand loyalty is developed through a process of cognitive, affective, and conative. This is similar to the proposition made by Fournier (1998) that there are three main dimensions of brand relationship quality namely attachment which comprises of love/passion and self-connection, behavioral ties

which is made up of interdependence and commitment, and supportive cognitive beliefs which includes intimacy and brand partner quality. As a result, the brand love dimensions used in this study must incorporate these three elements of brand relationship quality.

The previous studies have thus been re-examined based upon the rationale that the brand love dimensions used in the study should include the three elements suggested by Fournier (1998). The common dimensions identified in previous research are passion, commitment, intimacy, self-related identity, affection, and commitment. Passion can be defined as the motivation leading to physiological and psychological arousal, which is affected by the changes in the level of intimacy (Sarkar et al., 2012). Intimacy encompasses the information flow between partners, strong favorable attitude towards each other, positive or warm feeling, affinity or feeling of closeness, liking, and perception of care (Sarkar et al., 2012; Shimp & Madden, 1998). Commitment is defined by Fournier (1998) as the feeling and emotional bond that motivates the consumers to take actions that would maintain the relationship with the brand.

One of the studies to express the brand love dimensions was done by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). The authors posited five facets namely passion, attachment, positive evaluations of the brand, positive emotions in response to the brand and declarations of love for the brand. However, the weakness of this measure is its uni-dimensionality as explained in the previous section. As a result it is insufficient to encompass the three elements postulated in brand relationship quality. Another study of interest is the work of Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2008). As discussed

earlier the researchers proposed seven first order dimensions of uniqueness, pleasure, intimacy (proximity), idealization (interpersonal items), duration (long relationship), memories (important persons or events), and dream (present in consumer's mind) with two additional second order factors namely passion (linked with idealization and pleasure) and affection (duration, dream, memories, intimacy, and uniqueness). Sarkar et al. (2012) criticized that this scale has only been published in conference proceedings, thus leading to questions about its validity. In addition Albert et al. (2008) focuses more on the cognitive and emotional component leaving out the conative or behavioral element. Thus, it is not adequate for developing the brand love dimensions used in this study.

Synthesizing the current studies, Patwardhan and Balasubramanian (2013) explained that some of the constructs commonly referred to in many studies that seem different actually overlap with the research of Batra et al., (2012). For instance dimensions of intimacy and passion overlap with the passion-driven behaviors and positive emotional connection. Other constructs that are identified in the Batra et al., (2012) study found in other research includes separation distress and attitude strength. Park et al., (2010) suggested that the dimensions of separation distress, the feeling of anxiety when the object of love is no longer accessible, and attitude strength, the certainty or firmness of attitude valence, were shown to improve the validity of the construct of brand attachment. The reason these constructs are interesting is because when individuals are attached to a brand they would commit money, time, and social resources to ensure that the relationship will be continued (Park et al., 2010). Therefore, the strength of this dedication and the subsequent anxiety when the brand no longer exists warrant further study. These constructs are absent from previous

brand love research. As a consequence this research uses the dimensions proposed by

Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012) because it is deemed as more comprehensive. As a

result the dimensions of brand love identified by Batra et al. (2012) are used in this

study. Therefore the brand love dimensions used in this study include: (1) passion

driven behaviors; (2) self-brand integration; (3) positive emotional connection; (4)

anticipated separation distress; (5) long-term relationship; (6) positive attitude

valence; and (7) strongly held attitudes that are regarded with high certainty and

confidence.

The brand love dimensions identified in Batra et al. (2012) can be applied to

the sports context. The history of the involvement is an indicator of the passion of the

fan has for the team (Richins & Bloch, 1986). This can be explained with the finding

by Albert et al. (2008) that brand love is driven by a consistent set of motives that can

be explained by an emotional connection. Fans seek "the right" team to support based

on the congruence of the team's image to their own self (Aaker, 1997). This

emotional connection tends to be a strong bond because sports is a category that

produces a very high emotional response (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The

emotional attachment experienced by fans partly determines their level of

commitment for the team (Thomson et al., 2005).

The self-brand integration can be analogous to the psychological connection

with teams (Trail & James, 2001; Wann et al., 2001). A direct result of this

connection would lead to fans having frequent thoughts about their favorite teams

(Ross & James, 2007). When brands form a strong bond with consumers the brand

thoughts surface easily and frequently (Park et al., 2010). The positive emotional connection can lead to nostalgia, which is a longing for the past or a feeling of affection that is derived from memories from the past (Holbrook, 1993). This nostalgic association between fans and their teams helps to create brand equity (Gladden & Funk, 2002).The historical association and nostalgic memories lead fans to engage in passion driven behaviors. Previous researchers have identified that passion-driven behaviors motivate fans to invest in their loved teams (Trail & James, 2001; Funk & Pastore, 2000; Wann, 1995). Funk and James (2006) explained that nostalgia and recollection of good memories was an important driver of brand love.

Having a history together leads to the possibility of a long-term relationship with the team, this term is linked to intimacy (Ahuvia, 2005). This relationship quality has thus been identified as a possible dimension of brand love in sports (Kim & Trail, 2011; Kim, Trail, & Ko, 2011). Sports fans are involved with their teams and experience anticipated separation distress when they experience joy and pain at every loss or victory (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005; Branscombe & Wann, 1992). Attitude valence is defined as the degree of positive or negative evaluation of the team's performance (Funk & Pastore, 2000). This influences the longevity of the attitude; resist negative information about the team and preferences for competitive teams; create bias thoughts about the team; and have consistent behavior in supporting the team (Funk & James, 2004). Funk and Pastore (2000) defined that attitude strength is the confidence or conviction that fans have for their loved team.

56

Sports brands or teams serve many needs for consumers especially those of socialization and spending time with loved ones (Trail & James, 2001). Social reference is important because sports are consumed as a social activity (Wann, 1995). Cunningham and Kwon (2003) found that the values and traditions can be established from the references from other fans as subjective norms, which are social expectations from their friends. DeGroot and Robinson (2008) suggested that the sense of membership is important to the consumer's sports consumption experience. Thus, the stage is set for the exploration of identification antecedents of brand love that will be explained in section 2.2 (Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2000).

2.2 Antecedents of Brand Love

After developing the concept of brand love in 1993, Ahuvia embarked on a research to identify some possible antecedents and outcomes of brand love (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). The authors reasoned that the nature of the brand had an effect on brand love quoting from previous research such as Hirschman and Holbrook (1982). Hedonic products that had pleasure and fun as its primary benefit should elicit stronger emotional responses. Self-expressive brands which dealt with the aspect of the construction of the sense of self through the merging of self and the beloved was used as another antecedent (Aron & Aron, 1986). The authors reasoned that if consumers loved the brand they would be more likely committed to repurchase and talk positively about it.

A sample size of 334 respondents answered the questionnaire that was collected by student volunteers who were employed as field researchers. No specific

brand was mentioned, the respondents were told to recall a specific brand of packaged good in its product category that they were satisfied with. All of the remaining questions referred to that particular brand. The items regarding brand love, brand loyalty, +WOM, and self-expressive brand were Likert scales, while the measure of hedonic product was a semantic differential scale. Two separate measures were developed for the possibility of two dimensions of self-expressive brand namely the brand that reflects the inner self and the brand that enhances the social self. Structural Equation Modeling was used for the analysis of the relationships between the constructs. The results showed that the hedonic product factor had very low direct effects on +WOM and loyalty. Self-expressive brand had a fairly good effect on +WOM and brand love but not loyalty. The strongest path showed that brand love did have a strong effect on +WOM. This meant that the identification with the brand was a strong factor affecting brand love as compared to the benefit derived from using the product. Thus, this research does not include the characteristics of the brand as an antecedent of brand love.

Building on the findings of Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) reasoned that brand identification would be one of the antecedents of brand love. They quoted the work of Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) that social identity should influence brand identification and hence increasing involvement with the brand. As for the consequences of brand love they used brand loyalty and WOM according to Carroll and Ahuvia (2006). However, they believe that there might be more actions taken as a consequence of brand love than just WOM thus they included the variable active engagement.

They conducted two surveys. Respondents were university students who were asked to participate in the study without any reward. The data were collected in class. For each study two brands were pre-selected and respondents were allowed to either name a soft drink or apparel brand as the third brand. This is to ensure that there is a mix of utilitarian and hedonic products. A total of 293 respondents answered the questionnaire. The analysis was conducted using Partial Least Square. The results showed that brand identification and sense of community are both directly related to brand love. The hypothesized path from sense of community to brand identification was rejected.

Subsequently, the research by Batra et al. (2012) conducted three studies based on the argument that brand love needs to be developed from the grounded theory approach. The first study aimed to elicit a broad perspective on the things consumers professed love for. This was a structured phone interview of 70 respondents. The second study was narrower in scope with the focus on loved brands. This was an in-depth interview of 18 respondents. The third study was a survey examining the love in the electronics context. A pre-test was conducted on 133 undergraduates. The final data collection was an online study administered in random order. The resulting sample was 268 respondents. This was done using the same method as Thomson, MacInnis, and Park (2005) and Escalas and Bettman (2005). The study yielded seven higher order elements namely self-brand integration, passion-driven behaviors, positive emotional connection, long-term relationship, positive overall attitude valence, attitude and certainty confidence, and anticipated separation distress. In addition the study found that quality beliefs serve as an antecedent to brand love. This is in line with the study by Thomson, MacInnis and Park (2005) that

found that satisfaction leads to emotional attachment to the brand. Brand loyalty, WOM, and resistance to negative information are consequences.

Later Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2013) proposed brand identification and brand trust as possible antecedents of brand love and brand commitment, positive word of mouth, and propensity to pay a premium price as consequences. The study was conducted with a sample of 1,505 respondents from an online panel and the data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares SEM. The participants were instructed to choose their own favorite brand. The items used were developed partly from Albert et al. (2008); Caroll and Ahuvia (2006) and Escalas and Bettman (2003). This reiterates the findings by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) that brand identification influences brand love. Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2013) found that the brand trust and identification were strong antecedents of brand love while brand commitment, positive word of mouth, and propensity to pay a premium are the consequences. Combining the findings from these previous studies, it stands to reason that this research would use brand identification and identification to other users as antecedents to brand love.

2.3 Literature Related to Identification

Building upon the review in the previous section regarding identification as possible antecedents of brand love, this section relates the constructs within the setting of virtual brand community. In simple terms the virtual brand community described by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) is a relationship triad among customers and the brand. The drive of personal expression is fulfilled through the purchase of goods and services. As Aaker (1997) stated, consumers make purchases to reflect their

identity. Consumers match the brand with the brand user image or symbol attributes with the their self concept, which encompasses the actual self, ideal self, social self, etc. (Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber & Lee, (2006); Sirgy (1982). Research has shown that the congruity between the self and the brand plays an important role in motivating purchases and hence brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006; Maholtra, 1988; Sirgy, 1985). Self-image congruence with the brand has been studied extensively in relation to consumer choices (Kressman et al., 2006). These authors found that self-image congruence had both direct and indirect effect on loyalty. Self-image congruence with the brand is driven by self-concept motives namely self-esteem and self-consistency (Aaker, 1997; Biel, 1997; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Sirgy, 1982). It is postulated that the greater the match between the brand user's image with the consumer's ideal self-image, the greater the drive to use the brand to fulfill the self-esteem needs.

Researchers have identified sociological reasons for consumers to engage in relationship with brands. Hollebeek (2011) proposed that it is interesting to study empirically the impact of different engagement levels on loyalty outcomes through statistical modeling. Previous research has shown the influence of social institutions and groups on purchase and consumption. Of particular interest will be reference groups that consumers compare themselves with in order to seek guidance for their own behavior (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Virtual brand communities have been recognized as having the ability to contribute to the formation of attitudes towards the brand (Muniz & Schau, 2005; McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

2.3.1 Definitions of Identification

This section briefly introduces how the definitions of identification give rise to the two antecedents of brand love. The relationship between the constructs is discussed within the context of virtual brand communities, which is the major focus of this study. The constructs Consumer Brand Identification and Psychological Sense of Community are further explained in section 2.4.1 Identification Antecedents of Brand Love.

As brands become loaded with meaning, consumption becomes an issue regarding serving identification goals (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, &Sen, 2012; Escalas & Bettman, 2009; Fournier, 2009; Belk, 1988;Levy, 1959). The concept of consumer brand identification was developed from organization behavior where employees felt a sense of belonging to their workplace or students to their alma maters (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Bhattacharya et al., 1995; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The following section traces the development of the identification construct.

Initial studies explored the sense of belonging to organizations including place of work or educational institutions (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Bhattacharya et al., 1995; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Later Ashforth and Mael (1989) developed the concept of person-organization relationship or organization identification. The authors characterized it as a perceived oneness with organization, which means that the individual feels the organization's successes and failures as it were one's own. Working further on this construct Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) described it as a

cognitive identification state that is separate from the evaluative and emotional

consequences. They called it cognitive organizational definition.

Escalas and Bettman (2003, 2009) recognized that the importance of the self-

brand connection stems from organization identification. The authors described these

self-brand connection as the extent to which an individual incorporates the brand into

their personal definition of self-concept. Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) suggested that

there should be a distinction between consumer-company identification and the

identification with the brands. Building on this study, Ahearne, Bhattacharya, and

Gruen (2005) developed the customer-company identification concept, which is

similar to Bhattacharya and Sen (2003). Ahearne et al. (2005) proposed three

conditions for its development. First, the product or service must be important enough

to matter to the consumer, which is in line with the study by Bhattacharya and Sen

(2003). The second is that the identification is likely to occur from distinctive

difference within the comparison set. The third is that the customers feel that they are

"embedded" in the folds of the organization through the frequent interaction with the

company making them feel more like insiders (Ahearne et al., 2005). On the other

hand customer brand identification proposed by Lam et al., (2010) is defined as the

psychological state of perceiving, feeling, and valuing the belongingness of the

consumer with the brand. This research uses the perspective that a bond is formed by

consumers to engage with the company because they identify with the brand (He, Li

& Harris 2012). This is supported by research on consumer brand identification (CBI)

that has explored the consequences including brand loyalty and brand advocacy

(Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012).

63

In addition to identifying with brands, consumers also identify with fellow consumers. Friendship is one of the benefits sought in joining virtual brand communities (Ridings & Gefen, 2004; Horrigan, 2002). This feeling of camaraderie is an important characteristic identified as a collective sense of identity that is felt by members of a virtual brand community (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). A person's identity, which is related to social identity, may be derived from community membership (Riger & Lavrakas, 1981; Sarason, 1974; Gusfield, 1975).

The social identity itself is created from the relationships that individuals have with other individuals and the community (Jenkins, 1996). As a result the definition of self is based on the perceived similarities with other group members deriving identity from their connections (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) applied the concept to virtual brand community and expressed it as a cognitive identification state that is separate from the evaluative and emotional consequences. Consequently, this perspective is used in this study to guide the definition of the identification constructs.

Beyond the perception of similarity with other members is the feeling of membership. Andersen (1983) proposed the idea of an "imagined community" where people are connected to one another through a mental image of affinity that is not bound to language or geography. Shaw and Evens (2005) expanded this definition by stating that members feel a sense of belonging with people previously unknown to them through the consumption of a common brand, which is what makes the virtual brand community different from the traditional brand community (Bagozzi &

Dholakia, 2002). Thus leading to the introduction of the construct Psychological

Sense of Community used in this study as one of the antecedents of brand love.

2.3.2 Theories Related to Identification

This section reviews the theories including Social Identification Theory,

Reference Group Theory, Social Identification - Brand Equity, and Collective Identity

Framework that have been used to explain identification. For the purposes of this

study the Social Identification Theory (SIT) is used in developing the identification

aspects in this research.

Identity itself is described as individual's conception of who they are, what

sort of people they are, and how they relate to others (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Of

interest in this study is how brands assist in the maintenance of an individual's

identity (Escalas & Bettman, 2003; Ball & Tasaki, 1992; Belk, 1988). Research has

shown that even as early as middle childhood to the early adolescent years to

adulthood, brands serve as identity cues (Chaplin & John, 2005; Gentry, Baker, &

Kraft, 1995). The self-concept of individuals can be maintained by the brands used in

such a way that these brands define, maintain, and enhance the individual's self image

(Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003).

It is posited that individuals will act in a way that is consistent with and/or

enhances their sense of self (Graef, 1996; Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993; Belk,

1988; Sirgy, 1982). As a consequence Graeff (1996) presented the idea of "Image

Congruence Hypothesis" stating that consumers would be attracted to brands that are

perceived to be congruent with their self-image. It has been suggested by Levy since

65

1959, that consumers buy the brands as symbols to communicate their self-concept. Ownership of products can be used as a means to define and identify the self to others and to maintain this consistent image over time (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003).

Individuals identify with brands because they would like to be associated with others who are using the brand (Grubb & Hupp, 1968). Hyman (1942) proposed the idea that individuals will compare themselves with reference groups as a means of formulating their own behavior. Under this Reference Group Theory the process of using reference groups can be explained through the concepts of identification, internalization, human aspirations, and the reduction of perceived risk. Escalas and Bettman (2005) built on this original premise stating that the symbolic properties of reference groups become imbued in the brands that the groups are believed to use.

The creation of brand meaning and its expression both privately and publicly are ideally found in the context of brand communities (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; McCracken, 1988). The brand communities create an environment that brings to the fore the idea that usage of brands, that are perceived as congruent or similar to one's identity. enhance one's self-identity (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Escalas & Bettmann, 2003). Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen (2012) explained that consumers in brand communities are connected through a shared set of beliefs, rituals, and jargon. This means that the connection to the brand should enhance their social connection to a desired group.

The Social Identity Theory by Tajfel (1978) explains that an individual's self-concept is derived from their knowledge of membership in a social group including the value and emotional significance of belonging. In essence the Social Identity Theory is based on the personal and social identities of a person (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social Identification Theory posits that self-concept consists of a personal identity, which includes the individual characteristics like physical attributes and abilities. In effect personal identity is described as the characteristics based on how one views one self. It is made up of factors such as unique talents, interests, and self-perception (Bartel, 2001). Social identity is described as the perception of belonging to a group resulting in identification with the group (Bhattacharya, Rao, &Glynn, 1995).

Of interest in this research is the concept of how the individual is linked to the salient groups through social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In interpersonal relationships this gives as individual an intergroup context as members of a certain group (Tajfel, 1978). Thus, the meaning of self is derived from the comparison with others and resulting relational perception. Hence, the self-concept is borne from the evaluations of others. In a bid to get positive reactions, people may consume certain products or services in communicating the desired meaning to others (Grubb & Gratwohl, 1967).

This is in line with the idea of reference groups, which are considered a major source of information for consumers in terms of evaluation of the world. These cues are especially strong when it comes from those that are deemed to have similar beliefs or share common characteristics in important dimensions with the individual (Escalas

& Bettman, 2005). Previous research has demonstrated that there is a congruency between the group membership and brand usage (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989; Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Of particular interest will be reference groups that consumers compare themselves with in order to determine their own actions (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Consumers will comply with group norms in order to attain certain benefits, to avoid punishment, or simply to remain socially connected. In addition this might include the reduction of risk and give credence to information. Sometimes it is aspirational in nature, which is why the brand itself should reflect admirable qualities.

Social Identification – Brand Equity (SIBE) model is an elaboration of the Social Identity Theory. Underwood, Bond, Baer (2001) proposed the SIBE model to explain the emotional connection between the consumer and service brands. SIBE posits that the more an individual identifies with a brand the higher the level of brand equity held. The social identification is created within the context of the service marketplace. In the context of sports this can include fan community and location of matches (Boyle & Magnusson, 2007).The group spectator experience further enhances the natural in-group perception thus cultivating a stronger bond with the brand (Underwood et al., 2001).

Another framework that elaborates on the social identity framework is the collective identity framework developed by Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004). Much like Tajfel (1978) Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) explained that social identity comprises of the perceived belongingness to a group defined as community identity.According to other works such as Hogg and Turner

68

(1985) and Tajfel (1978) it results in enhanced individual self-esteem. For this

enhancement to happen the consumer must find that the particular community is an

attractive target for identification, as explained by Ahearne et al. (2005).

Furthermore a person's identity may be derived from community membership,

which is related to the person's social identity (Riger & Lavrakas, 1981; Gusfield,

1975; Sarason, 1974). Social identity is created from the relationships that individuals

have with other individuals and the community (Jenkins, 1996). Thus individuals end

up defining themselves based on the perceived similarities with other group members

deriving identity from their connections (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Bergami and

Bagozzi (2000) defined identification as the degree of overlap between the self-

schema and the desired group. It is the cognitive identification state that is separate

from the evaluative and emotional consequences. This is similar to the concept of

consumer-company identification proposed by Bhattacharya and Sen (2003). The

authors described it as the primary psychological process that explains the deep

meaningful commitment in the relationships between consumers and brands.

2.3.3 Dimensions of Identification

Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) presented the view that

identification is a multi-dimensional construct including self-categorization,

evaluation, importance, attachment and sense of interdependence, social

embeddedness, behavioral involvement, as well as content and meaning. This is in

line with the Social Identity Theory, which posits that there are three components that

make up the individual's social identity (Tajfel, 1982). First is the cognitive

component, which is the self-categorization or awareness of group membership. The

second is the evaluative component or group esteem, a means to compare one to others in the group. The third is the emotional investment component, which is the affective commitment to the group.

Lam et al., (2010) proposed three dimensions namely cognitive, emotional, and valuing the oneness with the brand. The author explained that identification was a formative construct with three dimensions of cognitive dimension, emotional consequences of the brand usage, and evaluative CBI. Cognitive dimension is defined akin to the concept of cognitive organizational identification by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000). This construct is the cognitive state of self-categorization that reflects self-awareness of one's membership in an organization. The second dimension is the "feeling" component of emotional consequences of brand usage. The third dimension is defined as the "evaluative" component, which is the perception of whether the consumer thinks that the psychological oneness with the brand is valuable to the person individually and socially. Stokburger-Sauer et al., (2012) and Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) argued that many of these elements can be either categorized as antecedents or outcomes of identification. Thus for a better understanding of the identification process, the Social Identity Theory (SIT) is discussed in the following section.

2.4 The Social Identity Theory

This research uses the Social Identity Theory as the basis in developing the identification constructs used in this research as antecedents to the dependent variable brand love. In this section the Social Identity Theory originally proposed by Tajfel

(1978) is explained. Finally, the concepts formulated in this theory are linked to the identification constructs used in this study.

The Social Identity Theory (SIT) was developed by Tajfel (1978)and later by Tajfel and Turner (1979) as a social-psychological theory designed to explain the cognition and behavior of individuals as a result of group-processes. The assumption is a demonstration of in-group solidarity and discrimination against those perceived as out-group, which is a part of the social identity process that is motivated by the need to achieve positive self-esteem and self-enhancement (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Trepte, 2006). The main proposition of Social Identification Theory (SIT) is the level of an individual's identification with the group would consequently determine their behaviors to align with the norms and values of the group.

Social Identification Theory (SIT) defines a group membership as having a cognitive component (acknowledging group membership or social categorization), an evaluative component (a positive or negative evaluation of the group membership or self esteem), and an emotional component (emotional involvement and the subsequent affective commitment or social comparison) (Trepte, 2006; Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999).

Social Categorization

To simplify the environment, humans create categories in order to choose the appropriate kind of social interaction. Thus, it can be said that social categorization discriminates those who are out-group by accentuating the inter-class differences while playing down the intra-class differences (Trepte, 2006). This is further

71

accentuated when the group is salient and of immediate relevance to the individual (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). The social categorizing influences perception and behavior when the group is important.

This theory was further elaborated by Turner (1987) as the Self-Categorization Theory. It differs from Social Identification Theory in the assumption regarding the interpersonal and intergroup behavior as opposing ends on a continuum. Self-Categorization Theory posits that personal and social identities represent different levels of this self-categorization (Trepte, 2006). Previous theorists have found that it is difficult to distinguish the two theories and are often discussed as complementing one another.

Social Comparison

After acknowledging group categorization, the first behavior is social comparison, which is defined as the individual's place in society (Trepte, 2006). Once individuals categorize themselves and others, they start to evaluate the groups. The evaluation of superiority or inferiority of one's group is derived from a comparison of characteristics, members, and benefits. This is in line with Festinger's (1954) Theory of Social Comparison, which has the assumption that the comparison is necessary when there are no objective standards to evaluating one's own self.

Social comparison in Social Identification Theory is regarded as an important driver of social identity and self-esteem. Social comparison usually takes place between groups that are similar. The evaluation will be based on dimensions upon which the groups compete with one another, such as the case of fan clubs of rival

football teams. There are three premises underlying social comparison. First the group membership is part of their self-concept thus the individual must be identified with their in-group. Second social comparison is possible in the situation or context. Finally, the out-group must be relevant thus it must be similar in key dimensions and within the proximity for comparison (Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Trepte, 2006).

However, the major question that comes to mind at this point is how the group membership can be formed. The following section explains the Sense of Community (SOC) concept. Consequently, the discussion of this concept leads to the development of the Psychological Sense of Community, which is the expansion of SOC within the framework of virtual brand communities, which lays the foundation for this research.

Sense of community (SOC) concept, developed by Sarason (1974) and McMillan and Chavis (1986), serves as the foundation for the development of psychological sense of community. Carlson et al., (2008) reasoned that consumers develop a sense of community due to the identification with desirable characteristics of the brand and/or characteristics of the members in the community. This may be possible even in the absence of actual physical social interaction between members. With the Internet it is possible to have what Anderson (1983) termed as imagined community through virtual interactions.

Identity and identification are the core premises particularly relevant to the development of virtual brand communities (Blanchard 2007; Blanchard & Markus, 2004; Tonteri et al., 2011). Thus, the Social Identity Theory forms the foundation for the development of the concept of psychological sense of community. Previous

studies such asGusfield (1975) have emphasized the geographical community as the prerequisite for the development of a sense of community. However, later works conducted by McMillan and Chavis (1986) and Carlson et al., (2008) have demonstrated that the psychological sense of community can be attained without geographic proximity, which laid the foundation of the development of this concept.

The psychological sense of community is derived from the Sense of community (SOC) concept developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). It is described as the shared feeling that members have a sense of belonging since they matter to the community. They believe that their needs can be fulfilled through the commitment they have to the community. Thus it can be said it is comprised of four elements namely membership, influence, integration, and need fulfillment.

1) Membership is characterized by McMillan and Chavis (1986) as a feeling that is derived from the investment in the membership thus warranting the right to belong. This personal investment motivates members to participate in the community (Bess et al., 2002).

2) Influence is a bidirectional concept wherein members have influence on the group and vice versa (Rosenbaum et al., 2005;McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

3) Integration and fulfillment of needs are the primary drivers of behavior that enhance or reinforce the positive sense of togetherness. In a way it is the reward for the membership (Bess et al., 2002; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Other authors like Blanchard (2008), Blanchard and Markus (2004), Wasko and Faraj (2000) also defined a dimension of giving back or the need to be obligated to the community.

4) Shared emotional connections stem from the needs of members in incorporating the community's identity to their own (Rosenbaum et al., 2005; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Other studies also identify this emotional connection (Blanchard, 2008; Blanchard & Markus, 2004; Koh & Kim, 2003).

The importance is psychological sense of community is clear in virtual brand communities, where the relationship between members is not dependent on actual social interaction. The authors reasoned that consumers may develop a sense of community due to the identification with desirable characteristics of the brand and/or characteristics of the members in the community (Carlson et al., 2008). Psychological sense of community (Woisetschlager, Hartleb, & Blut, 2008) is reasoned to include elements such as feelings of friendship, trust, and support. As a consequence the brand is the link connecting consumers who have similar passions.

Self-Esteem

Group membership is evaluated in terms of its value to the individual (Ellemers et al., 1999). The value of the group membership has to be explored within the social context since the esteem is driven from the status or performance of the group. Matsuoka et al. (2003) found that when the team's performance is good, the positive evaluation of team membership increases.

2.4.1 Identification Antecedentsof Brand Love

As stated earlier that for the underlying concepts of Social Identity Theory (SIT) to drive action, the group must be important to the individual. The Social Identity Theory posits that salience is an exogenous factor thus related research has been used to explain it. Salience is defined by Stryker and Serpe (1994) as the

readiness to take action based on the identity, which is the consequence of the cognitive structure or schema. This salience is activated when the sense of belonging to the group results in self-esteem, pride or vicarious achievement. Despite being proposed as a possible antecedent to activation of identification the effort of putting this in a framework for understanding brand communities is in its infancy (Heere et al. , 2011). Thus this section will examine salience, which can be taken as the antecedentsnamely consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community.

Consumer Brand Identification

The choice of brands is said to help maintain a sense of self for individuals in today's world that is saturated with marketing messages (Graef, 1996; Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993; Belk, 1988; Sirgy, 1982). The choice of brands comes from the way individuals would like to project their self-image (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). As a result brands are used as a means to communicate the self-concept to others (Escalas & Bettman, 2005).

Brands have been recognized for their identity in developing brand positioning (Aaker, 1997; Balmer, 1995). This identity structure is comprised of six facets namely culture, personality, self-projection, physique, reflection, and relationship. Physical representations include product features, symbols and attributes while personality is a representation of character and relationship is a sign of beliefs and association. Culture is the set of values held while reflection is the consumer's view of the brand and finally self-image is the internal reflection of the consumer on who is the user of the brand (Kapferer, 1992). It is quite obvious that some of these concepts overlap

with other branding ideas such as personality and image, which can be assumed to be true since the brand is a synthesis of its various components. The brand itself is more than a sum of its parts (Maurya, 2012). This collaborates with the next concept that the brand is inclusive of all the associations that exist in the mind in relation to it (Arnold, 1992; Keller, 1993).

Calder (2005) explained that a brand could be broadly characterized as groups of properties and associations deriving a specific meaning for the product or service. This is further elaborated by Franzen and Moriarty (2008) that consumer decisions have personal and cultural values as influencers, thus it is logical to assume that brands represent a bundle of values. Clark (1987) later explained that consumers find value in the brand, its heritage, and the experience of their interactions with it. Sheth et al., (1991) identified five consumption values as functional –the utility level of the product, social value or social acceptance value, emotion value or the feelings and aesthetics involved, epistemic values or the novelty value, and finally conditional value or the context and circumstances of purchase and usage.

Brands are recognized as having symbolic personalities that offer value beyond the functional aspect (Maurya, 2012; Goodyear, 1993; Blackston, 1992; Arnold, 1992). Consumers purchase brands that fit the personality they wish to project (Zinkhan et al., 1996). Since the pioneering work of Schouten and McAlexander (1995), brands as a focal point in creating identification has received continued interests in many prominent studies such as Cova and Pace (2006); Muniz and Schau (2005); McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig (2002); Muniz and O'Guinn (2001).In addition consumer brand identification (CBI)is described by Lam et al.

77

(2010) as the psychological state of perceiving, feeling, and valuing the belongingness with the brand by the consumer. Research on consumer brand identification has demonstrated consequences such as brand loyalty and brand advocacy (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012).

Stokburger-Sauer and Teichmann (2014) explained that consumer brand identification (CBI) is synonymous with fan identification in sports marketing. The benefits of consumer brand identification (CBI) has been explored by previous researchers to include engagement activities such as watching the matches played by the team (Trail et al., 2015; Matsuoka et al., 2003). Boyle and Magnusson (2007) found that this social identification or consumer brand identification with the team played a major role in increasing brand equity. The authors did a comparative study of three types of audiences for college basketball namely alumni, public, and students. They found that each group had a different level of identification with the team hence different levels of perceived brand equity. For the purpose of this research CBI is identified as the individual's sense of having personal identity embodied by affiliation with the brand.

Psychological Sense of Community

Initially identity was described as the individual's held concept of who they, what type of people they are, and how they are defined in relation to others (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Later the concept of social identity was developed showing the connection between an individual to salient groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The authors suggested that individuals end up defining themselves based on the perceived similarities with other group members deriving identity from their connections. Social

identity was further developed by Ellemers, Kortekaas, and Ouwerkerk (1999) as a sense of belongingness.

Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008) found that consumers who had a high psychological sense of community were more likely to engage in activities like WOM, preference of the brand over competitors, interest in brand-related events, and interest in the history of the brand. The authors concluded that having some sort of commitment to the community has an impact on four activities (1) a higher probability to promote the brand to others, (2) preference for the brand over competitive offerings, (3) interest in attending brand related activities, and (4) interest in the history and tradition of the brand, which is extension beyond the typical concept of brand loyalty. In a way, many of these concepts are incorporated in brand love, which is an extension of brand loyalty (Carlson, Suter, & Brown, 2008). The study by Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) identified that sense of community is not an antecedent of brand identification. As a consequence, this research hypothesizes that the relationship takes on a different path. The consumer brand identification may have an impact on the psychological sense of community and together they have an impact on engagement and brand love.

2.5. Literature Related to Engagement

As researchers start to focus on the dynamics of consumer brand relationships, a stream of studies started to explore the involvement or the level of interest that the consumers' express in terms of the brand's relevance to the individual (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). According to the researchers the shift to the iterative nature of the consumer brand relationship, has given rise to the study of engagement.

Hollebeek (2011) explained that this is because engagement is rooted in the relationship marketing and service-dominant logic perspectives. This view is supported by many works that have suggested that engagement is an antecedent of positive brand outcomes including sales growth, brand referrals, collaboration with consumers, co-creative experiences, and profitability (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Nambisan & Baron, 2007; Prahalad, 2004). To illustrate this point Verhoef et al. (2010) explained that engagement includes repeated purchase and subsequent loyalty, which are basic relationship marketing tenets.In addition the modern consumer is no longer a passive recipient of brand communications. Consumers today are more active in the brand-based processes (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Prahalad, 2004; Hoffman & Novak, 1996).

The engagement-based construct has been studiedin relation to many different brand-based processes including the brand (customer engagement (Brodie et.al, 2011); customer brand engagement (Hollebeek, 2011a; Hollebeek, 2011b); brand engagement in self-concept (Sprott, Czellar, & Spangenberg, 2009) consumer brand engagement (Hollebeek et al., 2014)); the brand community (consumer engagement in brand community (Brodie et.al, 2013); brand community engagement (Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Hermann, 2005)); the media (online engagement (Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009)). Based on these previous studies, Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) made five observations regarding the development of the engagement construct. As mentioned earlier there are many engagement-based concepts. This seems to be a sign that this construct is still in the early stages of its development (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). Second, engagement is a motivational state (Van Doorn, et al., 2010) that drives the interactive experience with the brand or some other

object such as online media (Malthouse & Hofacker, 2010; Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Shankar & Batra, 2009) or brand offerings, organizations, and organizational activities (Hollebeek, 2011; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Patterson, Ting, & De Ruyter, 2006). The third observation is that engagement is a multi-dimensional concept that comprises of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions (Hollebeek, 2011, 2012). For instance Calder, Malthouse, and Schaedel (2009) identified eight dimensions, namely, stimulation and inspiration, talking/sharing, temporal, self-esteem and civic mindedness, time-out, utilitarian, participation and socializing, and community. The fourth observation engagement is a key concept in the nomological net of conceptual consumer brand relationships (Brodie et al., 2011). The fifth and the final observation is that fact that there are still only a limited number of engagement scales that have been developed.

2.5.1 Definitions of Engagement

There are two streams of research defining the engagement (Maslowska, Malthouse, & Collinger, 2016) construct. The first stream is the behavioral stream (Van Doorn et al., 2010; Verheof et al., 2010). This definition of engagement is the behavior exhibited by the consumer towards the brand that goes beyond simple purchase. However, as discussed in the previous section, this research takes the view that engagement can be interpreted as motivation to have an iterative experience with a particular object. This second stream of research has led to the development of various engagement concepts and resulting definitions that will be discussed in this section accordingly.

81

Patterson, Yu, and De Ruyter (2006) proposed the customer engagement as being the level of physical, cognitive, and emotional presence in the relationship with a service provider. It is a multi-dimensional construct described by vigor, dedication, absorption, and interaction. This is similar to the consumer of consumer engagement described by Vivek (2009) as the intensity level of the connection and participation with the firm's offerings and/or activities. It is also a multi-dimensional construct composing of awareness, enthusiasm, interaction, activity, and extraordinary experience.

Whittaker et al., (1997) explored the process of explained as the repeated active participation, access to shared resources, reciprocity of information, shared social context, and some shared vision which is the reason for membership in the virtual brand community. Algesheimer et al. (2005) defined engagement as the result of positive influences of identification with the brand community, which is derived from the individual's motivation to interact and cooperate with other community members. It is described as having utilitarian, hedonic, and social aspects. Consequently Algesheimer et al. (2005) defined community engagement as the consumers' intrinsic motivation to interact and cooperate with community members including 1. Helping members 2. Participation in joint activities 3. Acting volitionally in ways the community endorses and that enhances its value for themselves and others.

Brodie et al. (2011b) defined engagement as a motivational state as a result of interactive, co-creative consumer experiences with the brand within the context of a brand relationship. The researcher elaborated on the consumer experiences proposing

that consumer engagement in virtual brand communities as consisting of five behaviors namely learning, sharing, advocating, socializing, and co-developing. Later Brodie et al. (2013) refined the definition to be a multi-dimensional construct composed of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions that are central in the relational exchange embedded in the iterative context of brand communities.

Hollebeek (2011a,b) defined engagement as the level of a customers' motivational, brand-related, and context-dependent state with specific levels of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment in brand interactions. This captures the value of the experience derived as a consequence of these interactions. Later, Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) added "positively valenced" to the definition to reiterate the importance positive reinforcement in driving the interaction process. Thus the resulting definition is the positively valenced cognitive, emotional, and behavioral brand related activity that is generated during, in relation to, and specifically for consumer and brand interactions.

Calder et al. (2009) developed a scale for on-line engagement. The researchers reasoned that engagement is difficult to define as a result the construct is described as a measurement model where the experiences, which can be derived from utilitarian or hedonic enjoyment, are first-order constructs. The engagement itself is defined as a second-order construct. Using the measurement model approach the researchers developed the model by factor analyzing the experience measures to develop the second-order construct, engagement. This research takes a different approach for others in defining engagement providing useful insight into further development of the construct.

Another interesting definition of engagement is developed by Sprott, Czellar, and Spangenberg (2009). Specifically, the engagement is defined as being embedded within the self-concept of the consumer. As a result the definition of engagement is given as the propensity to include important brands as part of the how consumers view themselves or self-concept.

Another perspective of engagement is the social context with the focus on the ability of the brand to facilitate the affective responses and co-creation experiences from the consumers (Gambetti et al., 2012). As a result of engagement that delivers the meaningful messages resonating with consumers, a mental activation of passionate feelings for the brand is developed (Smith, 2014). Engagement can also be defined as the result of iterative experiences spent over time with a brand in response to a brand communications that underlies consumer behavior (Plummer, Zaltman, & Mast, 2006).

After studying these various definitions, this study proposes to define engagement as a motivation driven multi-dimensional construct comprising of positive cognitive, emotional, and brand-related activity with differing levels of intensity embedded within the context of the experience in the virtual brand community as part of the expression of the individual's self-concept.

2.5.2 Theories Related to Engagement

The basic assumption of engagement is that consumers are active participants in the brand related activities and processes (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Prahalad 2004). In order to better understand the development of the construct, it is necessary to

revisit some of the theories that are used to explain engagement with technology, social media, and eventually its application to branding.However different these theories explain the core idea that engagement is a motivation based construct that is rooted in the experience with a particular object of interest. The broad compilation of theories is necessary because engagement is a construct that has been developed from numerous disciplines including psychology, sociology, and organizational behavior (Brodie et al., 2011).Maslowska, Malthouse, and Collinger (2016) explained further that despite being recognized as an important construct the theories used to explain engagement is still far from complete and its nomological network not sufficiently explained.

The first perspective of engagement discussed explains the motivation driving action. The main proposition of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), explains that an individual's actual behavior would be determined from prior intention in collaboration with beliefs that a person would have for that particular behavior. TRA posits that attitude towards behavior and social norm predicts behavior. This social norm corresponds to the community pressure, which in turn drives the group behavior in maintaining relationships within the group (Algesheimer et al., 2005; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Davis (1986) used this premise of attitude and social norms predicting behavior to develop the Technology Adoption Model (TAM). In the studies of related to motivation in regards to technology related matters Technology Adoption Model (TAM) is the most cited theory (Lee, Kozar, & Larsen, 2003). Davis (1986) proposed that the motivation to use a system depended upon three factors.

The constructs include the Perceived Ease of Use, Usefulness, and Attitude

toward using the system. It was posited that the attitude of a user toward the system

determined the adoption. Two types of perception, ease of use and usefulness affect

this attitude. Initially Davis (1986) chose not to include subjective norm (SN) because

he explained that Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggested that this construct was not

well supported theoretically. Davis (1986) proposed the use of attitude (A), which

would be predicted by beliefs and evaluations, namely, Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)

and Perceived Usefulness (PU).

Ventakesh and Davis (2000) later modified model to reflect the impact of

three interrelated social forces believed to affect the adoption of a system. These three

factors are subjective norm, voluntariness, and image. Of interest in this particular

literature review would be the construct subjective norm and image. Subjective norm

is derived from the gap that it is necessary to study the condition that has an impact on

the social influences. Ventakesh and Davis (2000) quoted Kelman (1958) to explain

the premise that individuals respond to social normative influences to establish or

maintain a favorable image with the reference group. Even such technology driven

theory recognizes the importance of the self-identity within the reference group which

bridges the gap between technology and social factors.

Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) developed the Uses and Gratifications

Theory has been used to study the motivation driving media usage. Rubin (1993)

explained that Uses and Gratifications Theory was designed to explain why people

used media and the subsequent outcomes of media usage. The use of media and the

content produced it is expected to gratify psychological and social needs (Rubin & Rubin, 1985). There are five premises as follows (Rubin, 2002):

1. The behavior is driven by purpose. The choice to engage with a certain media results in personal and social consequences.

2. The individual is an active participant. The choice to engage satisfies certain needs that can be physical, psychological, or social.

3. In making media choices the individual is influenced by social and psychological factors.

4. Individuals have multiple choices of communication. However, the choice to select on over the others is due to the differences in the individual's social or psychological context.

5. The media has an influence on personal level characteristics and the individual's eventual reliance on it.

Rubin (1993) explained that social and psychological factors influence media selection. Thus, Uses and Gratifications serves as a suitable theory to explain the mediating role of engagement from identification antecedents to brand love consequences. An important assumption of this theory is that individuals range in terms of their "activeness" in media usage. This theory provides the explanation for the theoretical framework.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) developed by Bandura (1986, 1989) expands upon the Uses and Gratifications Theory by positing that individuals have the ability to plan and anticipate the consequences of their actions. Also it introduces the concept

of enactive learning as the process through which individuals experience the media. Consequently this experience shapes the expectations that determine the future level of media usage. As a consequence the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) introduces the idea that positive expectations of media usage may be rewarding from activities such as finding, sharing, and posting useful information (LaRose, Mastro, & Eastin, 2001). Other applications of the Uses and Gratifications Theory have been used by researchers to explain engagement in the context of virtual environments (Nambisan & Baron, 2007; Bronner & Neijens, 2006).

For the purposes of this study the focus is on the customer thus the brand theories regarding the brand experience are explored. Schultz and Schultz (2004) said that the customer creates their own dreams or fantasy where the product and brand makes some sort of aspiration possible. This is because there are simply too many choices, too many ways to make a purchase, too many ways to experience a brand due to proliferation of marketing and communication; branding can no longer be the same. At the heart of branding today is the customer experience. Schultz and Schultz (2004) suggested that if the company is capable of delivering the right brand experience in a consistent manner, customers would continue their patronage and the brand will be successful. Brand experience as defined by Brakus et al., (2009) is a set of sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses that are evoked by the stimuli in the customer interaction with the brand whether it is a direct or indirect interaction. Other definitions include a distinctive experience that can be created by managing the functional and emotional elements of the brand (Morrison & Crane, 2007; Haeckel et al., 2003; Berry et al., 2002). To manage the experience it is necessary to ensure consistency at each of the touch points where the customer meets the brand (Meyer &

Schwager, 2007; Shaw & Ivens, 2005). By putting together the appropriate

experiences connecting with customers goes beyond the functional benefit of the

product or service but extends to creating an emotional connection through engaging,

compelling and a consistent context (Pullman & Gross, 2004). It is expected that a

good brand experience can build brand loyalty and brand evangelism (Schmitt, 2009;

Deming, 2007; Pullman & Gross, 2005). To explain this reciprocal nature of learning

and doing in the virtual brand communities, the Activity Theory has been used in the

context of educational technology research (Barah, Schatz & Scheckler, 2004). This

leads to the next set of theories for explaining engagement that is rooted in the

relationship marketing paradigm.

As mentioned in the previous section, engagement is rooted in the relationship

perspective, thus one theory that can explain the construct is Social Exchange Theory

(SET) proposed by Blau (1964). According to this theory customers reciprocate

positive feelings, thoughts, and action towards the brand in return for benefits derived

from the relationship with the brand (Hollebeek, 2011). Consequently, SET posits that

one party would feel obliged to give a favor to another in the hopes of receiving a

return in the future (Rousseau, 1989). Hollebeek (2011) explained that this

cost/reward perspective is derived from the interactive nature of engagement itself.

However, these theories still do not address the experiential, social, and

cultural dimensions of consumption in context (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The

researchers explained that Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) links the individual level

(or idiographic) meanings to the level of culture processes and structure in the

marketplace context.According to CCT the consumption is embedded in the

context,symbolic, and experiences of acquiring, purchasing, consuming, and subsequent disposing of the product (Joy & Li, 2012; Arnould & Thompson, 2005; McCracken, 1986). Arnould and Thompson (2005) explained that consumers create collective or community identity through the creation of common value through interaction with the marketplace, which explains engagement in the virtual brand community as consumers seek collective identification through the participation to create solidarity (Kozinets et al., 2010; Cova & Pace, 2006; Kozinets, 2002).These communities present themselves through the display of localized cultural capital and through the skill in combining and organizing the pool of symbolic resources shared within the group (Kozinets, 2001). Consumers expend resources in order to successfully enact their social life (Arnould et al., 2006).Consumers' lives are immersed in experience where the fantasies and identity of the individual is created (Hollebeek, Glynn & Brodie, 2014; Holt & Thompson, 2004; Kozinets, 2001; Belk & Costa, 1998; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). In the context of sports Cunningham and Kwon (2003) found that the experience of values and traditions can be developed as a consequence of references from other fans of the team.

There are four domains in the study of CCT (Joy & Li, 2012; Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The domains are consumer identity studies, market place cultures, consumption socio-historical patterning, and mass-mediated marketplace. Identity construction is created throughthe consumption experiences. This self-identity can be created through association on-line such as the case of a virtual community. The second domain of market place cultures elaborate on the identity domain by explaining that consumers need collective identification and participation in rituals as a result they would engage in consumption cultures occurring online (Cova & Pace,

2006; Muniz & Schau, 2005; Kozinets, 2001; McAlexander, 1995). This is the reason consumers form communities online (Joy & Li, 2012). The consumption socio-historical patterning domain focuses on studying how the consumer society is created and maintained (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The final domain of mass-mediated marketplace ideologies, which is defined as the systems of meaning transmit and reproduce the consumers' actions and ideas as a means to protect the dominant social interest (Joy & Li, 2012).

Cova and Cova (2014) presented a slightly different view of CCT. The authors explained that it is more of a cultural branding phenomenon with four main approaches namely relationship marketing, retro marketing, tribal marketing, and collaborative marketing. Of particular interest to this research is the aspect of tribal marketing and collaborative marketing. Tribal marketing presents the proposition that groups forming naturally around consumption should be defined as a viable market segment. Fournier & Avery (2011) explained that people are more interested in the people they meet as part of the brand consumption than the brand itself. This is contrary to the idea of opinion leaders that assume only a few key people take part in the group. Cova and Cova (2014) explained that in the virtual brand community everyone plays a role to keep the vibrancy of the community. As for the collaborative marketing aspect Hewer and Brownlie (2010) explained that consumers can be empowered to create meaning for the brand through their own brand interactions within the dynamic environment among consumers and other players in the market.

The Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) hence provides the glue that links the relationship between the identification antecedents and the dependent brand love.

Vargo and Lusch (2004) proposed that the Consumer Culture Theory could lead the way for the development for a theory regarding customer value co-creation which is the goal of this research in exploring the brand love construct and subsequent engagement invirtual brand communities. This is especially true in the context of sports since it is an experience that is loaded with social dynamics that is rooted in the consumer consumption experience.

2.5.3 Engagement Dimensions

While researchers seem to have differing views on the definition of engagement, they seem to be more in agreement that it is a multidimensional construct. One study that has a different view is Sprott, Czellar, and Spangenberg (2009), which expressed brand engagement in self-concept as a uni-dimensional construct. However, the dimensions defined differ based on the theories used in the development of the construct. One group of researchers basing the construct in the relationship marketing paradigm identified the dimensions as being cognitive, emotional, and behavioral (Brodie et al., 2013; Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek, 2011a,b).

Others such asAlgesheimer et al. (2005) defined the dimensions of utilitarian, hedonic, and social. Later, Calder, Malthouse, and Schaedel (2009) developed the online engagement scale that has eight dimensions.These dimensions include stimulation and inspiration, social facilitation, temporal, self-esteem and civic mindedness, intrinsic enjoyment, utilitarian, participation and socialization, and community.The uniqueness of this scale is the result of its development from the Uses and Gratifications Theory as described in the previous section.This is similar to the

research conducted by Baldus, Voorhees, and Calantone (2015). The authors defined online community engagement as the compelling intrinsic motivation to sustain interaction with the community. They developed the online brand community engagement scale with 11 dimensions namely brand influence, brand passion, connecting, helping, like-minded discussion, rewards (hedonic), rewards (utilitarian), seeking assistance, self expression, up-to-date information, and validation. They authors reasoned that the motivation to participate in online communities is dependent on the type of community. As a result the drive to engage may include social status enhancement, social interaction, learning more by using product, and having fun.

Despite having different names these dimensions can still be classified as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral (Hollebeek, Glynn, &Brodie, 2014). Another variation in the research is Mollen and Wilson (2010) that also proposed three dimensions with a slightly different interpretation namely active sustained processing, experiential value and instrumental value. Working on the previous research Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) further refined the definition of the dimensions of engagement as cognitive processing, affection, and activation specific to brand interactions.

2.5.4 Engagement Dimensions in this Study

A review of the engagement dimensions from previous research shows that the dimensions of cognitive, affective, and behavioral form the basis for a majority of the studies. As a consequence engagement dimensions selected for this study is based on the research done by Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014). The authors conducted four studies to conceptualize and develop the scale of consumer brand engagement in

93

the specific social media setting. In the quantitative studies 3 and 4 the authors used the social media brands Twitter and Linkedin. The resulting dimensions of cognitive processing, affection, and activation have been developed in the tradition of relationship marketing and the consumer culture theory, which is in line with the studies of Brodie et al. (2011) and Arnould and Thompson (2005). In addition Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) found that the dimensions of engagement they identified are firmly related to self-brand connection, which is one of the important of dimensions of brand love used in this study. The authors explained that their dimensions and corresponding scale was developed in line with the perspectives of relationship marketing, service dominant logic, and consumer culture theory. As a result it should be capable of capturing the value-laden consumer brand interactions and relationships. Consequently, this can be applied to the sports context because engagement with a team develops results in attachment and overt support for the team (Boyle & Magnusson, 2007). When fans become more engaged with the team they become more than mere spectators, they become active participants who share the pain in loss and joy in victory with the team (Underwood et al., 2001). Following the team becomes the primary focus for watching the sport.

Table 2.2: Engagement Studies and Dimensions

Source : Developed for this Study

Authors	Construct	Definition	Context	Dimensions
Algesheimer et al. (2005)	Brand community engagement	The positive influence from the identification with a brand community through the consumer's intrinsic motivation to interact with other community members.	Brand community	Utilitarian, Hedonic, Social
Patterson et al. (2006)	Consumer engagement	The level of physical, cognitive, and emotional presence felt in a relationship with a service organization.	Service	Vigor, Dedication, Absorption, and Interaction.
Calder et al. (2009)	Online engagement	Second order constructs derived from the first order constructs of experience defined as how the website fits into the life of the consumer.	Website	Stimulation, Social Facilitation, Temporal, Self-Esteem and Civic mindedness, Intrinsic Enjoyment, Utilitarian, Participation & Socializing, and Community
Sprott et al. (2009)	Brand engagement in self concept	The tendency of the individual to incorporate important brands into how they perceive themselves	Branded possessions	Uni-dimensional
Hollebeek (2011)	Customer brand engagement	The level of expression of customer motivation in a brand related context dependent state of mind that is	Consumer self selected context including reality television, packaged goods,	Cognitive, Affective, Behavioral

		characterized by a level of activation, identification, and absorption in brand interactions.	automobiles, fitness, cosmetics, electronics, airlines, clothing, retail, stationery, insurance	
Brodie et al. (2011)	Customer engagement	The motivational state derived from interactive, co-creative customer experiences with the brand in relationships with the brand.	Virtual brand communities	Cognitive, Affective, Behavioral
Brodie et al. (2013)	Consumer engagement	The cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions play a central role in the relational exchange wherein these are antecedents or consequences within the iterative engagement process in the brand community.	Virtual brand communities	Cognitive, Affective, Behavioral
Hollebeek (2014)	Consumer brand engagement	The positively valenced cognitive, emotional, and behavioral brand related activity immersed in specific consumer brand interactions	Consumer self selected context including reality television, packaged goods, automobiles, fitness, cosmetics, electronics, airlines, clothing, retail, stationery, insurance	Cognitive, Affective, Activation
Baldus et al. (2015)	Online community engagement	The compelling intrinsic motivation to sustain interaction with the community. The motivation to participate in online communities may include social status enhancement, social interaction, learning more by using product, and having fun.	Online community	Brand Influence, Brand Passion, Connecting, Helping, Like-minded Discussion, Rewards (hedonic), Rewards (utilitarian), Seeking Assistance, Self Expression, Up-to-Date Information, and Validation.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

This chapter presents the conceptual framework that leads to the development of the hypotheses and the operationalization of constructs. The discussion will start with the theoretical framework.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is shown in Figure 3.1. Social Identification Theory explains the general group formation mechanics seen in the virtual brand community. It sets the stage for the two identification antecedents in the model. The Consumer Culture Theory is used to explain the esteem or motivation factors and the engagement as mediator that leads to the formation of positive attitudes towards the brand embedded in the context of the football club virtual brand community (Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005). These consequences fit the seven dimensions of brand love, which are in turn explained by the Self-Expansion Theory. This phenomenon will be explained in detail in the following section.

Using social processes defined by the Social Identification Theory to explain the relationships formed between consumers and brands in the context of a virtual brand community has provided many interesting insights. It explains the first marker of community, which is the sense of shared awareness or oneness with others. However, the psychological underpinnings of consumer involvement with the community and the brand remain to be explored. Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008)

demonstrated that the effects of brand identification and psychological sense of community as antecedents of brand love.

Brand communities can be regarded as an embodiment of a type of brand relationship (Schau & Muniz, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; McAlexander Schouten, 1998). Engagement in essence is the vehicle for creating, building, and enhancing customer relationships. Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002) explain that internalization plays an integral role for virtual brand community participation because participation comes from volitional choice, which is further supported by Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006). The researchers explained that the social identity factors keep participants active within the community that can be further explained by the Consumer Culture Theory, which explains the remaining two markers of community namely shared rituals and traditions and moral obligation.

The tradition of the Consumer Culture Theory can be used to explain the phenomenon of meaning and value creation in virtual brand communities. Brand communities create norms and cultures that define their identity. This includes learning the brand history, sharing brand stories and myths, creating special terms and icons as codes that reinforce membership identification in the community (Schau & Muniz, 2007; O'Guinn& Muniz, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Part of creating the glue that holds the community together is the process of story telling and sharing of stories (Schau & Muniz, 2007; Muniz & Schau, 2006; Schau & Muniz, 2006;O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001) In the Apple Newton community, consumers came together to provide assistance to a product that the manufacturer has stopped supporting. Community members shared usage tips and told stories that

helped to strengthen the brand despite the discontinuation of the product (Muniz & Schau, 2005). This demonstrates a level of commitment to the brand in peril that is akin to the concepts of anticipated separation distress (a feeling of sadness should the brand no longer exist). This also demonstrates the consumer's long-term relationship (the willingness to use it in the future and having a long-term commitment to it) in the definition of brand love by Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012).

Likewise Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) in studying the Saab community found that the users shared information on recommended dealers, parts suppliers, and technical information. This reciprocity and sharing is the essence that keeps the brand community alive (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005). Thus the mechanism of the virtual brand community is very much connected to the concept of brand love, where in the brand becomes a part of the individual as explained by the Self-Expansion Theory.

Figure 3.1 Theoretical Framework
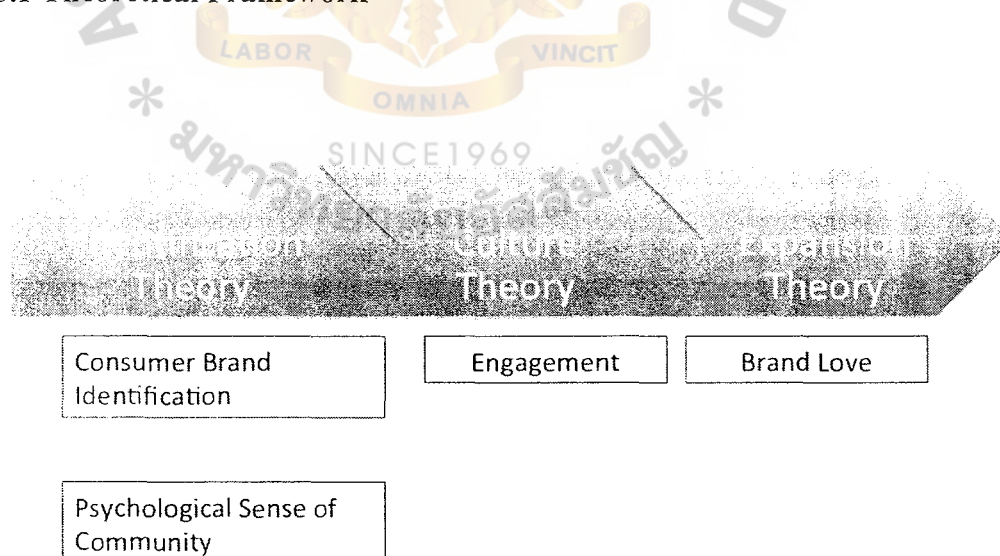
3.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was developed in order to explore brand love within the nomological network that includes the constructs of identification and engagement. The nomological network is defined as the investigations of constructs and measures explored through hypotheses developed from theory. Thus, the nomological validation requires the testing of the theoretical relationships between the constructs and the empirical relationships between these measures (Netemeyer, Bearden, & Sharma, 2003). As a consequence this study explores brand love within virtual brand communities. The identification antecedents are linked to one of the markers of community, consciousness of kind, which is the intrinsic connection to members separating them from other groups as defined by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001).These constructs are defined by the Social Identity Theory as categorization and comparison. As a consequence this adoption of the values of the community, which in this case is derived through consumption of the brand results in engagement whereby increasing the member's self-esteem (Woisetchlager, Hartleb, & Blut, 2008). This is supported by Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006), which found that identification, had an impact on participation. Carlson, Suter, & Brown (2008) further elaborated that consumers may identify with the desirable characteristics of the brand and the characteristics of other consumers of the brand. Unlike the model posited by these authors, this research does not include identification with the group instead using the psychological sense of community. As Woisetchlager, Hartleb, and Blut (2008) explained that the psychological sense of community may extend beyond the members of the community to other consumers as well. They reasoned that this is because the connection to the brand is more important than the identification with the characteristics of other members. This is especially true in the case of the virtual

100

brand community wherein members can be very diverse since the community is no longer geographically bound.

Figure 3.2 Conceptual Framework
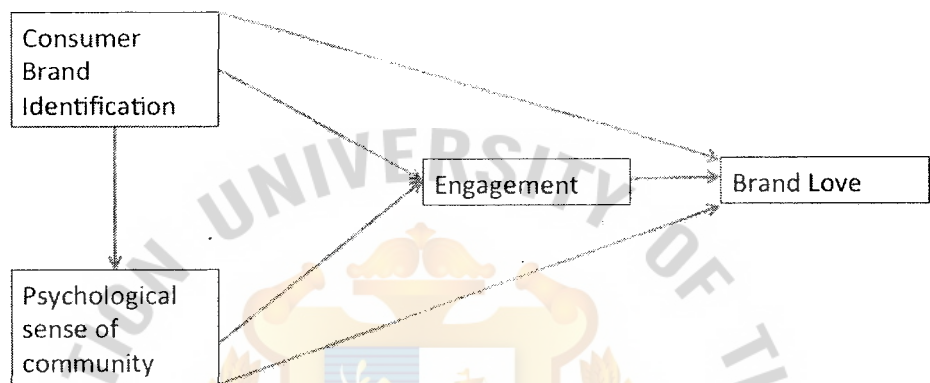
3.3 Research Hypotheses

In simple terms the brand community described by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) is a relationship triad among customers and the brand. The drive of personal expression is fulfilled through the purchase of goods and services. As Aaker (1997) stated consumers make purchases to reflect their identity. Consumers match the brand with the brand user image or symbol attributes with their self concept, which encompasses the actual self, ideal self, social self, etc. (Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber & Lee, 2006; Sirgy, 1982). Research has shown that the congruity between the self and the brand plays an important role in motivating purchases and hence brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006; Maholtra, 1988; Sirgy, 1985). Self-image congruence with the brand has been studied extensively in relationship with consumer choices (Kressman et al., 2006). These authors found that the self-image

101

congruence had both direct and indirect effect on loyalty. Self-image congruence with the brand is driven by self-concept motives namely self-esteem and self-consistency (Aaker, 1997; Biel, 1997; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Sirgy, 1982). It is postulated that the greater the match between the brand user's image with the consumer's ideal self-image drives the use of the brand to fulfill the self-esteem need. This is driven by the tendency that individuals attempt to reduce the discrepancies between their actual and ideal self to result in boosting of the self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1979). Self-consistency is a drive for individuals to behave in a way that is consistent with how they see themselves or their actual self. Kressmann, et al., (2006) found that the greater the self-congruity between the individual and the brand of choice, the greater the loyalty and commitment. The authors explained that this is because the actual self-congruity means that the brand satisfied the consumer's need for self-consistency resulting in a positive evaluation for the brand's performance. In a similar vein the ideal self-congruity implies that the brand fulfills the need of self-esteem, which results in the positive evaluation of the brand leading to repurchase.

Individuals are motivated to have a relationship with a brand due to social attachment (Kressmann et al., 2006; Baumeister and Leary, 1996). This desire for interpersonal attachment is an element of human nature that can be reasonably compared to the attachment people make with brands at the emotional level (Kressman et al., 2006; Fournier, 1994; 1998; Belk, 1988). The more the partner (in this case the brand) is perceived as similar to one's ideal self, the more the partner is seen as attractive and the relationship quality is enhanced. This relationship quality as defined by Fournier (1998) incorporates the concepts of love/passion, self-connection, interdependence, commitment, intimacy, and brand partner quality. Albert and

Merunka (2013) together with Harrison-Walker (2001) propose that users who identify with the brand develop a positive feeling for it. Ahuvia (1993) further explained that to be loved, the brand has to be perceived as part of the consumer since these objects represent the deeply held values of these individuals. Taking identification into the context of sports, Bauer, Stockburger-Sauer, and Exler (2008) explained that strong positive team beliefs would help to build the bond with the team. Ross (2007) also found that consumers who strongly identify with the team will have more frequent thoughts about the team, which is one of the dimensions of brand love. In addition Kressman et al. (2006) and Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) found that brand identification is positively related to brand love. Thus, it is hypothesized that

H_1: The consumer brand identification has a positive influence on brand love.

Stretching beyond the direct consumer relationship with the brand, the consumer to virtual brand community relationship is explored. Consciousness of kind is the element of "we-ness" or the collective sense of identity that is experienced by those in the same community (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). This feeling of identification comes from being connected to the usage of a common brand and similarity of characteristics to other members in the community. This consciousness of membership forms a social connection making members feel that they know one another even if they have not met in person (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Cova, 1997).

Since psychological sense of community is not reliant on the social interaction between members the identification with other members in the group becomes important. According to research belonging and categorizing into groups helps individuals make sense of the world around them (Carlson, Suter, & Brown, 2007; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Thus the identification of the brand has an effect on this feeling of oneness with people otherwise unknown to the individual. In the context of sports Cunningham and Kwon (2003) found that the values of teams are passed through the fan references and social expectations in the group. Also Bech-Larsen (2010) found that consumer brand identification is positively related to the psychological sense of community.

Thus, it is hypothesized that

H_2: The consumer brand identification has a positive influenceon psychological sense of community.

Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008) explained that the relationship bond that is formed between the users of the brand should be an antecedent to the development of any sort of commitment to the community. The authors found that group identification was a strong antecedent of a sense of psychological sense of community especially when members were involved with activities in the community.

Lee (2003) and Marchi, Giachetti, and de Gennaro (2011) explained that in virtual brand community participation is the establishment of relationships with other members and sharing experiences. Virtual brand communities are non-geographically bound communities based on social communications and the creation of relationship

among a brand's consumers (Brodie, Juric, &Hollebeck, 2011; De Vlack, 2009). These communities are characterized by shared consciousness, shared rituals, and moral obligations, content creation, which serves as an important force in shaping the community's character and determines its influence on members (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2002).

Schmitt (2012) suggested a model that distinguishes five brand-related processes: identifying, experiencing, integrating, signaling, and connecting with the brand. Integrating these aspects in their research Lee, Kim, and Ko (2011) suggested that "social psychological processes" motivate consumers to participate in brand community engagement behaviors. This phenomenon is explained by Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) that the social identity and group identification related behavior leads to the participation in brand related behavior. Cunnigham and Kwon (2003) explained that fans in the community exert their influence through subjective norms causing members to engage with the team cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. Thus it is hypothesized that

H_3: Engagement is positively influenced by consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community.

Palmatier, Dant, Grewal, Evans (2006) state that the relationship is strengthened by the dyadic nature with both parties sharing the benefits. Casalo, Flavian, and Guinaliu (2007) found that participation increased the positive influence on consumer commitment to the brand and the satisfaction of such interactions further reinforced commitment to the brand, which is one of the dimensions of brand love.

Morgan and Hunt (1994), Kim et al., (2008) explained that in virtual brand communities there is an exchange process where the individual develops loyalty to an organization or another individual. In simple terms, this can be described as the mechanism enabling positive brand specific behavioral outcomes (Kim et. al., 2008; Gruen et. al., 2000). These positive brand outcomes have been defined as purchase intentions, cross-over buying, word of mouth, co-production, and participation, which are concepts that overlap with the 7 dimensions of brand love proposed by Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012). Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) found that engagement is related to self-brand connection, which is one of the dimensions of brand love.

Thus it is hypothesized that

H_4: Engagement has a positive influence on brand love.

McAlexander et al. (2002) and Schouten et al. (2007) explained that the greater the engagement within the community results in greater integration in the brand community increases the customer loyalty and consequently the transcendental consumer experiences result in stronger relationships with the brand and the other customers.

Thus it is hypothesized that

H_5: Engagement mediates the effects of consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community on brand love.

DeGroot and Robinson (2008) explained that identification with the team is an integral part of the fans' brand experience. Trail and James (2001) found that fans have the motivation to follow the achievements of the team and seek knowledge about the team. Also, Wann (1993) found that the more a fan identified with the team, the more the individual will be engaged with the team.

Thus it is hypothesized that

H_6: Consumer brand identification has a positive influence on engagement.

Individuals need to maintain a sense of self-continuity or self-verification (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012). These needs are currently being met through the use of brands that are perceived as congruent or similar to one's sense of self (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Escalas & Bettmann, 2003). Further brand research has pointed out the importance of this perceived congruity and the self-personality (Aaker, 1997; Sirgy, 1982; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). In the context of today's marketing, global brands have become cultural icons whose possession helps to define the social status of the user (Wang, Butt, & Wei, 2011; and Holt, 2004). Ahearne et al. (2005) concluded from their research that identification should be integrated into the study of loyalty because consumers interact exclusively with the company in the purchase situation. Research shows that identification satisfies the need for social identity and self-definition and will result in positive impact on organizational membership loyalty (Ahearne et al., 2005; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). In addition Hollebeek (2001) reasoned that the passion consumers felt for a brand was the reciprocation

from brand-related benefits with a favorable emotion during interaction with the brand.Thus it is hypothesized that

H_7: Engagement mediates the effects of consumer brand identification on brand love.

Bhattacharya et al. (1995) explained that the sense of belonging with a group can be regarded as a consciousness of kind. This is an intrinsic connection that holds members together and creates a collective sense of difference from others (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).It stands to reason that the psychological sense of community is akin to the self-categorization dimension explained by the Social Identification Theory which leads to a positive distinction of the community's values, norms and behaviors resulting in an increase in the member's self-esteem (Turner, 1987).Furthermore, Carlson et al. (2008) and Algesheimer et al. (2005) support the notion that the psychological sense of brand community has a positive impact on engagement. Researchers including Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) along with Woisetchlager, Hartleb, and Blut (2008) found that the psychological sense of community had the strongest effect on participation. Thus it is hypothesized that

H_8: Psychological sense of community has a positive influence on engagement.

Ownership of products can be used as a means to define and identify the self to others and maintaining this consistent image over time (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). The creation of the brand meaning and its expression both privately and publicly are ideally found in the context of brand communities (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; McCracken, 1988). The consumption of the brand is seen as "sacred" as part of

the community ritual as an expression of extreme loyalty (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989). When examining the social interaction of individuals in a brand community (Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005) found that identification with other group members had a positive impact on the level of community engagement. Thus it is hypothesized that

H_9: Engagement mediates the effects of psychological sense of community on brand love.

The core phenomena of the brand love experience comprises of different cognitions about self-identity, affect or feelings and a sense of connectedness and fit, as well as behaviors including continued interactions or resource investments (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012). Previous research has found evidence supporting psychological sense of community as a critical in the development of brand commitment (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012; Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2008). Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) reasoned that the sense of community and consumer brand identification as possible antecedents of brand love because these two constructs affect the individual directly. The researchers found a positive relationship between the sense of community to brand love. Thus it is hypothesized that

H_{10}: Psychological sense of community has a positive influence on brand love.

3.4 Operationalization and Measurement Items

This section covers the operationalization of the measurement items of brand love, identification antecedents, and engagement. The measurement and source of the

109

item measures are presented in Table 3.1. There are 4 major constructs proposed for study in the conceptual framework in Figure 3.2. The measurements items have been developed from the review of literature to suit the definition and dimensions proposed in this study for each respective construct.

Table 3.1: Operationalization of Constructs

Constructs	Conceptual Definition	Operationalized Definition	Sources
Consumer brand identification	Consumer's psychological state of perceiving, feeling, and valuing their belongingness with the brand.	1. I feel a strong sense of belonging to XX Football Club. 2. I identify strongly with XX Football Club. 3. XX Football Club embodies I believe in. 4. XX Football Club is like a part of me. 5. XX Football Club has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	Stockburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, and Sen (2013)
Psychological sense of community	Psychological sense of community (PSC) is the degree to which an individual perceives a bond that is relational with other brand users without the pre-requisite of a social interaction.	1. I feel strong ties to other members of the football club virtual community. 2. I find it easy to form a bond with other members of the football club virtual community. 3. I feel a sense of being connected to other members of the football club virtual community. 4. A strong feeling of camaraderie (friendship) exists between me and other members of the football club virtual community. 5. Supporting this team gives me a sense of community. 6. I feel a sense of community with other members of this football club virtual community.	Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008)
Engagement	Engagement is defined as the nature of the participants	1. Visiting the fan page gets me thinking about my favorite football team.	Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie, 2014

	in certain specific interactions for creating, building, and enhancing customer relationships.	2. I think about the football team when I use the fan page. 3. Visiting the fan page stimulates my interest to learn more about the team. 4. I feel very positive when I cheer this team. 5. Cheering for this team makes me happy. 6. I feel good when I cheer this team. 7. I am proud to cheer this team. 8. I spend a lot of time cheering this team when compared to other teams. 9. Whenever I watch football, I usually watch my favorite team play. 10. The team is one of the football teams that I usually cheer when I watch football.	
Brand Love	Brand love is a specific affective state derived from a satisfied long-term consumer-brand relationship	1. To what extent do you feel that using items from this football team says something "true and deep" about whom you are as a person? 2. To what extent do you feel that this football team is an important part of how you see yourself? 3. To what extent does this football team brand make you look like you want to look? 4. To what extent does this football team brand make you want to feel? 5. To what extent is this football team able to do something that makes your life more meaningful? 6. To what extent does this football contribute something towards making your life worth	Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012)

		living? 7. To what extent do you find yourself thinking about this football team? 8. To what extent do you find that this football team keeps popping into your head? 9. To what extent do you feel yourself desiring to use items from this football team? 10. To what extent do you feel yourself longing to use items from this football team? 11. To what extent have you interacted with this football team in the past? 12. To what extent have you been involved with this football team in the past? 13. To what extent are you willing to spend a lot of money improving and fine-tuning a product from this football team after you buy it? 14. To what extent are you willing to spend a lot of time improving and fine-tuning a product from this football team after you buy it? 15. Please express the extent to which when you first encountered this football team, you felt "yes this is what I've been looking for." 16. Please express the extent to which when you first encountered this football team, it just felt "right" for you. 17. Please express the extent to which you feel emotionally connected to this football team. 18. Please express the extent to which this football team feels like an old friend. 19. Please express the extent to which you feel that	

113

		this football team is fun.	
		20. Please express the extent to which you feel that this football team is exciting.	
		21. Please express the extent to which you believe that you will be supporting this team for a long time?	
		22. Please express the extent to which you expect that this football team will be part of your life for a long time to come.	
		23. Suppose this football team will go out of existence, to what extent would you feel anxiety?	
		24. Suppose this football team will go out of existence, to what extent would you feel apprehension?	
		25. Consider all the experiences you have had with this football team to date. How satisfied are you?	
		26. Considering all the expectations you have had about the product, to what extent has this football team fallen short of your expectations or exceeded your expectations?	
		27. How certain are you of these overall feelings and evaluations you just gave above?	
		28. How much confidence do you have in these overall feelings and evaluations you just gave?	

Note: All items (except 25 – 28) are measured using a 7-point Likert scale. The scale ranges from the level of agreement 1 being "strongly disagree" and 7" being strongly agree".

114

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will discuss the research methodology used, the sampling frame and sampling procedures, the research instrument, along with the data collection method. The next section will provide information about the research instrument including the questionnaire design, pretest, measurement validity and reliability. After which the pretest results are presented. In the final section the statistical treatment of the date is explained.

4.1 Research Design

Previous research used both qualitative and quantitative research to study brand love (for more details see Table 4.1). In order to test the relationships hypothesized in this study, the research methodology employed is the quantitative study using the survey method. This is an attempt to fulfill the research gap suggested by Brodie et al., (2011) that the consumer engagement sub-process intensity should be explored through empirical research. In addition it is suggested by Churchill (1992) that a survey is the best-suited means in collecting data from a large number of respondents regarding variables that cannot be directly observed. Also previous brand love studies including Albert and Merunka (2013); Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012); Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010); Carroll and Ahuvia (2006); all used the survey method.

Table 4.1 : Summary of Brand Love Studies

Source : Developed for this Study

No	Title	Authors	IV	DV	Moderator/ Mediator	Sample Size	Sample	Statistical Analysis	Remarks
1.	Consumer-Object Relations: a Conceptual Framework Based Analogously on Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love	Shimp and Madden (1988)							Conceptual Paper 8 Kinds of Love based on 3 constructs
2.	The Fire of Desire: A Multisited Inquiry into Consumer Passion	Belk, Ger and Askegaard (2003)					Advanced undergrad and MBA students	Qualitative Study	Cycle of Desire
3.	Some antecedents and outcomes of brand love	Carroll and Ahuvia (2006)	Hedonic Prod. Self-expressive brand	Brand Loyalty WOM	Brand Love	334	Non-students	Structural Equation Modeling	Brand Love 10 items scale Self expressive brands are more loved.
4.	Measuring Brand Love Applying	Heinrich et al. (2008)				299	Consumer Online		Brand passion

116

#	Title	Author							
	Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love in Consumer-Brand Relations						survey		Intimacy commitment
5.	When consumers love their brands: Exploring the concept and its dimensions	Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2008)				843			Conceptual paper
6.	Two studies of consequences and actionable antecedents of brand love	Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2009)	Sense of community	Brand Loyalty Active Engagement	Brand ID Brand Love	Study 1 158 Study 2 135	Undergrad students	PLS due to small sample size	BL and active engagement outcomes of brand love
7.	Brand passion: Antecedents and consequences	Albert, Merunka, Valette-Florence (2013)	Brand ID Brand Trust	WOM Willingness to pay more	Brand Passion Brand Commitment	1505	Online panel	PLS which has less restrictions than SEM	
8.	Brand Love	Batra, Ahuvia, Bagozzi (2012)				Study 1 70 Study 2 18 Study 3 268		Study 3 SEM	Use grounded theory to develop brand love scale
9.	A new COARSE based content valid and predictively	Rossiter, Langner, Fischer	Brand love	Purchase WOM		291	Students	Demonstrate use of contrastive measure	Distinguish brand love from liking

117

	valid measure that distinguishes brand love from brand liking	(2012)							
10.	Falling in love with brands: a dynamic analysis of the trajectories of brand love	Langer, Bruns, Fischer, and Rossiter (2016)				38 volunteers	Students	Qualitative analysis of trajectories	5 trajectories of brand love

118

4.2 Research Instrument/Questionnaire Design

The development of the questionnaire should ensure the reduction of errors through the establishment of reliability and validity of the measurement constructs (Malhotra, 2010; Churchill& Iacobucci, 2010). To ensure the integrity of the empirical research, the marketing scale development process designed by Churchill (1979) was used to guide the research procedure. The eight steps proposed by Churchill (1979) are as follows:

1. Specify the constructs –this is done through the process of conducting the literature review.
2. Generate a sample –this is the creation of the measurement scales, translation and back translation by experts
3. Pilot test –at this stage the questionnaire is pretested on a group of respondents, who represent the required sample. Final corrections and modifications are made to the questionnaire.
4. Assessment of the items –checking for validity and reliability of the instrument from the pilot test stage
5. Actual data collection –the questionnaire is distributed to the respondents in accordance to the sample size required
6. Assess reliability –CFA is used to assess the reliability
7. Assess validity –CFA is used to assess the validity
8. Structural equation modeling –the model is tested and hypothesis examined

The first and parts of second steps of the marketing scale development procedure (Churchill, 1979) have been discussed in chapters 2 and 3 respectively. To ensure

119

content validity (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2010) a literature review to develop the definition and conceptualization of the constructs need to be completed. However, since the scales need to be translated care has to be taken to ensure that the content validity is maintained. The following section explains the translation process.

To ensure the accuracy of the translation and reduction of possible errors the back translation method was used (Maholtra, 2010). The translation of the questionnaire from English to Thai was conducted by two lecturers in the field of Marketing Communications –one from Assumption University, a private institution and another from NIDA, a state institution. Both lecturers are well versed in translations of scales as part of their practice in conducting academic research. In the second phase is the back translation of the Thai version into English. This was conducted by two lecturers from Assumption University; one is in the field of English translation and the other in Marketing. To ensure face and content validity the translation the questionnaire was sent to check for general readability by a lecturer in the field of Marketing and another practitioner in the field of Marketing Research as suggested by Churchill & Iacobucci (2010). The back-translated questionnaire is found in Appendix A.

However, Beaton, Bombardier, Guillemin, and Ferraz (2000) explained that cross-cultural adaptation is necessary to ensure that the conceptual equivalence between the source and target questionnaires is attained. Therefore, additional procedures have been added in the translation of the questionnaire. Netemeyer et al. (1995) used three to four judges to rate the items as being representative of the construct studied. The researchers had the judges evaluate the scales in two phases. As

a result the generate sample items stage proposed by Churchill (1979) is modified in this research.

Based on the suggestion by Netemeyer et al. (1995) this research used three academics, experienced in both academic work and professional marketing research from Thammasat University and Assumption University. Their suggestions have been used to refine the translated questionnaire items to ensure that the items adequately represent the construct to be investigated (Churchill& Iacobucci, 2010).

Table 4.2: Translation Process

	Process Used in this Research
Churchill (1979)	Back translation
Netemeyer et al. (1995)	Three experts asked to review the back translated questionnaire to ensure construct validity
Steps modified for use in this study.	In-depth interview of ten fans to identify the terms football supporters use and activities they join.
	The same three experts asked to review the revised questionnaire once again to ensure construct validity.

This research adapted this process further by having another in-depth study conducted on 10 fervent football fans to identify the terms used by the fans in their own conversations. Moreover, previous researchers (Cova & Cova, 2014; Fourier & Avery, 2011) explained that research rooted in the consumer culture theory should incorporate a means to study the contents that are collaboratively created and linked in social media. As a consequence a qualitative aspect should be added into the attempt to empirically study the phenomenon. This is in line with the suggestion by

Cha, Kim, and Erlen (2007) that having a pilot study helps to identify potential problems with the questionnaire.

The in-depth interview was conducted by interviewing 10 respondents, who were highly engaged football fans. This is to ensure that the wordings used in the questionnaire reflect the language that these fans use in their interactions with the football club. Also the pilot study was designed to capture any activities or explanations that are needed for further refining the items. This is in line with the suggestion by Muniz and Schau (2011) that the community members create their own identity and meaning in the community. Hewer and Brownlie (2010) further suggested that these active participants create their own experience with the brand. Consequently, the questions used in the in-depth study revolved around the engagement and experience of the fans with their favorite football team and the other fans. Five of the respondents are those who had less than a bachelor's degree and 5 who had at least a bachelor's degree and above. This is because football viewing is a very common activity. As a consequence, it is necessary to ensure that the questionnaire can be understood by every group of fans. Cha, Kim and Erlen (2007) explained that direct translations are not necessary as long as the content is maintained. (Transcripts of the in-depth interviews are available in Appendix C.) However, the meaning in the translated version must be the same as the original. The wordings of the questionnaire were then revised to accommodate the jargon used by the fans and to define the items and activities into which they invest their time and resources.

In the next phase three marketing research expert academics evaluated the items. With no further revision necessary the questionnaire is ready to be tested in a pilot study. This final step in the process suggested by Hardesty and Bearden (2004) is the ultimate test of construct validity. This is done through the assessment of reliability, discriminant and convergent validity and nomological validity that can be attained with rigorous statistical testing. The data collected in the pilot study would be tested using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of the measurement model, which ensures that the items load only on one construct and that the latent constructs may correlate (equivalent to the oblique rotation in Exploratory Factor Analysis conducted using factor analysis) (Ho, 2006). The resulting questionnaire is in Appendix B.

The questionnaire consists of four sections not including the screening questions and cover letter requesting the assistance in filling out the questionnaire. The invitation was sent to visitors on the fan pages for Liverpool, Manchester United, Chelsea, and Arsenal in the form of Facebook and Line messages.

4.3 Questionnaire Pilot Test

As the third step in the marketing scale development proposed by Churchill (1979) the pilot test was implemented to ensure that the questionnaire to be used met the reliability and validity requirements as suggested by Churchill and Iacobucci (2010). As indicated in the previous section, the questionnaire is divided into four sections. The first section is the general profile of the respondent. The first section includes questions regarding the basic demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questions are ordinal and nominal measurements. The remaining sections are all measured using interval scale with a range from 1 to 7. The Likert response scale

ranges from strongly agree (7), somewhat agree (6), agree (5), neither disagree nor agree (4), somewhat disagree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1) respectively. The scale is adapted to suit each of the questions but all of the major constructs are measured using this 7-point scale. The second section is about the behavior in the virtual football community (psychological sense of community and engagement). The psychological sense of community was adapted from Carlson, Suter, and Brown (2008). The engagement was adapted from Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014). The third section is about team identification (consumer brand identification). The consumer brand identification was adapted from Stockburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, and Sen (2013). The fourth section is about the engagement and brand love adapted from Batra et al., 2012).

4.3.1 Pilot Test Data Collection

The pilot study was conducted online to ensure that the sample would not be skewed towards any particular characteristic that may affect the findings as suggested by Babbie (2013). This also allowed the researcher to test using the link that would be used for the actual data collection. An invitation was sent to those identified as football fans to answer the questionnaire. To ensure that the recipients of the invitation are similar to the desired respondents as suggested by Iacobucci and Churchhill (2010), two screening questions were added. Only a yes on the two screening questions asking about virtual football community membership and visit in the past week would allow respondents to proceed into the next section of the questionnaire. Should there be any error and there is a person who answered no and was allowed to complete the questionnaire, that particular questionnaire would be deleted from the analysis.

To ensure that the pilot study can truly measure the validity and reliability of the scales utilized in the study, this research has referred to the common practice of using ten times the number of variables analyzed by factor analysis (Hair et al., 1998; Ho, 2006). The size of the pilot test according to Babbie (2013) depended on the research questions, objectives, time, money, resource, and the questionnaire design. As a rule of thumb Maholtra (2010) proposed that a pretest can be conducted with at least a size of 30 respondents. Laroche et al. (2012) conducted a similar study on virtual brand communities also conducted a pre-test using 30 respondents. In conducting the pretest the researcher asked the questions in order to ensure that they were clear and understandable to minimize response errors. The data collection period of the pilot was in March– April 2016. A total of 50 questionnaires were collected and only 44 were complete and usable. All of the comments given by the respondents were taken down in order to further refine the questionnaire items.

After the pilot test was completed the revisions have been made to the final questionnaire. This included the clarification of certain question items and the format of the questionnaire that appeared a bit confusing. Also the appearance of the questions in the questionnaire was modified so it did not appear too overwhelming for the respondents to answer. The revision is in line with the suggestion by Churchill and Iacobucci (2010) regarding the use of the pilot study to improve the questions that will be used in the actual study. Also the length of time needed to complete the questionnaire was also recorded as suggested by Saunders et al. (2012). It was found that the respondents took about 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. This became a bit of a concern to the researchers because of the potential high incompletion rate that may occur when the data is collected online.

4.3.2 Pilot Test Results

The following section provides the results of the pilot test. This is the fourth stage in the marketing scale development proposed by Churchill (1979). The first section details the respondent profile. This is followed by their behavioral profile. Then the factor analysis and reliability tests of the variables are discussed.

Table 4.3: Measures of Internal Consistency

Consumer Brand Identification Items	s Alpha'Cronbach
CBI	.932
I feel a strong sense of belonging to XX Football Club.	
I identify strongly with XX Football Club.	
XX Football Club embodies I believe in.	
XX Football Club is like a part of me.	
XX Football Club has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	

Psychological Sense of Community	s Alpha'Cronbach
PSC	.877
I feel strong ties to other members of the football club virtual community.	
I find it easy to form a bond with other members of the football club virtual community.	
I feel a sense of being connected to other members of the football club virtual community.	
A strong feeling of camaraderie (friendship) exists between me and other members of the football club virtual community.	
Supporting this team gives me a sense of community.	
I feel a sense of community with other members of this football club virtual community.	

Engagement	s Alpha'Cronbach

EN   .882

Visiting the fan page gets me thinking about my favorite football team.

I think about the football team when I use the fan page.

Visiting the fan page stimulates my interest to learn more about the team.

I feel very positive when I cheer this team.

Cheering for this team makes me happy.

I feel good when I cheer this team.

I am proud to cheer this team.

I spend a lot of time cheering this team when compared to other teams.

Whenever I watch football, I usually watch my favorite team play.

The team is one of the football teams that I usually cheer when I watch football.

Brand Love	s Alpha'Cronbach

BL   .901

To what extent do you feel that using items from this football teams says something "true and deep" about who you are as a person?

To what extent do you feel that this football team is an important part of how you see yourself?

To what extent does this football team make you look like you want to look?

To what extent does this football team brand make you feel like your want to feel?

To what extent is this football team able to do something that makes your life more meaningful?

To what extent does this football contribute something towards making your life worth living?

To what extent do you find yourself thinking about this football team?

To what extent do you find that this football team keeps popping into your head?

To what extent do you find yourself thinking about this football team?

To what extent do you feel yourself desiring to use items from this football team?

To what extent do you feel yourself longing to use items from this football team?

To what extent have you interacted with this football team in the past?

To what extent have you been involved with this football team in the past?

To what extent are you willing to spend a lot of money improving and fine-tuning a product from this football team after you buy it?

To what extent are you willing to spend a lot of time improving and fine-tuning a product from this football team after you buy it?

Please express the extent to which when you first encountered this football team, you felt "yes this is what I've been looking for."

Please express the extent to which when you first encountered this football team, it just felt "right" for you.

Please express the extent to which you feel emotionally connected to this football team.

Please express the extent to which this football team feels like an old friend.

Please express the extent to which you feel that this football team is fun.

Please express the extent to which you feel that this football team is exciting.

Please express the extent to which you believe that you will be supporting this team for a long time?

Please express the extent to which you expect that this football team will be part of your life for a long time to come.

Suppose this football team will go out of existence, to what extent would you feel anxiety?

Suppose this football team will go out of existence, to what extent would you feel apprehension?

Consider all the experiences you have had with this football team to date. How satisfied are you?

Considering all the expectations you have had about the product, to what extent has this football team fallen short of your expectations or exceeded your expectations?

How certain are you of these overall feelings and evaluations you just gave above?

How much confidence do you have in these overall feelings and evaluations you just gave?

4.4 Sample Size

The study uses the structural equation modeling technique to test the hypotheses. As suggested by Hair et al. (2010) the minimum sample size required is 200. However, the rule of thumb suggestions are based on the ration of 10 – 15 respondents to one parameter/item (Hair et al., 2010; Ho, 2006) There are 48 items tested in this research. Thus in line with the suggestion by Hair et al. (2010) the required sample size of 100 – 400 is sufficient to run the procedure. Carroll and Ahuvia, (2006) used a sample size of 334 respondents. Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) used data collected in the classroom from 293 respondents. Research done by Albert and Merunka, (2013) collected data from 15,505 respondents from panel data in France. Batra et al. (2012) conducted a study on 268 college students.

It is understood that a larger sample size would increase the likelihood of getting statistically significant results (Cohen, 1969). Ho (2006) and Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black (1998) suggested that a sample of 100 or larger would be suitable for factor analysis. However, for running a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), the recommended sample size is 300 (Hinkin, 1995). Thus, for the purposes of this study the sample size was set at 400 respondents. With this sample size the structural equation modeling technique could be used in this study. The link was open for 3 months (June – August, 2016) and 576 usable questionnaires were collected.

4.5 Collection of Data

The data was collected from the community of Premier League Football brand communities. As explained by Belk (1988) that true to the hallmark of naturalistic inquiry is the interpretation of the data that is collected at "the interactional site at

which the phenomena of interest to the inquirers is known to occur." Since the topic of this study is in brand communities, it is logical to collect the data from the brand communities of the respective football teams. Batra et al. (2012); Thomson, MacInnis, and Park (2005); and Escalas and Bettman (2005) also conducted the research online.

Following the direction set by Schouten (1991) and McCraken (1988) the study will incorporate the questioning of brand community members profile and their experiences in the football virtual brand community. This is an effective means to collect data because data collection in an online sample does not produce different results from offline (Deutskens, Ruyters, &Wetzels 2006). In addition Calder, Phillips, and Tybout (1981) explained that in the situation wherein the research objective is to test a theory samples that are homogeneous are suitable. This method is preferred because it reduces the likelihood that extraneous variables will impact the results of the study because internal validity of primary importance.The purposive sampling method in which the respondents will be selected to serve the researcher's purpose (Zikmund & Babin, 2010) was used. The questionnaire was sent to page administrator of Red Army was recruited to help post the questionnaire link on the page for Red Army Manchester United, Liverpool, and Arsenal (Appendix D). These teams make up the majority of the Thai fan base of the English Premier League with the ratio as reported by Sanook! (April 23, 2015) Liverpool (29.69), Manchester United (19.77), Chelsea (18.95), and Arsenal (15.03). In addition sports commentators from FM 99 Sports Radio were asked to share the link to the questionnaire on their Facebook pages.

4.5 Statistical Treatment of the Data

The completed questionnaires were verified and checked before the data analysis process was implemented. The first and second sections of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

The data in sections three to five were scales that needed to be put through the test of reliability. The Cronbach's alpha of each construct has to pass the minimum criteria set by Nunally (1978) to be included in the study. The scales measure from .877 to .932 thus passing the selection criteria for use in the next stage of the study.

The next stage is the extraction of factors using Exploratory Factory Analysis (EFA). The results will show how the items fit in the constructs they are expected to measure. Then a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) will be conducted to test themeasurement model using in structural equation modeling. This analysis will test the reliability of the constructs, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of each construct.

For testing the hypothesis structural equation modeling technique was chosen because it is a technique that allows for the testing of the construct validity that is more rigorous and conveniently tested in a single research (Garver& Mentzer, 1999). In addition structural equation modeling is a more powerful statistical tool in testing hypotheses because it combines the features of factor analysis with regression analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Structural equation modeling is suited for investigating interrelated dependence relationships between the measured variables and their latent

constructs. At the same time it measures the relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables (Hair et al., 2010; Ho, 2006).

In the final stage the structural equation model will be used to assess the overall fit of the model to test the relationships hypothesized in the model (Hair et al., 2010; Ho, 2006). Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012) used structural equation modeling to create a model of first order and higher order structural models. Research on brand love such as Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) used partial least squares while others such as Unal and Aydin (2013), Ismail and Spinelli (2012), and Carroll and Ahuvia (2006)used structural equation modeling. This research uses structural equation modeling because it is a technique that is well suited to investigate the relationship between the variables and their latent constructs (Hair et al., 2010; Ho, 2006). The test of all the paths in the model are necessary to understand the total effects of the constructs in the model, since each path is representative of the mechanisms in creating engagement and brand love. Separate analysis of the Indirect Model will be used to demonstrate the mediation effect of engagement (Pearl, 2001).

Table 4.4: Summary of the Hypotheses and Statistical Treatment Tests

	Hypothesis	Statistical Treatment
H1	The consumer brand identification has a positive influence on brand love.	SEM
H2	The consumer brand identification has a positive influence on psychological sense of community.	SEM
H3	Engagement is positively influenced by consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community.	SEM
H4	Engagement has a positive influence on brand love.	SEM
H5	Engagement mediates the effects of consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community on brand love.	SEM
H6	Consumer brand identification has a positive influence on engagement.	SEM
H7	Engagement mediates the effects of consumer brand identification on brand love.	SEM
H8	Psychological sense of community has a positive influence on engagement.	SEM
H9	Engagement mediates the effects of psychological sense of community on brand love.	SEM
H10	Psychological sense of community has a positive influence on brand love.	SEM

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND RESULTS

Chapter V presents the findings of the main study. The data analysis will be conducted for each section. The first section will explain the data collection and results. The next section will present the respondent profile followed by behavioral data. Consequently, the reliability and validity analysis will be explained. Then the results of the Structural equation modeling (SEM) technique are used for testing the hypothesis. The final section will present the hypothesis testing.

5.1 Survey Data

The data collection was done as explained earlier in Chapter IV. The data collection was done June – August, 2016 in four major Premier League fan clubs. The data collection period took a total of three months because the level of cooperation was quite low. Repeated requests had to be sent to more people to broaden the target. The lesson learned is that online data collection may be cheap but the main trade off is the time and effort needed to follow up to get the required sample size. In total 591 questionnaires were completed. Of this number 576 can be used. This is due to incomplete answers.

5.2 Sample Characteristics

Table 5.1: Respondents' Profile

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
years 25 – 21	81	14
26 – 30 years	144	25
31 - 35 years	86	15
36 – 40 years	104	18
41 – 45 years	92	16
46 – 50 years	46	8
51 – 55 years	23	4
Total	**576**	**100.00**
Education		
s Degree'Below Bachelor	185	32
s Degree'Bachelor	299	52
Degree s and PhD'Master	92	16
Total	**576**	**100.00**
Income		
Below 10,000	236	41
baht 20,000 – 10,001	156	27
20,001 – 30,000 baht	115	20
30,001 – 40,000 baht	46	8
40,001 – 50,000 baht	23	4
Total	**576**	**100.00**
Age		
Male	484	84
Female	92	16
Total	**576**	**100.00**

Behavior Football	Frequency	Percentage
Favorite Team		
Manchester United	248	43
Liverpool	236	41
Arsenal	29	5
Chelsea	29	5
Leicester City	23	4
Manchester City	6	1
Others	5	1
Total	**576**	**100.00**
Purchase of Team Products		
Made Purchase	276	48
purchase Did not make	300	52
Total	**576**	**100.00**

The summary of the respondents profile is provided in Table 5.1. The majority
of the respondents are male (84%) and aged over 30 years (61%). Most of them have

income below 10,000 baht (41%). There is almost an equal ratio of Manchester United fans (43%) and Liverpool fans (41%). The remaining 16% is split between fans of Arsenal, Chelsea, and Leicester City. About 48% of the respondents made a purchase of the team products in the past year. (For more details see Appendix E).

5.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Reliability Analysis

This section presents the reliability test on the constructs used in the main study. The results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and the reliability analysis are presented in Table 5.2. The reliability analyzed by the score of the Cronbach's alpha of the constructs range from .929 to .963. This fits the criteria requiring 0.70 or higher (Hair et al., 2010; Maholtra, 2010).

Table 5.2: Measures of Internal Consistency

Consumer Brand Identification Items	s Alpha'Cronbach
CBI	.929
I feel a strong sense of belonging to XX Football Club.	
I identify strongly with XX Football Club.	
XX Football Club embodies I believe in.	
XX Football Club is like a part of me.	
XX Football Club has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	

Psychological Sense of Community	s Alpha'Cronbach
PSC	.946
I feel strong ties to other members of the football club virtual community.	
I find it easy to form a bond with other members of the football club virtual community.	
I feel a sense of being connected to other members of the football club virtual community.	
A strong feeling of camaraderie (friendship) exists between me and other members of the football club virtual community.	
Supporting this team gives me a sense of community.	
I feel a sense of community with other members of this football club virtual community.	

Engagement	s Alpha'Cronbach
EN	.954

Visiting the fan page gets me thinking about my favorite football team.
I think about the football team when I use the fan page.
Visiting the fan page stimulates my interest to learn more about the team.
I feel very positive when I cheer this team.
Cheering for this team makes me happy.
I feel good when I cheer this team.
I am proud to cheer this team.
I spend a lot of time cheering this team when compared to other teams.
Whenever I watch football, I usually watch my favorite team play.
The team is one of the football teams that I usually cheer when I watch football.

Brand Love	s Alpha'Cronbach
BL	.963

To what extent do you feel that using items from this football teams says something "true and deep" about who you are as a person?
To what extent do you feel that this football team is an important part of how you see yourself?
To what extent does this football team make you look like you want to look?
To what extent does this football team brand make you feel like your want to feel?
To what extent is this football team able to do something that makes your life more meaningful?
To what extent does this football contribute something towards making your life worth living?
To what extent do you find yourself thinking about this football team?
To what extent do you find that this football team keeps popping into your head?
To what extent do you find yourself thinking about this football team?
To what extent do you feel yourself desiring to use items from this football team?
To what extent do you feel yourself longing to use items from this football team?
To what extent have you interacted with this football team in the past?
To what extent have you been involved with this football team in the past?
To what extent are you willing to spend a lot of money improving and fine-tuning a product from this football team after you buy it?
To what extent are you willing to spend a lot of time improving and fine-tuning a product from this football team after you buy it?
Please express the extent to which when you first encountered this football team, you felt "yes this is what I've been looking for."
Please express the extent to which when you first encountered this football team, it just felt "right" for you.
Please express the extent to which you feel emotionally connected to this football team.
Please express the extent to which this football team feels like an old friend.
Please express the extent to which you feel that this football team is fun.
Please express the extent to which you feel that this football team is exciting.
Please express the extent to which you believe that you will be supporting this team for a long time?
Please express the extent to which you expect that this football team will be part of your life for a long time to come.
Suppose this football team will go out of existence, to what extent would you feel anxiety?
Suppose this football team will go out of existence, to what extent would you feel apprehension?
Consider all the experiences you have had with this football team to date. How satisfied are you?
Considering all the expectations you have had about the product, to what extent has this football team fallen short of your expectations or exceeded your expectations?
How certain are you of these overall feelings and evaluations you just gave above?
How much confidence do you have in these overall feelings and evaluations you just gave?

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) tests resulted in the KMO value of .944 is considered very good, which means there is no problem of multicollinearity. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant at the level of less than 0.001. This proves that the data is suitable for conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The results showed that factors had eigenvalues of greater than 1.00, which is suitable as posited by Ho (2006) and Hair et al. (2010). The results of the factor analysis show that the constructs in the study account for 76% of the variance of the model being studied. The results show no cross loading among the factors, which support the demonstration of discriminant validity.

5.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Convergent Validity reveals how the items relate to the underlying constructs (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2010). This section shows the analysis of the measurement model. The first step is the test of the model fit. The Chi-square goodness-of-fit test (3.016) shows that the measurement model has a good model fit. This based on the recommendation from Kline (2011) that Chi-square less than 5 is considered as adequate fit. The baseline comparison fit indices NFI(.889), RFI(.878), IFI(.923), TLI(.915), and CFI(.923) range from 0.88 to 0.92. The GFI is 0.80 and the RMSEA is 0.059, which fits within the range suggested by Ho (2006) and Hu and Bentler (1999) at less than or equal to 0.06. Hoelter test of 205 exceeds 200, which is the acceptable level.

Based on these statistical indices, CFA testing of the constructs show that all are reliable and demonstrate convergent validity. Table 5.3 present the factor loadings derived from the Standardized Regression Weights for the measurement model

evaluation. To sum it up, the CFA, shows factor loadings for consumer brand identification range from .67 to .91; psychological sense of community range from .81 - .92; engagement range from .72 - .92; and brand love range from .32 - .85.

The relatively low factor loading on the brand love raised concern about using the construct in further model development. As a consequence an examination of the Cronbach's Alpha if the item was deleted analysis was conducted. It was found that the deletion of the items did not improve the scale reliability. The deletion of the items would result in Cronbach's Alpha ranging from .962 - .964. The total Cronbach's Alpha for the brand love scale is .963. Therefore, further analysis was conducted on these factors showing weak loading. The result is the confirmation of two dimensions of brand love uniquely proposed by Batra et al. (2012), which are positive overall attitude valence and attitude certainty/confidence.If these two dimensions are removed from the analysis, the CFA factor loadings range from .60 to .85, which is considered acceptable. The factor loadings reported by Batra et al. (2012) for brand love range from .84 - .95. Since it is not as high as expected, the authors suggested that the examination of individual items was less important than assessing the overall brand love factor. Following this lead, the discriminant analysis would be performed to further assess strength of the constructs.

Factor analysis reveal a pattern of five second-order factors that are different from the original work proposed by Batra et al. (2012).These five second-order constructs account for 71.966 percent of the variance explained for brand love. The scree plot and factor loadings are shown in Appendix F. To further test that the second-order constructs, CFA was conducted. The results are shown in Figure 5.1.

The CMIN is 1.167 which is considered good fit. The Goodness-of-Fit index (GFI) value is 0.974, which is within the range as set from 0 (poor fit) to 1 (perfect fit). The root mean square error of approximation RMSEA is 0.017, which is acceptable at equal or less than 0.06 (Ho, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The baseline comparison indices of NFI (.988) and CFI (.998) show very good fit for the model. The factors and their implications would be further discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 5.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Love Second Order Constructs

Chi-square=195.358 df.= 168 Sig.=.073 CMIN/df.= 1.167 n = 576
CFI=.998 NFI=.988 GFI=.974 AGFI=.947 IFI=.998
RMSEA=.017 RMR=.031

139
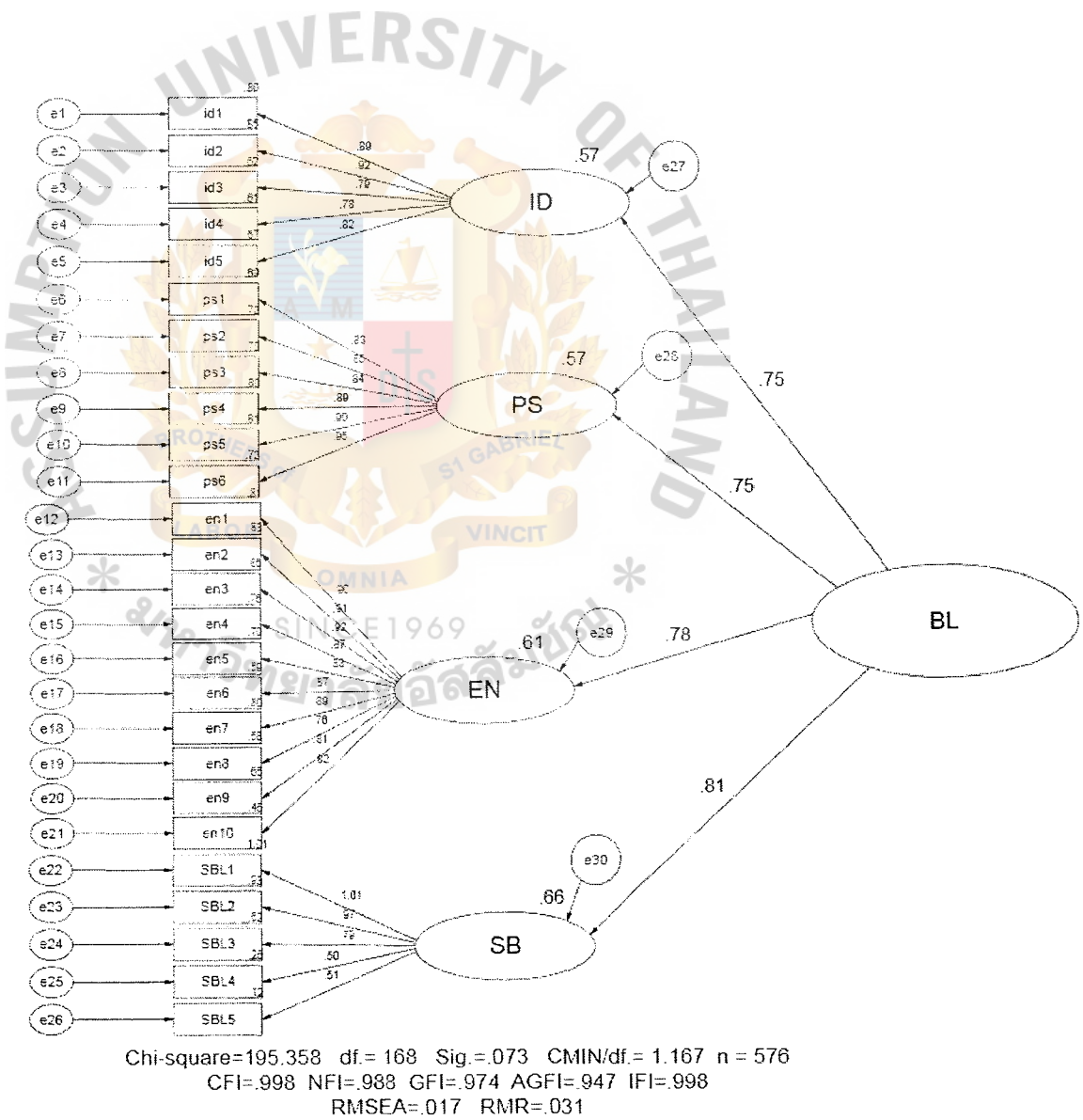
Table 5.3: Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate
id5	<---	ID	.800
id4	<---	ID	.761
id3	<---	ID	.668
id2	<---	ID	.896
id1	<---	ID	.912
ps6	<---	PS	.848
ps5	<---	PS	.879
ps4	<---	PS	.919
ps3	<---	PS	.844
ps2	<---	PS	.859
ps1	<---	PS	.817
en10	<---	EN	.732
en9	<---	EN	.798
en8	<---	EN	.720
en7	<---	EN	.826
en6	<---	EN	.784
en5	<---	EN	.885
en4	<---	EN	.873
en3	<---	EN	.914
en2	<---	EN	.890
en1	<---	EN	.839
bl1	<---	BL	.611
bl2	<---	BL	.789
bl3	<---	BL	.796
bl4	<---	BL	.787
bl5	<---	BL	.739
bl6	<---	BL	.737
bl7	<---	BL	.820

bl8	<---	BL	.771
bl9	<---	BL	.707
bl10	<---	BL	.712
bl11	<---	BL	.602
bl12	<---	BL	.664
bl13	<---	BL	.725
bl14	<---	BL	.618
bl15	<---	BL	.771
bl16	<---	BL	.797
bl17	<---	BL	.849
bl18	<---	BL	.788
bl19	<---	BL	.708
bl20	<---	BL	.751
bl21	<---	BL	.740
bl22	<---	BL	.789
bl23	<---	BL	.654
bl24	<---	BL	.645
bl25	<---	BL	.467
bl26	<---	BL	.329
bl27	<---	BL	.440
bl28	<---	BL	.495

Figure 5.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model

Chi-square/df = 3.016 , GFI = .800 , RMSEA = .059 , Hoelter = 205.000
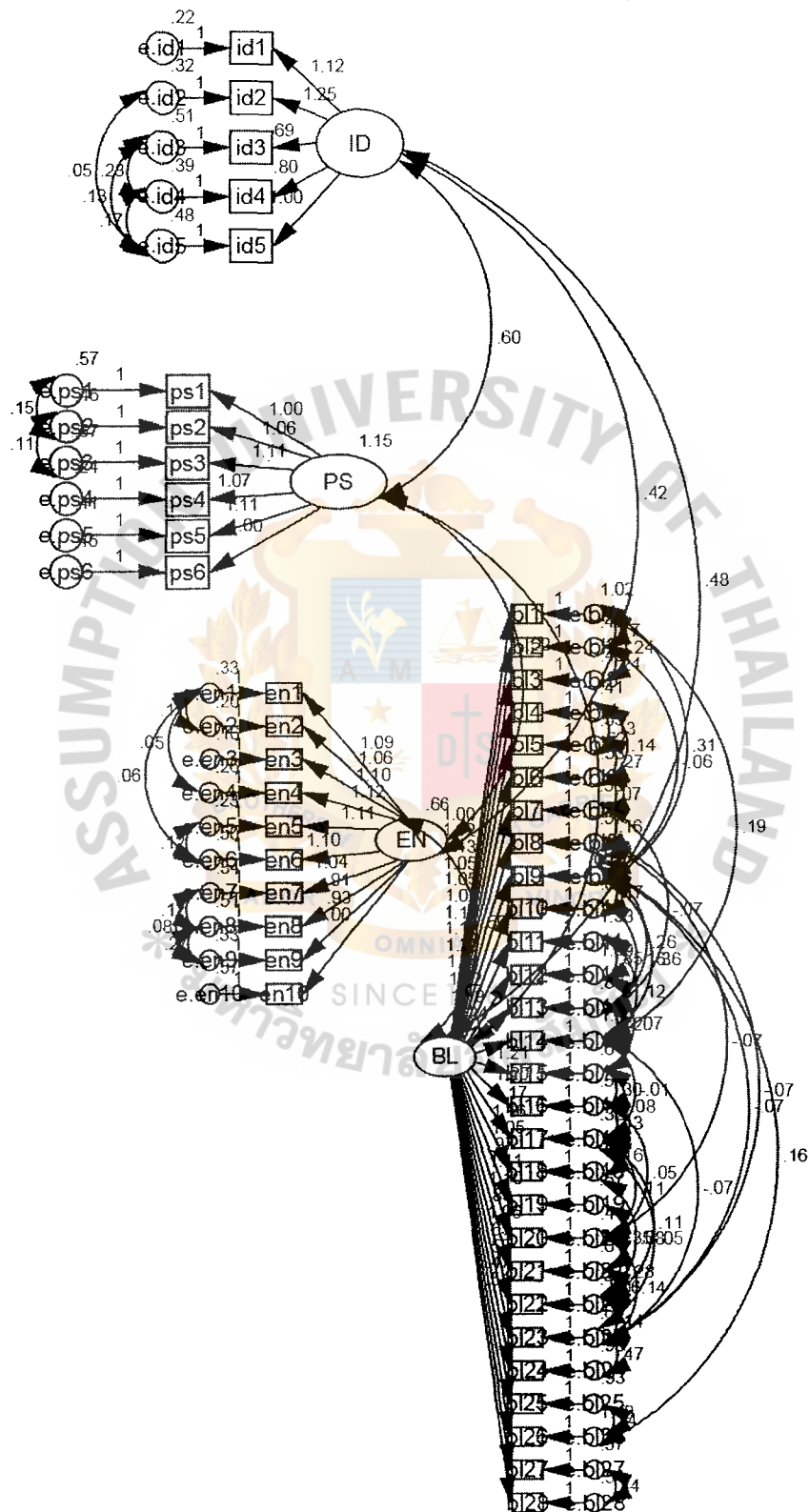
Discriminant Validity

The intra-construct discriminant validity is tested using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The rationale for this method is that the indicators should strongly correlate to its construct rather than to other constructs (Shiu et al., 2011). Based on the suggestion by Hair et al. (2010) the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values have been assessed based on the rule of thumb greater than 0.50. The result for brand love is 0.71, which the same as the results by Batra et al. (2012). The AVE for engagement is 0.5, psychological sense of community 0.53, and consumer brand identification 0.58. The AVEs confirm the discriminant validity of the items representing the latent constructs.

5.5 Structural Equation Model

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) has been constructed to test the hypotheses regarding the relationships between the antecedents, mediators, and the dependent variable brand love. The hypothesis testing was conducted using the maximum likelihood method. Figure 5.3 traces the various paths to be tested in the model.

143

Figure 5.3 Path Model
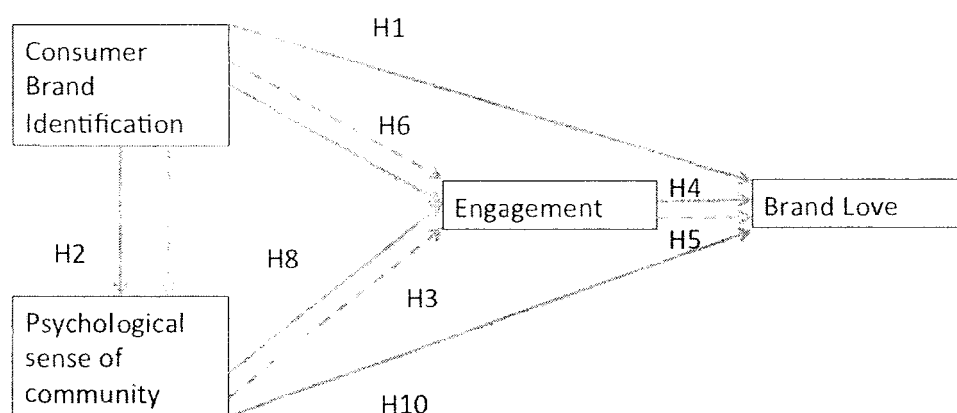
Overall Model Evaluation

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) was subject to absolute fit using the Chi-square test. The Chi-square test is 3.157 which according to Kline (2011) is considered as adequate fit. The Goodness-of-Fit index (GFI) value is 0.787, which is within the range as set from 0 (poor fit) to 1 (perfect fit). The root mean square error of approximation RMSEA is 0.06, which is acceptable at equal or less than 0.06 (Ho, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The baseline comparison indices are NFI (.883), RFI (.872), IFI (.917), TLI (.908), and CFI (.917). The results range from .89 to .92. It should be noted that in the case of complex models with many items measuring variables the TLI and CFI tend to decline slightly (Kenny & McCoach, 2003). This shows that the hypothesized model fits the data, since it falls in the recommended values ranging from 0to 1. Hoelter test of 196 is almost 200, which is the acceptable level (Hoetler, 1983).This test is usually done when the Chi-square is significant and the sample size is over 200.While some of the indicators may not be strong the overall model fit is considered acceptable. In this hypothesized model, the variations in engagement are explained by the joint influence of the antecedents and mediator

144

investigated in this study. Ho (2014) suggested that the analysis of the unexplained variance would reveal how well the constructs in the model work together. The unexplained variance .31 for the engagement construct means that 69% of the variation of this construct is explained by the two identification antecedents consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community. The unexplained variance of .17 for the brand love construct shows that the two identification antecedents and mediating explain 83% of the variation of this construct.

Figure 5.4: Direct Model
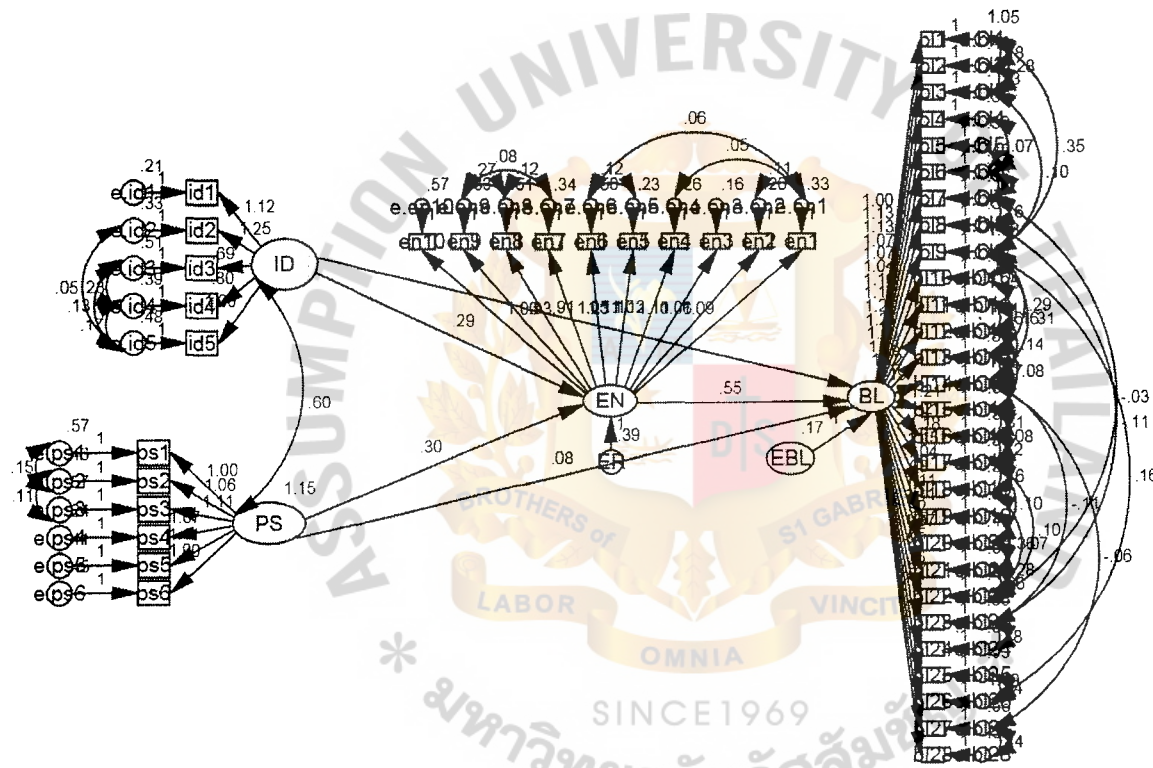
Chi-square/df = 3.157 , GFI = .787 , RMSEA = .061 , Hoelter = 196.000

Testing of Hypotheses

Table 5.5 presents the hypotheses testing results. The regression weights and standardized coefficient estimates of the paths. The hypotheses testing were done by analyzing the regression weights (for statistical significance) and the standardized coefficients estimates of the paths (for the magnitude and direction of the relationship). Of the hypotheses tested nine of the ten were statistically and significantly supported. The results of the hypotheses testing will be explained in the following section.

Table 5.4: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Direction	Standardized Regression Weight	Result
H1	CBI ⟶ Brand Love	Positive	.274	Supported
H2	CBI ⟶ PSC	Positive	.6	Supported
H3	CBI ⟶ PSC ⟶ Engagement	Positive	.461	Supported
H4	Engagement ⟶ BL	Positive	.578	Supported
H5	CBI ⟶ PSC ⟶ Engagement ⟶ BL	Positive	.77	Supported
H6	CBI ⟶ Engagement	Positive	.324	Supported
H7	CBI ⟶ Engagement ⟶ BL	Positive	.187	Supported
H8	PSC ⟶ Engagement	Positive	.228	Supported
H9	PSC ⟶ Engagement ⟶ BL	Positive	.394	Supported
H10	PSC ⟶ Brand Love	Positive	.080	Not supported

Figure 5.5: Indirect Model

Chi-square/df = 3.240 , GFI = .780 , RMSEA = .062 , Hoelter = 191.000

148
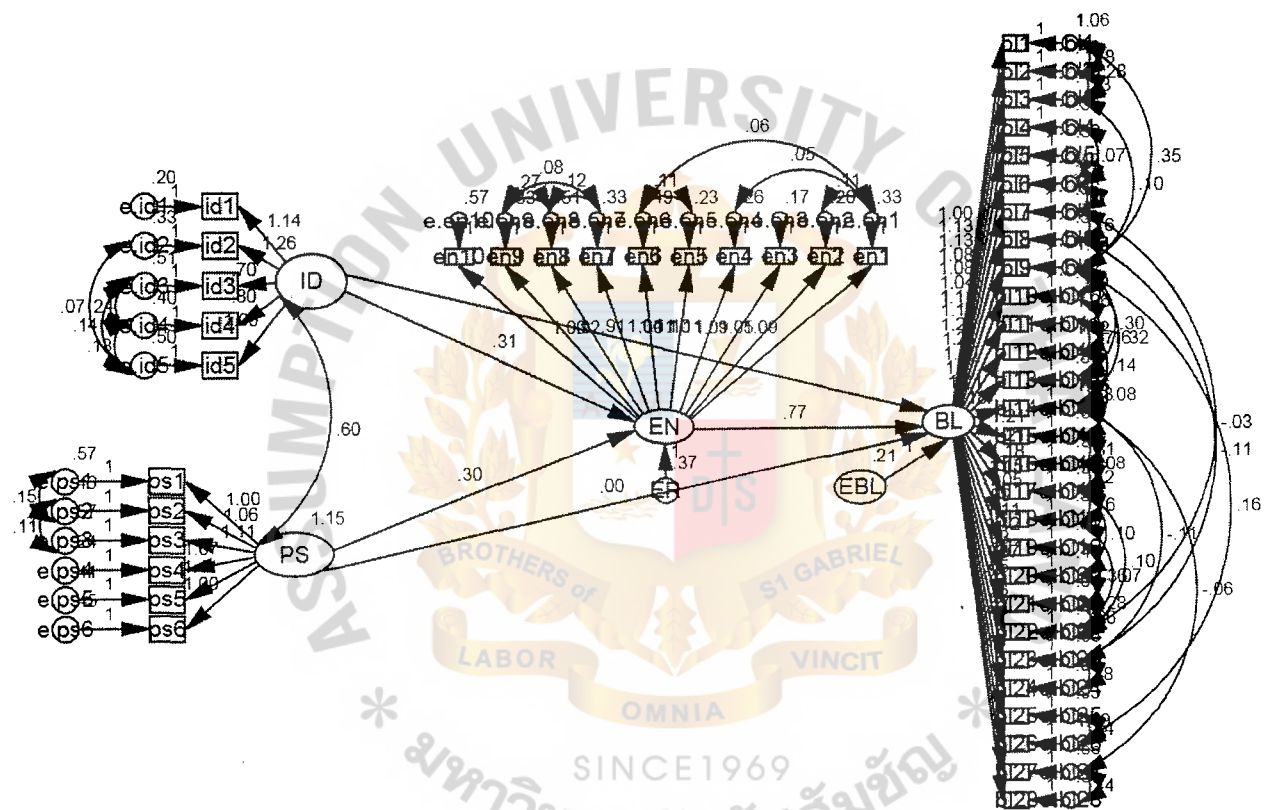
The indirect model shows the strength of the mediating variable engagement. Hair et al. (2006) explained that the mediating effect is measured in the indirect model. Baron and Kenny (1986) posited that to test for mediation effect the direct paths would be set to be non-significant. This manipulation is made through the function of Manage Model in AMOS. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) was subject to absolute fit using the Chi-square test. The Chi-square test is 3.24 is less than 5 based on the rule of thumb (Kline, 2011). The Goodness-of-Fit index (GFI) value is 0.78 falls within the range as set from 0 (poor fit) to 1 (perfect fit). The root mean square error of approximation RMSEA is 0.06, which isequal to 0.06, shows good model fit (Ho, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The baseline comparison indices are NFI (.880), RFI (.869), IFI (.914), TLI (.905), and CFI (.914). Some of thevalues tend to be lower in models with many items explaining constructs (Kenny & McCoach, 2003). This shows that the hypothesized model fits the data, since it falls in the recommended values ranging from 0 to 1. The Hoelter test conducted when the Chi-square is significant and sample size is more than 200 has a value of 191 (at 0.05) and 196 (at 0.01), which is considered acceptable (Hoetler, 1983). The model comparison shows a CMIN/DF of 47.57. The NFI, IFI, RFI, and TLI all show values of 0.003. According to Ho (2014) this can be interpreted as the absolute improvement to the model fit for both models can only be 0.003.

As suggested by Ho (2014) the analysis of the unexplained variance was conducted to examine the explanatory power of the antecedents and mediator. The unexplained variance .37 for the engagement construct means that 63% of the variation is explained by the two identification antecedents consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community. The unexplained variance of .21

for the brand love reveals that 79% of the variation in the construct is explained by the two antecedents and mediator. Examination of the AIC test as suggested by Ho (2014) found that the AIC value for the Direct Model is 3691 which is lower than 3782 for the Indirect Model. This means that the Direct Model is more parsimonious and has a better fit. Total model explanation the issue of context. As a consequence the Indirect Model does not show any significant improvement from the Direct Model. To further explain this phenomenon the examination of the items of engagement need to be revisited in Chapter V.

5.6 Results of Hypothesis Testing

As proposed by this research the antecedents of identification –consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community- are significantly and positively related to engagement and brand love is in turn driven by engagement, there is evidence strongly supporting Hypothesis 5 (Engagement mediates the effects of consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community on brand love.) with a Standardized Regression Weight of .77. The lower strength of the paths from consumer brand identification through engagement to brand love and the paths from psychological sense of community are quite weak with Standardized Regression Weights of .187 and .228 respectively in the Direct Model. The Standardized Regression Weights improve to .31 for the path from consumer brand identification and .30 from psychological sense of community. This means that for the model to be strong all of the three constructs must work together to predict brand love.

Hypothesis 2 testing the relationship between the consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community is also strong with the

Standardized Regression Weight of .6.The identification to the brand and its other users should be pronounced because it is the cognitive categorization that is based on common values and beliefs. This proves the significance of the social context of the brand experience in the virtual brand community as explained by the Social Identity Theory.

Hypothesis 4 which is the path from engagement to brand love has a Standardized Regression Weight of .578. This is the path with the third highest value for the Standardized Regression Weight. The results show that connection between the engagement and brand love. Since engagement is described as the context driven positive iterative cognitive, affective, experience it stands to reason that this leads to a passionate commitment to a relationship with the brand.

Hypothesis 3, which is the path from consumer brand identification to psychological sense of community to engagement, is the fourth strongest path with Standardized Regression Weight of .461. Since members of the community identify with the same football team, they are driven by a common goal in the experience of engaging with the brand.This is in line withHypothesis 8, which is the path from psychological sense of community to engagement (Standardized Regression Weight of .394). It is reasonable that individuals would choose to engage with those they feel a sense of camaraderie.

Hypothesis 6, which is the path from consumer brand identification to engagement, has Standardized Regression Weight of 324. Since the brand serves as the context for engagement, it is central to the consumer experience with the brand. It

is possible that an individual may identify with the brand and engage with it. However, since engagement requires a reiterative process, the lack of connection with other consumers weakens this path.

Hypothesis 1, which is the path from consumer brand identification to brand love, has Standardized Regression Weight of .274. This path shows the effects of traditional marketing communications tools since consumer brand identification can be created from the perceived value and characteristics of the brand.

Hypothesis 9, which is the path from psychological sense of community through engagement to brand love, has the Standardized Regression Weight of .228. This weak result may be due to the fact that the identification with other members in the community with no regard to the identification of the brand is not possible to create brand love. The engagement is the context of this study is specific to the brand experience thus the paths from psychological sense of community without consumer brand identification would be weak.

Hypothesis 7, which is the path from consumer brand identification through engagement to brand love is also weak. The Standardized Regression Weight is .187. This provides further support for Hypothesis 5, which is the integration of the two identification constructs through the mediating factor having the strongest path. It appears that the two antecedents independent of one another though passing through the mediator still has minimal effect in creating brand love.

Hypothesis 10 which is the path from psychological sense of community to brand love is not significant. This is understandable because an affiliation to other members without the brand in context cannot result in an expression of love.

The following section explains how the results of the hypotheses testing fit with previous research. It would elaborate on the relationship between the constructs proposed in the conceptual framework.

The strong support shown for Hypothesis 5 (Engagement mediates the effects of consumer brand identification and psychological sense of community on brand love.), means that the main premise for this research is in the right direction. This means that for the model to be strong all of the three constructs must work together to predict brand love. This is in line with the researchof Schouten et al. (2007) and McAlexander et al. (2002) that the greater the engagement within the community results in the increase of customer loyalty through transcendental consumer experiences. This results in stronger relationships with the brand and the other customers. The findings reinforce the work of Reimann, Aron, and Ahuvia (2015), which posited that people connect with others using brands as connectors. The following hypotheses examine the mechanisms of creating brand love explained through the relationship among the constructs.

Hypothesis 2 examines the relationship between the two identification antecedents or cognitive categorization that is based on common values and beliefs.This is the mechanism of creating the virtual brand community. It is the second strongest relationship showing that the identification to the brand and its other

users should be pronounced. This is akin to the shared consciousness explained by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001). The processes within the community promote an iterative exchange process that eventually develops into loyalty to the organization and other related individuals (Kim et al., 2008; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). This proves the significance of the social context of the brand experience in the virtual brand community as explained by the Social Identity Theory.

Hypothesis 4 shows the connection between engagement and brand love. This relationship shows that the centrality of the brand in the interaction (engagement) that an individual has with the product category is a strong driver of attachment. This supports the research of Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) that engagement would foster positive brand attachment, which is one of the important dimensions of brand love.

Hypothesis 3 is akin to the markers of community, shared rituals and traditions defined by Muniz and O'Guinn. Members feel a shared sense of consciousness driving them to perform rituals and hold traditions with a feeling of moral obligation to ensure the survival of the group. This is in line with the findings by Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) and Cunnigham and Kwon (2003) that identification with subjective norms propels community members to engage with the brand and other members cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. Members thus need to play their roles in keeping the community functioning. Hypothesis 8 supports the idea that people rapport with people they can identify with. It is the internal mechanism of the functioning within the virtual brand community, which serves to elaborate Hypothesis 3. In addition this is in line with the findings by Carlson et al. (2008) and Algesheimer

et al. (2005) that psychological sense of community has a positive impact on engagement.

Hypothesis 6 explains the effect of identification on engagement. When consumers feel that the brand is an important part of their identity, engagement is a natural consequence. This is supported by DeGroot and Robinson (2008) and Trail and James (2001) that identification plays a role in driving engagement through the motivation to follow the achievements of the team and seek knowledge about the team.

Hypothesis 1 shows the impact of identifiable brand values that have the potential for building brand love. These brand values are likely to be communicated through traditional marketing communications tools. This leads to the explanation of the mechanism of branding as a starter for brand love. It is supported by Albert and Merunka (2013) and Harrison-Walker (2001). The authors purport that users must identify with the brand in order to develop a positive feeling for it. However, it is not a sufficient indicator of brand love because the positive association must extend beyond the brand to the other users as evidenced in the findings of Cunningham and Kwon (2003) that reference groups will further enhance identification and positive brand associations. In addition as hypothesized in this study engagement plays an important role in mediating this relationship because it is the situation within which the brand and its supporters reciprocate good will that lays the foundation for brand love as suggested by Hollebeek, 2011.

However, the related Hypothesis 7, which is the path from consumer brand identification through engagement to brand love, is weak. This is reasonable since engagement would require some sort of sense of affinity with other supporters for the brand in order to engage with the community. Schouten et al. (2007) explained that there must be common experiences to foster the bond between consumer brand and virtual brand community.

Hypothesis 9 and Hypothesis 10 both deal with the impact of psychological sense of community. It is found that they are very weak. This is the same results as Larcoche et al. (2012). The authors suggested that psychological sense of community was insufficient to ensure that individuals would support the brand. This stands to reason since the feeling of membership to the community itself cannot be a sufficient determinant of brand love because it discounts the importance of the values and performance of the brand, which is critical for consumers to want a relationship with the brand. In fact the brand serves, as the context for the community in this study as a consequence the association to the brand is the pre-requisite for the psychological sense of community. Thus, this construct cannot work alone to predict brand love.

The next chapter, Chapter VI, discusses the implications of the hypotheses testing results. In addition justifications and recommendations regarding the results are provided.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The hypothesis testing was already presented in Chapter V. This chapter

discusses the implications of the findings. The results of the research questions and

objectives are also revisited. In addition the theoretical contributions and managerial

implications are also presented followed by the limitations of the study. The final

section is the suggestion for future research directions.

6.1 Discussion of the Findings

This research presents the findings regarding brand love, as the focal

dependent variable as explained by Self-Expansion Theory. In addition the

antecedents of identification were studied using the Social Identity Theory. The

mediating effect of engagement was explained using the Consumer Culture Theory.

This study was conducted in the context of Premier League Football Virtual

Community Fan Club. The results of the study show support for all of the hypotheses

tested and would be discussed in detail in the following sections.

6.1.1   Discussion of the Identification Antecedents of Brand Love

The research findings support the first research objective and second research

contribution in using the Social Identity Theory (SIT) to explain the identification

antecedents of brand love. The relationship among the constructs would be explained

in the detail in the next section.

Consumer Brand Identification

Consumer brand identification has a positive impact on brand love. The paths from consumer brand identification to brand love (.274), to psychological sense of community (.6), and to psychological sense of community to engagement (.461) show the impact of this construct in the relationship consumers have with brands. This confirms the previous findings that consumers bond with brands that project their desired image (Cova & Pace, 2006; Muniz & Schau, 2005; McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Previous research also supports this finding since the more congruent the brand identity is with the self the more it drives positive relationship consequences (Albert & Merunka, 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012; Kressmann et al., 2006; Maholtra, 1988; Sirgy, 1985).

This is especially important in the context of sports where the team elements such as the team's performance, iconic players, tradition, colors, and symbols all play a role in the development of the identification with the team (Gladden & Funk, 2001). This is because in the sports industry there is a high level of identification between the fans and their teams (Underwood et al., 2001). In addition the prestige of the team would further enhance identification (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003).Consequently, brands have a reciprocal partnership with their consumers thus brands are bestowed values that reflect those of their users (Sweeney & Brandon, 2006).Thus, it is important to emphasize positive values, image, or personality need to be a major branding strategy. This will encourage that feeling of being part of the brand, which is a major contributor to brand love. Therefore, the consumer brand identification relationship to brand love can be succinctly explained by Fink, Trail, and Anderson

158

(2002) as the orientation of self into another object (brand which for the purposes of this research isfootball team) resulting in feelings of close attachment (love).

Psychological Sense of Community

Psychological sense of community in itself does not have impact on brand love (Hypothesis 10 is not supported). Hypotheses 8 and 9 are supported with Standardized Regression Weights of .394 and .228 respectively. This goes to show the role of psychological sense of communityin strengthening the consumer brand identification and engagement link. Belonging and being categorized into groups is critical for individuals to make sense of the world around them (Carlson, Suter, & Brown, 2008). This drives the need for individuals to identify with others supporting the same brand (Grubb & Hupp, 1968). As a consequence the symbolic brand image is the non-product related attributes that can satisfy the higher-level needs of the consumers such as social approval needs or personal expression for maintaining self-esteem (Keller, 1993).Escalas and Bettman (2005) built on this view to explain that these symbolic properties of brands thus include the characteristics of the reference groups.

In the context of sports identification with the team enhances the association with friends and family (Kaynak et al., 2008). This association in turn leads to engagement with the other fans in the virtual football fan club. The Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) explains that people need to have affiliation with those who have the same likes and preferences. This in turn creates the psychological sense of community. However, as the path from psychological sense of community to brand love is not significant. The psychological sense of community relies on the

feeling of oneness with the group, which may be easier if it was a team representing a city (Kolbe & James, 2000). Thus it appears to confirm the finding by Sutton et al. (1997) that brand identification with the team is driven by the symbols, goals, stories, and the need to belong to a group hence the strong relationship between psychological sense of community and consumer brand identification (Standardized Regression Weight = 0.60). The findings suggest that the two are related. This is supported by Cunningham and Kwon (2003), who suggested that reference groups could strengthen identification through compliance of values and traditions. Thus, differing from the work of Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) that psychological sense of community is not an antecedent to brand identification.

6.1.2 Engagement Mediation

Identification can be enhanced through engagement as can be seen in the strong support for Hypothesis 5 (.77). Engagement is the internalization with the brand and its community through volitional choice enhancing identification (Sprott, Czellar, & Spangenberg, 2009; Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Dimmock & Grove, 2006; Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). The context of the community is the driver of engagement through the creation of a shared consciousness, shared rituals, and moral obligations (Cova & Cova, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). The results of this research build on the initial findings by Laroche et al. (2012) that in the context of social media social and emotional connection can be created for the benefit of the brand. Through the creation effective communications and engagement online the shared consciousness, shared rituals, and moral obligations can further enhanced (Blanchard, 2007). In addition to being identified as members, each must have a role to play in the creation of meaning and survival of the group and by extension the

brand the community is affiliated with. This explains the third research objective and fourth research contribution through fostering a better understanding of the engagement process in virtual brand communities using Consumer Culture Theory.

Consumer Culture Theory can explain the meaning and value creation resulting from engagement in the virtual brand communities. The sharing of stories, creation of norms, and cultures within the group helps to solidify the identification with the group. According to Woodside, Sood, and Miller (2008) people relate to one another by sharing brand and product related stories. Other researchers (Kuo & Feng, 2013; Megehee & Spake, 2012) have related this storytelling to brand communities. Thus it is theorized that with more social interaction within virtual brand communities there should be stronger feelings of psychological sense of community (PSC) (Carlson, Suter, & Brown, 2008). This might explain the significance of the path from psychological sense of community through engagement to brand love as being significant despite the fact that the direct path from psychological sense of community to brand love is not.

Linking engagement to the sports context Kolbe and James (2000) explained this as the process of learning the values and attitudes as well as expected behavior in being a fan of a sports team. Stories can be passed among members thus ensuring the survival of the community (O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005; Muniz & Schau, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). This addresses the fifth research contribution, which is the application of engagement in the context of sports.

Figure 6.1 Engagement Mediation Model of Brand Love
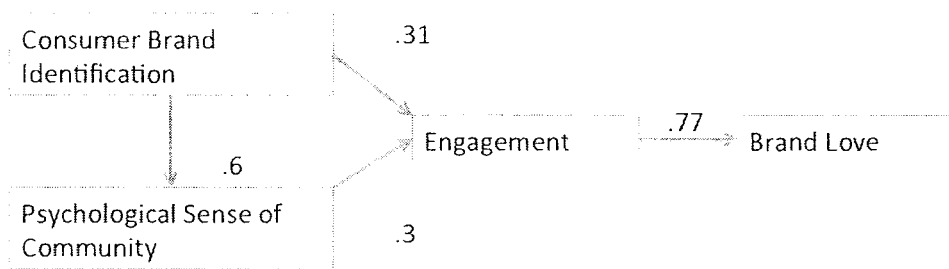
6.2 Theoretical Contributions

Nomological Validity of Brand Love Construct

The Self-Expansion Theory (Aron et al., 1986), which posits that as consumers bond with brands the emotional attachment with grow consequently motivating them to allocate resources to support the brand due to the reciprocal nature of the relationship. Based on this theory the nomological validity of brand love was confirmed by determining the relationships between the constructs in the study (Hair et al., 2006). Analyses of the significance of the correlations between the constructs were positive and significant thus ensuring the nomological validity of brand love. The unexplained variance of .17 for the brand love construct shows that the two identification antecedents and mediating explain 83% of the variation of this construct. The construct is based in the consumer brand relationship field of study as suggested by Fetscherin and Heinrich (2015) and proven empirically in this study. The authors conducted a meta-analysis of articles from leading journals and identified seven inter-related research streams in consumer brand relationships, which are study of brand constructs, effects of relationship on consumer behavior, brand love, brand communities, brand cult, self-brand connections, and story-telling. These research streams have been integrated into this study to develop a comprehensive

understanding of how brand love fits in the nomological net of consumer brand relationships. It expands the understanding that the dominant relationship-marketing paradigm or service dominant logic can be complimented by the incorporation of the social component that is explained through the psychological sense of community that roots engagement within the experience of the community that goes beyond the relationship between individuals with the brand but also with others in the community. This supports the first contribution of this research and the third research objective by confirming the framework of brand love in the context of virtual brand communities.

Brand Love Dimensions

The brand love scale used in the study is based on Batra et al. (2012). From the reliability and validity analysis, the resulting indicators were in line with the research conducted by Batra et al. (2012) (See Figure 6.3). However, the factor analysis showed that instead of loading on 7 factors, there were five factors identified. The five resulting are passion driven behaviors, self-brand integration, positive emotional connection, attitude valence, and attitude certainty and confidence (See Figure 6.2). The long-term relationship and anticipated separation distress loaded together with the positive emotional connection. The following section provides the definitions of the five dimensions proposed by this study.

Figure 6.2 Brand Love Factors
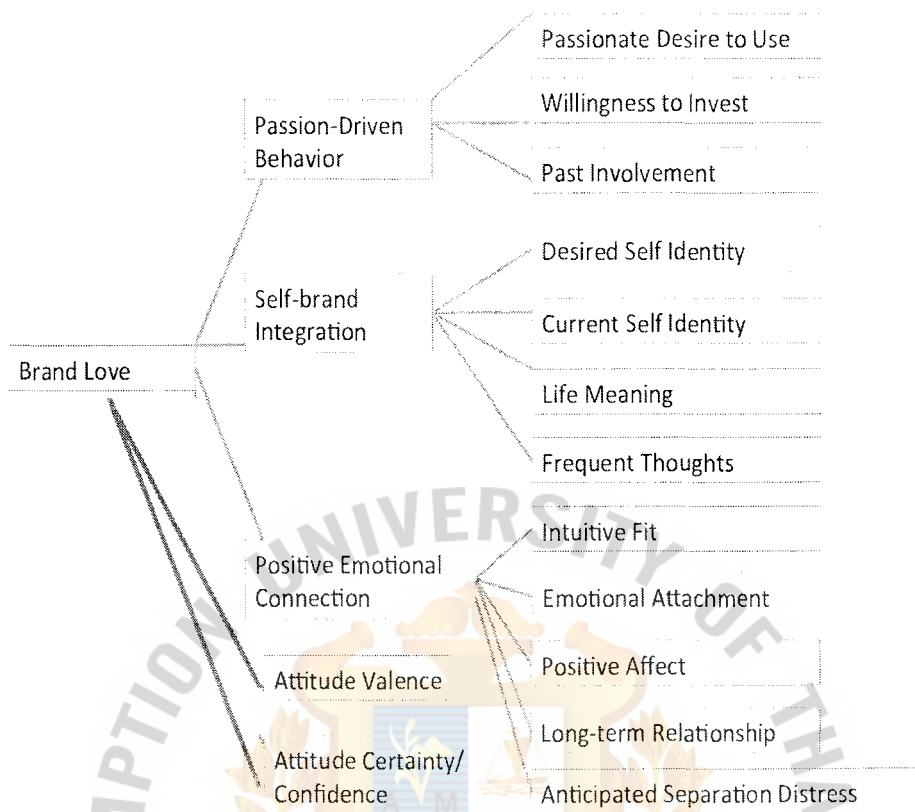
Passion driven behavior is the expressive aspect wherein the individual would like to show off the love for the object. This can be done through an involvement that spans a long period of time, investment of resources, and the desire to use or show off the association with the object of passion.

Self-brand integration is defined as the level of importance the association with the object of passion is to the individual. It expresses the importance of the identification to the self-concept through the congruence of the brand or fit with their current or desired identity. Because of the importance of this association it is frequently on the mind of the individual and has an impact on the life meaning.

Positive emotional connection is defined as the positive evaluation of the relationship with the brand. It is the hedonic or affective component of the relationship that drives the commitment to a long-term relationship and anticipated separation distress should the object of passion cease to exist.

Attitude valence is defined as the satisfaction with the performance of the object of passion. Attitude certainty and confidence is defined as the confirmation of the relationship. Both are important prerequisites for the continuation of the relationship with the brand and passionate expression defined as love.

Batra et al. (2012) had initial findings that created three factors namely passion-driven behaviors: willingness to invest resources, passionate desire to use, and past involvement; self-brand integration: life meaning, desired self-identity, current self-identity, frequent thoughts; and positive emotional connection: sense of intuitive fit, extent of emotional attachment, and extent of positive feelings (See Figure 6.3). The factors attitude valence and attitude certainty/confidence were added as a consequence of the results of their findings on how consumers experienced brand love and consumer psychological findings from Batra et al. (2012).

Figure 6.3 Higher-order Brand Love Factors

Source : Batra et al. (2012)
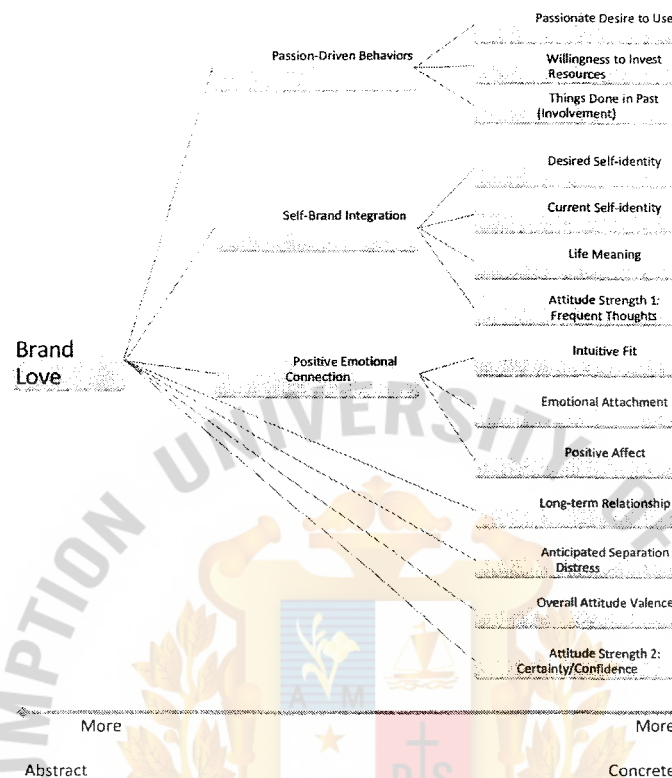
It is similar to Fournier's (1998) suggestion of attachment defined as love/passion and self-connection; behavioral ties including interdependence and commitment; and supportive cognition beliefs made up of intimacy and brand partner quality. As a result this research proposes five dimensions of brand love as another theoretical contribution. Also the findings confirm the brand love definition used in this research as an idiosyncratic expression of a satisfied customer in the form of a multi-dimensional construct that includes social, emotional, and behavioral components in a long-term brand relationship.

The comprehensive model developed allows the integration of constructs that have traditionally not been included in the same nomological network. As a result the

model shows how brand love can be strengthened through its passion, self-brand, and positive emotional connection having antecedents that are identity and engagement. According to Batra et al. (2012) attitude strength becomes stronger in more loved brands because of the interaction and engagement.This will further be strengthened through the attitude valence and confidence, which are prerequisites for the continuation of the relationship with the brand and the corresponding passionate expression.

Brand Love Scale for Sports

Another theoretical contribution is the verification of the brand love scale for use in the sports context as reviewed earlier. The application of the brand love scale into the sports context has extended the applicability of the construct beyond consumer products. In addition the items truly reflect the perception of sport fans including the desire to watch the live match (Kaynak et al., 2008); seek "the right" team to cheer based on image congruence (Aaker, 1997); having frequent thoughts about the team (Ross & James, 2007); willingness to spend resources for the team (Wann & Branscombe, 1993); team nostalgia (Gladden & Funk, 2002); intuitive fit (Milne & McDonald, 1999); and self-brand integration (Kahle & Riley, 2002).

6.3 Managerial Implications

The findings in this study suggest that the path to brand love is strengthened using both identification antecedents through engagement. This builds on the suggestions made by Batra et al. (2012) that there are three ways to build stronger brand love, which are associating the brand with positive context including performance and friends, creating the sense of intuitive fit with the values and beliefs, and creating a

bond like a long time friend. The following section provides the managerial implications that have developed from the research insights.

Traditional Marketing Communications and Consumer Brand Identification

From the strong impact of consumer brand identification on brand love, there is evidence that the traditional marketing communication tools are still critical as antecedents for this passionate consumer display. This answers the first contribution of the study. The findings are in line with previous research (Stokburger-Sauer & Teichmann, 2014; Marzocchi et al., 2013; Carlson et al., 2008; Gronroos, 1994). Consumer brand identification is a powerful influence to get consumers to build value for the brand. Therefore, positive identification of the brand must first be created. The use of marketing communications to inform, persuade, and remind consumers still remains the central means of reaching customers. Through the communication of favorable values that consumers can identify with the brand communications can create a sense of esteem derived from the relationship with the brand. This would eventually become love if the relationship is favorable over time.

Psychological Sense of Community Member Management Strategies

Identification with other members or psychological sense of community is also important in the development of brand love. People want to have relationships with others who have the desired characteristics. This would result in better consequent relationship with the brand (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Oliver, 1999). Thus, the virtual brand community creation needs to consider the recruitment of members, who should have the positive desirable characteristics of the brand. For instance the member recruitment strategies have to include member-get-member

because these form the strongest bond with the brand through the personal relationship of the members. Another means of leveraging this psychological sense of community may be done through enforcement of certain references such as city of origin (Kolbe & James, 2000). For instance the case of Leicester City has gained widespread support becausea Thai company owns it.

The psychological sense of community can be enhanced in the virtual brand community context. Laroche et al. (2012) explained that the psychological sense of community has an impact on engagement. Modeling the engagement based on the community markers of shared consciousness, rituals, and moral responsibility, it is recommended that the virtual community must have some sort of organization. There must be the distinction between those who are experts or have the legacy as defined by (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; O'Guinn & Muniz, 2005). Once these more knowledgeable members are identified they would be opinion leaders and drivers of engagement within the virtual brand community. These more knowledgeable members would have to create content and activities to influence the other members to engage more with the brand. They would have to create stories that are imbued with the values of the brand. Also they must develop rituals and events that create a sense of moral responsibility among the other members that they too must play a part to ensure the survival of the community. These activities should enable vicarious participation of members (Turner, 1984) to strengthen the esteem members have for supporting the brand. This is because the sense of esteem will contribute to the minimization of the impact of negative news regarding the brand, which in turn would strengthen brand love.

Figure 6.4 Brand Love Enhancement Model

Traditional Marketing Communication Tools
Path to Brand Love
Create positive associations and values

| Consumer Brand Identity | --------------------------→ | Brand Love |

Virtual Brand Community Path to Brand
Love
Create positive associations and values
Create Identity with other group members

| Consumer Brand Identity |

Promote
Interaction

| Engagement | ------→ | Brand Love |

| Psychological Sense of
Community |

Application to Sports

The application of identification in sports can be created through all the

communications managed by the team.Bauer et al. (2008) and Gladden and Funk

(2002) explained that identification can be created using team related media including

broadcasts of matches that show the team's logo and colors. Smith, Graetz, and

Westerbeek (2006) explained that visual identity such as the team logo is a strong

identification element of the brand.

Therefore, teams still have to use marketing communications taking advantage

of the televised matches to build the brand identification. However, it is important to

study what values resonate with consumers and incorporate them into the

communications. Each team has their own values embedded in their slogan like

Liverpool, "You will never walk along". Another interesting value is the nationalism that might be associated with country of origin or country of ownership. For instance Leicester City, owned by King Power, a Thai company, becomes Siam Fox. The values of fighting against the odds eventually coming out victorious are reinforced. As a result many Thais have converted to support the team. In addition the use of superstition through the link with famous Thai monk, Chaokhun Thongchai, has also added a cultural appeal for Thais.

Teams can also relate to the values that fans hold dear. For instance when His Majesty the King of Thailand passed away many teams showed their condolences, which reinforces this feeling of friendship that they have with their Thai fans. This reciprocation of good will is important in the relationship fans have with teams that can be applied to consumers and brands as well.

Engagement can be promoted in the sports context because the excitement of the matches and following the team lends itself very well for interaction. Woratschek et al. (2014) explained that value for brands could be created through interactions that may include special settings like fan zones during the matches. However, for fans who are many thousands of kilometers away from their favorite teams these special settings might be on the virtual brand communities. Stokburger-Sauer and Teichmann (2014) explained further that communicating the brand virtues, values, and identification can be done through social media. Therefore the use of fan pages to generate content for creating positive associations, the feeling of intuitive fit, and bonding as long time friend is a good strategy for teams to pursue.

The challenge in creating psychological sense of community is overcome through creating a tradition passed along from family members and friends (McKenna, 2015; Kaynak et al., 2008). These groups will help to share the values and build the positive attitudes that are important foundations of brand love Kolbe and James (2000). This enables fans to come together to create their own community with their own distinctive style in supporting their favorite team. One example in Thailand is the Red Army Fanclub, which is one of the sites used in the study. This community has their own logo, using hashtags that identify the community, and terminology to reinforce their in-group harmony.

.

This has to do with the functionality in the community. For instance the case of the Liverpool fan site provides links to watch free matches. This is important because the fans need access to the matches and not all of them can afford to pay for cable TV. AIS for instance takes advantage of engagement with the teams through creating specialized applications enabling fans to watch the English Premier League via their mobile phones.

Sunderland is one of the Premier League teams attempting to engage their fans on social media to create value. The team's management created road signs and even a plaque just outside the stadium to honor the fans, who renewed their season tickets. This is because season tickets are crucial to the team's earnings. Fans who purchased season tickets were the loyal customers who are highly engaged with the team by allocating the resource money and time to watch the matches. The pictures of these fans posting with their name on the signs became a real hit among the team's supporters promoting more to want to renew their season tickets. Southampton also

used social media to promote the launch of their new jersey. Balls were hidden in different locations around the city. The fans who found the balls had to selfie with it and use the hastag#EarnYourStripes to join the lucky draw to get the new T-shirt before it officially went on sale. By using engaging the fans in the virtual brand community, the team was able to persuade fans to express their love by showing their passion, self-brand connection identification, positive emotional connection, and attitude valence and attitude strength of their commitment to the team. These correspond to the five dimensions of brand love identified in this research. The campaign made expressing the passion of the fan in moments of having a history together will further strengthen the brand love.

Brand love must be facilitated through the promotion of its expression as part of everyday life. Examples include the Liverpool credit card by Standard Charter or Manchester United by Krungsri Bank. Yamaha Fino also has its own version of Manchester United motorcycle. This goes beyond just plain using the team for advertising purposes; it must be an expression of passion. For example using Manchester Unitedon the packaging of Nissin noodles was not too successful in selling the product.

There must also be segmentation for the fans because regardless of their wealth they share a passion for the team. Implications for the team include creating different versions of the T-shirts that the fans can buy. Some of the teams such as Liverpool and Leicester City have offerings that are licensed but cost less. Fans do not want to buy fake items if they have the choice. Additional accessories can be added to facilitate the modification of the products such as buying iron on to put on cheaper T-

shirts. Also it can be badges for Facebook and other social media as well bumper stickers. These are all additional streams of income for the teams. It may not have a big contribution margin per piece but if it can reach a wider target, these options may also be very profitable.

Events can be created to create engagement and brand love expression. For example there is the Battle of the Reds televised match in venues for people to come watch together and interact with like-minded people. Some of brands can use this strategy as promotion for example Krungsri Credit Card offers a chance to watch Manchester United at Old Tafford. This is full of meaning for passionate fans. However, for these events to be effective true fans should be rewarded for their loyalty. For instance, Heineken had a promotion taking the die-hard fans, who could demonstrate their passion for the UEFA Champions League by completing a series of tasks, to watch the championship match. If these events can be driven through the fan pages creating excitement for the fans, it would be highly engaging. Subsequently, it would drive the brand love for the team as well as the brand that has chosen to support it.

Thai people even give the names to their children as soccer stars or the stadium name like Anfield. This shows the level of passion Thais have for the football teams. The following section describes how to enhance brand love through the dimensions identified in this study:

Passion can be enhanced by providing the opportunity for victory celebration on line and off line. As stated earlier these brands have strategy to visit Asia to bring

the fantasy of their fans to life. However, on the flipside Thai fans also want to visit England to watch the matches. This is a good opportunity for the English Premier League teams to create the opportunities for selling match tickets to fans outside the UK. In addition giving them privileged access to exclusive content online would have a positive impact on the relationship fans have with their teams.

Self-brand integration is developed through emphasizing the values that fans relate to and creating a community. Values of the English teams can get a local flavor by association with Thai companies. These values might be in the form of national pride as in the case of Leicester City ownership. Values can also be enforced through relating with well-known brands such as the Singha campaign with Chelsea "Two Lions, One Pride". (This plays with the logo of both Chelsea and Singha being lions.)

Positive emotional connection can be developed through customer relationship management (CRM) strategies. This is already implemented partly in the football team fan pages. The community shouldactively recognize the role of members and provide the necessary support in developing co-creation opportunities.

Attitude valence and confidence can be reinforced through time and experience, which has to be further explored. This is the limitation due to the observation that can be seen in terms of the age, which is the length of the support. In addition the level of engagement in terms of frequency has not been explored. These limitations would be further explained in the following section.

6.4 Limitations

The limitations of this study would be discussed in the context of its results as follows:

First, this study was conducted in the context of Premier League Virtual Community Football Fan Clubs. Thus, the results may not be generalized to other industry contexts that have less engagement levels (Underwood et al., 2001). The uniqueness of the Premier League is the tenth month long annual competition, which means content is generated continuously for fans. Even during the two-month break there are issues like selling and buying players or change of managers that create constant content for fans to engage with.

Second, this research is a cross-sectional study, which means that the resultsare snapshots of only one particular point in time. However, the reiterative nature of the virtual brand community engagement may result in changes in the engagement levels and its outcomes (Andersen, 2005; Ramaswamy, 2009). The research findings appear to have evidence for the need to incorporate temporal effect. With 61% of the respondents aged over 30, it appears that it takes time for brand love to be formed through engagement. As suggested by Prasongsukarn and Patterson (2012) temporal effect may influence the perceptions of the consumers. Consequently, the author suggested the use of longtitudinal studies to examine this temporal effect in future studies. Therefore, future studies should trace the development of virtual brand communities from the beginning and see how the engagement changes over time and its subsequent effect on brand love.

The third limitation is from the suggestion made by Joy and Li (2012) that the study of consumer experience should use multiple data sources and triangulate methods. This is in line with the suggestion by Arnould and Thompson (2005) that consumers' have multiple realities that are shaped by their consumption experiences.

6.5 Future Research Directions

The findings of this study suggest that there are still interesting gaps that can be explored further by other researchers. Albert and Merunka (2013) suggested that consumer characteristics might affect brand love. This may be especially true in virtual brand communities, in line with Lastovicka and Sirianni (2011) that a social deficit may influence brand love. Researchers like Reimann, Aron, and Ahuvia (2015) have suggested that the personality factors of individuals may influence brand love expressions. Ultimately the authors suggested that people connected with others and used brands as the connectors, therefore this gap can be further explored.

One of the possible brand love outcomes is consumer co-creation or co-production. This is because as part of brand love the individual is willing to expend time and resources to support the brand, which is considered a part of their self-concept. So far studies in co-creation are qualitative in nature thus it would be worth to explore it in quantitative studies. A framework that can be used to study this process was developed byEtgar (2008). The researcher proposed a consumer co-production process with five distinct stages – (1) development of antecedent conditions, (2) development of motivations, which prompt consumers to engage in co-production, (3) calculation of the co-production cost benefits. (4) activation when consumers become engaged in the actual performance of the co-producing activities,

and (5) generation of outputs and evaluation of the results of the process. Future studies can adapt this framework for brand love outcomes.

With many of the English Premier League teams being owned by foreigners like the case of Leicester City being owned by Thais. It would be interesting to study how the English fans and international fans perceive this issue. Luedicke (2011) explains about consumer acculturation. The model explains the identity construction, acculturation agents such as media and business institutions. Bardhi, Ostberg, and Bengtsson (2010) and Stayman and Deshpande (1989) explained that cultural identities could be created through consumption. Cayla and Eckhardt (2008) studied how consumers think beyond their specific nationality to an imagined community. These are interesting studies that can be incorporated to develop more understanding about this foreign ownership of Premier League clubs.

Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) found that brand love made consumers more resistant to negative news such as loses and scandals. This is especially important because satisfaction derived from victory cannot be ensured in sports (Mahony, Madrigal & Howard, 2000). Bansal and Taylor (2005) explained that social influences could have an impact on switching intentions. Therefore, the research gap how fans behave when their teams are on a losing streak is also a good area to study.

In the context of virtual brand communities engagement is a reiterative process, which includes learning, sharing, advocating, socializing, and co-developing (Brodie et al., 2011; Resnick, 2001). Absent from this study is this behavioral sub-process. The activities in this sub-process may not have a clear sequential order.

Therefore, future research may explore the possibilities of identifying beneficial consequences of the sub-process (Ramaswamy, 2009; Andersen, 2005).Also the temporal effect of this sequence can be examined as suggested by Prasongsukarn and Patterson (2012).

This study has shown that the brand is experienced by the consumer as part of their daily life because it is integrated into their self-concept. Consumers have an emotional connection derived from an engaging, compelling, and consistent context, which leads them to the passionate expression for the brand. However, the exploration of this experiential aspect has many more dimensions to be explored. One interesting proposition is made by Schmitt (2012) regarding the five brand processes of identifying, experiencing, integrating, signaling, and connecting. However, there is still a lack of empirical evidence to support this framework; therefore using longtitudinal study to develop an understanding of the experiential perspective would be a good future research contribution.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research, 34*(3), 347-356.

Abrams, D., & Hogg, M. A. (1988). Comments on the motivational status of self esteem in social identity and intergroup discrimination. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 18*(4), 317-334.

Ahearne, M., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Gruen, T. (2005). Antecedents and consequences of customer-company identification: Expanding the role of relationship marketing. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*(3), 574.

Ahuvia, A. C. (1993). I love it!: Towards a unifying theory of love across diverse love objects (Abridged). Division of Research, School of Business Administration, University of Michigan.

Ahuvia, A. C. (2005). Beyond the extended self: Loved objects and consumers' identity narratives. *Journal of Consumer Research, 32*(1), 171-184.

Aijo, T. S. (1996). The theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of relationship marketing: Environmental factors behind the changing marketing paradigm. *European journal of Marketing, 30*(2), 8-18.

Albert, N., & Merunka, D. (2013). The role of brand love in consumer-brand relationships. *Journal of Consumer Marketing, 30*(3), 258-266.

Albert, N., Merunka, D., & Valette-Florence, P. (2008). When consumers love their brands: Exploring the concept and its dimensions. *Journal of Business research, 61*(10), 1062-1075.

_____. (2013). Brand passion: Antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Business Research, 66*(7), 904-909.

Algesheimer, R., Dholakia, U. M., & Herrmann, A. (2005). The social influence of brand community: Evidence from European car clubs. *Journal of Marketing, 69*(3), 19-34.

Anderson, B. (1765). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism* (London, 1983).

Andersen, P. H. (2005). Relationship marketing and brand involvement of professionals through web-enhanced brand communities: The case of Coloplast. *Industrial Marketing Management, 34*(1), 39-51.

Armstrong, K. L. (2002). Race and sport consumption motivations: A preliminary investigation of a Black consumers' sport motivation scale. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 25*(4), 309.

Aron, A., & Aron, E. N. (1986). *Love and the expansion of self: Understanding* attraction and satisfaction. Hemisphere Publishing Corp/Harper & Row Publishers.

Arnold, D. (1992). *The handbook of brand management*. Basic Books.

Arnould, E., & Thompson, C. (2007). Consumer culture theory (and we really mean theoretics): Dilemmas and opportunities posed by an academic branding strategy. *Research in Consumer Behavior, 11*, 3.

Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of other in the self scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63*(4), 596.

Ashmore, R. D., Deaux, K., & McLaughlin-Volpe, T. (2004). An organizing framework for collective identity: Articulation and significance of multidimensionality. *Psychological Bulletin, 130*(1), 80.

Babbie, E. R. (2013). *The basics of social research*. Cengage Learning.

Bagozzi, R. P., & Dholakia, U. M. (2002). Intentional social action in virtual communities. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 16*(2), 2-21.

Baker, B. J., McDonald, H., & Funk, D. C. (2016). The uniqueness of sport: Testing against marketing's empirical laws. *Sport Management Review, 19*(4), 378-390.

Baldus, B. J., Voorhees, C., & Calantone, R. (2015). Online brand community engagement: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Business Research, 68*(5), 978-985.

Bardhi, F., Ostberg, J., & Bengtsson, A. (2010). Negotiating cultural boundaries: Food, travel and consumer identities. *Consumption, Markets and Culture, 13*(2), 133-157.

Bartel, C. A. (2001). Social comparisons in boundary-spanning work: Effects of community outreach on members' organizational identity and identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 46*(3), 379-413.

Batra, R., Ahuvia, A. C., & Bagozzi, R. (2012). Brand love. *Journal of Marketing, 76*(2), 1-16. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234777767_Brand_Love

Bauer, H. H., Heinrich, D., & Martin, I. (2007, December). How to create high emotional consumer-brand relationships? The causalities of brand passion. In *Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference Proceedings* (pp. 2189-2198). Retrieved from http://www.anzmac.org/conference_archive/2007/papers/D%20Heinrich_1a.pdf

Bearden, W. O., & Etzel, M. J. (1982). Reference group influence on product and brand purchase decisions. *Journal of consumer research, 9*(2), 183-194.

Bearden, W. O., Netemeyer, R. G., & Teel, J. E. (1989). Measurement of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence. *Journal of consumer research, 15*(4), 473-481.

Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research, 15*(2), 139-168.

Belk, R. (2000). May the farce be with you: On Las Vegas and consumer infantalization. *Consumption, Markets and Culture, 4*(2), 101-124.

Belk, R. W., & Tumbat, G. (2005). The cult of Macintosh. *Consumption Markets & Culture, 8*(3), 205-217.

Bergami, M., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2000). Self categorization, affective commitment and group self esteem as distinct aspects of social identity in the organization. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 39*(4), 555-577.

Bergkvist, L., & Bech-Larsen, T. (2010). Two studies of consequences and actionable antecedents of brand love. *Journal of Brand Management, 17*(7), 504-518.

Berry, L. L., Carbone, L. P., & Haeckel, S. H. (2002). Managing the total customer experience. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 43*(3), 85.

Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2003). Consumer-company identification: A framework for understanding consumers' relationships with companies. *Journal of Marketing, 67*(2), 76-88.

Bhattacharya, C. B., Rao, H., & Glynn, M. A. (1995). Understanding the bond of identification: An investigation of its correlates among art museum members. *The Journal of Marketing, 59*(4), 46-57. doi:10.2307/1252327

Biel, A. L. (1997). Discovering brand magic: The hardness of the softer side of branding. *International Journal of Advertising, 16*(3), 199-210.

Blackston, M. (1992). Observations: building brand equity by managing the brand's relationships. *Journal of advertising research, 32*(3), 79-83.

Blanchard, A. L. (2007). Developing a sense of virtual community measure. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 10*(6), 827-830.

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

Branscombe, N. R., & Wann, D. L. (1992). Role of identification with a group, arousal, categorization processes, and self-esteem in sports spectator aggression. *Human Relations, 45*(10), 1013-1033.

Brinberg, D., & Wood, R. (1983). A resource exchange theory analysis of consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research, 10*(3), 330-338.

Brodie, R. J., Hollebeek, L. D., Juric, B., & Ilic, A. (2011). Customer engagement: Conceptual domain, fundamental propositions, and implications for research. *Journal of Service Research, 14*(3), 252-271. doi:10946705114117O3.

Brown, A. (2008). Our club, our rules: Fan communities at FC United of Manchester. *Soccer & Society, 9*(3), 346-358.

Calder, B. J., Malthouse, E. C., & Schaedel, U. (2009). An experimental study of the relationship between online engagement and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 23*(4), 321-331.

Calder, B. J., Phillips, L. W., & Tybout, A. M. (1981). Designing research for application. *Journal of Consumer Research, 8*(2), 197-207.

Carlson, B. D., Suter, T. A., & Brown, T. J. (2008). Social versus psychological brand community: The role of psychological sense of brand community. *Journal of Business Research, 61*(4), 284-291.

Carroll, B. A., & Ahuvia, A. C. (2006). Some antecedents and outcomes of brand love. *Marketing Letters, 17*(2), 79-89.

Casaló, L., Flavian, C., & Guinalíu, M. (2007). The impact of participation in virtual brand communities on consumer trust and loyalty: The case of free software. *Online information review, 31*(6), 775-792.

Cayla, J., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2008). Asian brands and the shaping of a transnational imagined community. *Journal of Consumer Research, 35*(2), 216-230.

Churchill Jr, G. A. (1979). A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs. *Journal of marketing research*, 64-73.

Churchill, D. A., & Iacobucci, D. (2010). *Market research: Methodological Foundations*. Cengage Learning. Retrieved from http://kttm.hoasen.edu.vn/sites/default/files/2011/12/22/market_research.pdf

Cohen, J. (1969). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences. New York: Academic Press.

Couvelaere, V., & Richelieu, A. (2005). Brand strategy in professional sports: The case of French soccer teams. *European Sport Management Quartely, 5*(1), 23-46.

Cova, B., Kozinets, R., & Shankar, A. (2007). Tribes, Inc.: The new world of Tribalism. In B.Cova, R.Kozinets & A. Shankar (Eds.), *Consumer Tribes: Theory, practice, and prospects* (pp. 3–26). London, UK: Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann.

Cova, B., & Cova, V. (2002). Tribal marketing: The tribalisation of society and its impact on the conduct of marketing. *European Journal of Marketing, 36*(5-6), 595-620.

Cova, B., & Pace, S. (2006). Brand community of convenience products: New forms of customer empowerment-the case "My Nutella The Community". *European Journal of Marketing, 40*(9-10), 1087-1105.

Crosby, L. A., Evans, K. R., & Cowles, D. (1990). Relationship quality in services selling: An interpersonal influence perspective. *The Journal of Marketing, 54*(3), 68-81.

Cunningham, G. B., & Kwon, H. (2003). The theory of planned behaviour and intentions to attend a sport event. *Sport Management Review, 6*(2), 127-145.

De Groot, M., & Robinson, T. (2008). Sport fan attachment and the psychological continuum model: A case study of an Australian football league fan. *Leisure/Loisir, 32*(1), 117-138.

Deutskens, E., De Ruyter, K., & Wetzels, M. (2006). An assessment of equivalence between online and mail surveys in service research. *Journal of Service Research, 8*(4), 346-355.

De Valck, K., Van Bruggen, G. H., & Wierenga, B. (2009). Virtual communities: A marketing perspective. *Decision Support Systems, 47*(3), 185-203.

Devasagayam, P. R., & Buff, C. L. (2008). A multidimensional conceptualization of brand community: An empirical investigation. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 17*(1), 20.

Dholakia, U. M., Bagozzi, R. P., & Pearo, L. K. (2004). A social influence model of consumer participation in network-and small-group-based virtual communities. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 21*(3), 241-263.

Dholakia, U. M., & Vianello, S. (2009). Effective brand community management: Lessons from customer enthusiasts. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. Retrieved fromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/228149597_Effective_Brand_Com munity_Management_Lessons_from_Customer_Enthusiasts

Dimmock, J. A., & Grove, J. R. (2006). Identification with sport teams as a function of the searchfor certainty. *Journal of sports sciences, 24*(11), 1203-1211.

Dionisio, P., Leal, C., & Moutinho, L. (2008). Fandom affiliation and tribal behaviour: A sports marketing application. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, 11*(1), 17-39.

Ellemers, N., Kortekaas, P., & Ouwerkerk, J. W. (1999). Self categorisation, commitment to the group and group self esteem as related but distinct aspects of social identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 29*(23), 371-389.

Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). Using narratives to discern self-identity related consumer goals and motivations. In S. Ratneshwar, D. G. Mick, & C. Huffman (Eds.), *The why of consumption: Contemporary perspectives on consumer motives, goals, and desires.* NY: Routledge.

Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2005). Self-construal, reference groups, and brand meaning. *Journal of Consumer Research, 32*(3), 378-389.

Etgar, M. (2008). A descriptive model of the consumer co-production process. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 36*(1), 97-108.

Fetscherin, M., & Heinrich, D. (2015). Consumer brand relationships research: A bibliometric citation meta-analysis.*Journal of Business Research, 68*(2), 380-390.

Fink, J. S., Trail, G. T., & Anderson, D. F. (2002). An examination of team identification: Which motives are most salient to its existence? *International Sports Journal, 6*(2), 195.

Fishbein, M. (1975). i Ajzen, I.(1975). Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behaviour: An Introduction to Theory and Research.

Flavián, C., & Guinalíu, M. (2005). The influence of virtual communities on distribution strategies in the internet. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management, 33*(6), 405-425.

Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 24*(4), 343-373.

Fournier, S., Dobscha, S., & Mick, D. G. (1998). The premature death of relationship marketing. *Harvard Business Review, 76*(1), 42-51.

Fournier, S., & Lee, L. (2009). Getting brand communities right. *Harvard Business Review, 87*(4), 105-111.

Franzen, G., & Moriarty, S. (2008). *The science and art of branding*. Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe.

Funk, D. C., & James, J. D. (2006). Consumer loyalty: The meaning of attachment in the development of sport team allegiance. *Journal of Sport Management, 20*(2), 189-217.

Funk, D. C., & Pastore, D. (2000). Equating attitudes to allegiance: The usefulness of selected attitudinal information in segmenting loyalty to professional sports teams. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 9*, 175-184.

Gangadharbatla, H. (2008). Facebook me: Collective self-esteem, need to belong, and internet self-efficacy as predictors of the iGeneration's attitudes toward social networking sites. *Journal of interactive advertising, 8*(2), 5-15.

Garver, M. S., & Mentzer, J. T. (1999). Logistics research methods: Employing structural equation modeling to test for construct validity.*Journal of Business Logistics, 20*(1), 33.

Gladden, J. M., & Funk, D. C. (2002). Developing an understanding of brand associations in team sport: Empirical evidence from consumers of professional sport. *Journal of Sport management, 16*(1), 54-81.

Gladden, J. M., Milne, G. R., & Sutton, W. A. (1998). A Conceptual framework for assessing brand equity in Division I College Athletics. *Journal of Sport Management, 12,*(1), 1-19.

Gladden, J. M., & Sutton, W. A. (2009). Marketing principles applied to sport management. In H.P. Masteralexis, C.A. Barr, & M.A. Hums (Eds.), *Principles and practices of sport management* (pp.42-59). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Barlett.

Goodyear, M. (1993). Reviewing the concept of brands and branding. *Marketing and Research Today, 21*(2), 75-75.

Graeff, T. R. (1996). Using promotional messages to manage the effects of brand and self-image on brand evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Marketing, 13*(3), 4-18.

Grönroos, C. (1994). From marketing mix to relationship marketing: Towards a paradigm shift in marketing. *Management Decision, 32*(2), 4-20.

Grubb, E. L., & Grathwohl, H. L. (1967). Consumer self-concept, symbolism and market behavior: A theoretical approach. *The Journal of Marketing, 31*(4), 22-27.

Gruen, T. W., Summers, J. O., & Acito, F. (2000). Relationship marketing activities, \ commitment, and membership behaviors in professional associations. *Journal of marketing, 64*(3), 34-49.

Gusfield, J. (1975). Categories of ownership and responsibility in social issues: Alcohol abuse and automobile use. *Journal of Drug Issues, 5*(4), 285-303.

Gwinner, K., & Swanson, S. R. (2003). A model of fan identification: Antecedents and sponsorship outcomes. *Journal of Services Marketing, 17*(3), 275-294.

Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black ,W. (1998). *Multivariate data analysis* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ : Prentice-Hall.

Haeckel, S. H., Carbone, L. P., & Berry, L. L. (2003). How to lead the customer experience. *Marketing Management, 12*(1), 18-23.

Hardesty, D. M., & Bearden, W. O. (2004). The use of expert judges in scale development: Implications for improving face validity of measures of unobservable constructs. *Journal of Business Research, 57*(2), 98-107.

Harrison-Walker, L. J. (2001). The measurement of word-of-mouth communication and an investigation of service quality and customer commitment as potential antecedents. *Journal of service research, 4*(1), 60-75.

Hatfield, E., & Sprecher, S. (1986). Measuring passionate love in intimate relationships. *Journal of Adolescence, 9*(4), 383-410.

He, H., Li, Y., & Harris, L. (2012). Social identity perspective on brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Research, 65*(5), 648-657.

Heere, B., Walker, M., Yoshida, M., Ko, Y. J., Jordan, J. S., & James, J. D. (2011). Brand community development through associated communities: Grounding community measurement within social identity theory. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 19*(4), 407-422.

Heinrich, D., Albrecht, C. M., & Bauer, H. H. (2012). Love actually? Measuring and exploring consumers' brand love. In S. Fournier, M. Breazeale, M. Fetscherin (Eds.), *Consumer-brand relationships: Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge (pp.137-150).

Heller, R. (2002). Manchester United's goal: a red planet. *BRW-MELBOURNE-, 24*(29), 46-47.

Hennig-Thurau, T. (2000). Relationship quality and customer retention through strategic communication of customer skills. *Journal of Marketing Management, 16*(1-3), 55-79.

Hennig-Thurau, T., & Klee, A. (1997). The impact of customer satisfaction and relationship quality on customer retention: A critical reassessment and model development. *Psychology & Marketing, 14*(8), 737-764.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., & Gremler, D. D. (2002). Understanding relationship marketing outcomes an integration of relational benefits and relationship quality. *Journal of Service Research, 4*(3), 230-247.

Hewer, P., & Brownlie, D. (2010). On market forces and adjustments: Acknowledging consumer creativity through the aesthetics of 'debadging'. *Journal of Marketing Management, 26*(5-6), 428-440.

Hinkin, T. R. (1995). A review of scale development practices in the study of organizations. *Journal of Management, 21*(5), 967-988.

Hinkle, S., & Brown, R. J. (1990). Intergroup comparisons and social identity: Some links and lacunae. In D. Abrams & M. A. Hogg (Eds.), *Social identity theory: Constructive and critical advances* (pp. 48-70). New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Ho, R. (2006). Handbook of univariate and multivariate data analysis and interpretation with SPSS. CRC Press.

Ho, R. (2014). *Handbook of Univariate and Multivariate Data Analysis with IBM SPSS*. Boca Raton, FL: Chapman & Hall.

Hogg, M. A., & Turner, J. C. (1985). Interpersonal attraction, social identification and psychological group formation. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 15*(1), 51-66.

Hoffman, D. L., & Novak, T. P. (1996). Marketing in hypermedia computer-mediated environments: Conceptual foundations. *The Journal of Marketing*, 50-68.

Holbrook, M. B. (1997). Romanticism, introspection, and the roots of experiential consumption: Morris the epicurean. *Consumption, Markets and Culture, 1*(2), 97-163.

Hollebeek, L. (2011). Exploring customer brand engagement: Definition and themes. *Journal of Strategic Marketing, 19*(7), 555-573.

Hollebeek, L. D., Glynn, M. S., & Brodie, R. J. (2014). Consumer brand engagement in social media: Conceptualization, scale development and validation. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 28*(2), 149-165.

Holt, D. B. (1995). How consumers consume: A typology of consumption practices. *Journal of Consumer Research, 22*(1), 1-16.

Holt, D. B. (2004). *How brands become icons: The principles of cultural branding.* Harvard Business Press.

Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A multidisciplinary Journal, 6*(1), 1-55.

Hyman, H. H. (1942). The psychology of status. *Archives of Psychology (Columbia University), 269,* 94.

Jenkins, R. (1996). *Social Identity.* London: Routledge.

John, M. T. (1995). Corporate branding and connoisseurship. *Journal of General Management, 21*(1), 24-46.

Johnson, B. K., Groothuis, P. A., & Whitehead, J. C. (2001). The value of public goods generated by a major league sports team: The CVM approach. *Journal of Sports Economics, 2*(1), 6-21.

Johnson, B. K., Peter A. G., & John C. W. (2001). The value of public goods generated by a Major League Sports Team: The CVM Approach. *Journal of Sports Economics 2*(1), 6-21.

Johnson, D. J., & Rusbult, C. E. (1989). Resisting temptation: Devaluation of alternative partners as a means of maintaining commitment in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*(6), 967.

Joy, A., & Sherry, J. F. (2003). Speaking of art as embodied imagination: A multisensory approach to understanding aesthetic experience. *Journal of Consumer Research, 30*(2), 259-282.

Joy, A., & Li, E. P. H. (2012). Studying consumption behaviour through multiple lenses: An overview of consumer culture theory. *Journal of Business Anthropology, 1*(1), 141-173.

Kahle, L. R., & Riley, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Sports marketing and the psychology of marketing communication.* Psychology Press.

Kapferer, J. (1992). *Strategic brand management: New approaches to creating and evaluating brand equity.* NC.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons, 53*(1), 59-68.

Kates, S. M. (2004). The dynamics of brand legitimacy: An interpretive study in the gay men's community. *Journal of consumer research, 31*(2), 455-464.

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations.* (2nd ed.). NY: John Wiley & Son.

Kaynak, E., Salman, G. G., & Tatoglu, E. (2008). An integrative framework linking brand associations and brand loyalty in professional sports. *Journal of Brand Management, 15*(5), 336-357.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *The Journal of Marketing, 57*(1), 1-22.

Keller, K. L. (2009). Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment. *Journal of marketing communications, 15*(2-3), 139-155.

Kenny, D. A., & McCoach, D. B. (2003). Effect of the number of variables on measures of fit in structural equation modeling. *Structural Equation Modeling, 10*(3), 333-351.

Kim, J., & McMillan, S. J. (2008). Evaluation of internet advertising research: A bibliometric analysis of citations from key sources. *Journal of Advertising, 37*(1), 99-112.

Kim, Y. K., & Trail, G. (2011). A conceptual framework for understanding relationships between sport consumers and sport organizations: A relationship quality approach. *Journal of Sport Management 25*(1), 57-69.

Kim, Y. K., Trail, G., & Ko, Y. J. (2011). The influence of relationship quality on sport consumption behaviors: An empirical examination of the relationship quality framework. *Journal of Sport Management, 25*(6), 576-592.

Klaassen, A. (2009, March). How two coke fans brought the brand to Facebook fame. *Advertising Age.* Retrieved from http://adage.com/article/digital/coke-fans-brought-brand-facebook-fame/135238/

Kleine, R. E., Kleine, S. S., & Kernan, J. B. (1993). Mundane consumption and the self: A social-identity perspective. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 2*(3), 209-235.

Kleinman, M. (2001). Man Utd tops Euro brand value table'. *Marketing, 5.*

Kline, R. B. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling.* NY: Guilford Press.

Ko, E., Chun, E., Song, S., & Kim, K. H. (2013). Which content types increase participation in fashion social platforms?. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science, 23*(3), 297-313.

Kolbe, R., & James, J. D. (2000). An identification and examination of influences that shape the creation of a professional team fan. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, 2*(1), 14-28.

Kozinets, R. V. (1999). E-tribalized marketing?: The strategic implications of virtual communities of consumption. *European Management Journal, 17*(3), 252-264.

Kozinets, R. V. (2001). Utopian enterprise: Articulating the meanings of Star Trek's culture of consumption. *Journal of consumer research, 28*(1), 67-88.

Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of marketing research, 39*(1), 61-72.

Kozinets, R. V., De Valck, K., Wojnicki, A. C., & Wilner, S. J. (2010). Networked narratives: Understanding word-of-mouth marketing in online communities. *Journal of marketing, 74*(2), 71-89.

Kozinets, R. V., Sherry, J. F., Storm, D., Duhachek, A., Nuttavuthisit, K., & DeBerry-Spence, B. (2004). Ludic agency and retail spectacle. *Journal of Consumer Research, 31*(3), 658-672.

Kressmann, F., Sirgy, M. J., Herrmann, A., Huber, F., Huber, S., & Lee, D. J. (2006). Direct and indirect effects of self-image congruence on brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Research, 59*(9), 955-964.

Kuo, Y. F., & Feng, L. H. (2013). Relationships among community interaction characteristics, perceived benefits, community commitment, and oppositional brand loyalty in online brand communities. *International Journal of Information Management, 33*(6), 948-962.

Lam, S. K., Ahearne, M., Hu, Y., & Schillewaert, N. (2010). Resistance to brand switching when a radically new brand is introduced: A social identity theory perspective. *Journal of Marketing. 74*(6), 128-146.

Langner, T., Bruns, D., Fischer, A., & Rossiter, J. R. (2016). Falling in love with brands: a dynamic analysis of the trajectories of brand love. *Marketing Letters, 27*(1), 15-26.

Laroche, M., Habibi, M. R., Richard, M. O., & Sankaranarayanan, R. (2012). The effects of social media based brand communities on brand community markers, value creation practices, brand trust and brand loyalty. *Computers in Human Behavior, 28*(5), 1755-1767.

Lastovicka, J. L., & Sirianni, N. J. (2011). Truly, madly, deeply: Consumers in the throes of material possession love. *Journal of Consumer Research, 38*(2), 323-342.

Lee, J. A. (1977). A typology of styles of loving. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 3*(2), 173-182.

Lever, J. (1995). *Soccer madness: Brazil's passion for the world's most popular sport.* Waveland Press

Loureiro, S. M. C. (2012). Consumer-brand relationship: Foundation and state-of-the-art. In H. Kaufmann & M. Fateh A. K. Panni (Eds.), *Customer-centric marketing strategies: Tools for building organizational performance* (pp.414-434). Hershey, PA: IG Global.

Luedicke, M. K., Thompson, C. J., & Giesler, M. (2010). Consumer identity work as moral protagonism: How myth and ideology animate a brand-mediated moral conflict. *Journal of Consumer Research, 36*(6), 1016-1032.

Lusch, R. F., & Vargo, S. L.(2006). Service-dominant logic: Reactions, reflections and refinements. *Marketing theory, 6*(3), 281-288.

Mahony, D. F., Madrigal, R., & Howard, D. A. (2000). Using the psychological commitment to team (PCT) scale to segment sport consumers based on loyalty. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 9*(1), 15-25.

Madrigal, R. (2000). The influence of social alliances with sports teams on intentions to purchase corporate sponsors' products. *Journal of Advertising, 29*(4), 13-24.

Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*(2), 103-123.

Malhotra, N. K. (1981). A scale to measure self-concepts, person concepts, and product concepts. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(4), 456-464.

Malhotra, N. K. (1988). Self concept and product choice: An integrated perspective. *Journal of Economic Psychology, 9*(1), 1-28.

Malhotra, N. K. (Ed.). (2010). Review of marketing research. Available from Emerald.

Malthouse, E. C., & Calder, B. J. (Eds.). (2005). Relationship branding and CRM. In A. M. Tybout & T. Calkins (Eds.), *Kellogg on Branding* (pp.150-168). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Son.

Marchi, G., Giachetti, C., & De Gennaro, P. (2011). Extending lead-user theory to online brand communities: The case of the community Ducati. *Technovation, 31*(8), 350-361.

Marzocchi, G., Morandin, G., & Bergami, M. (2013). Brand communities: Royal to the community or the brand? *European Journal of Marketing, 47*(1-2), 93-114.

Maslowska, E., Malthouse, E. C., & Collinger, T. (2016). The customer engagement ecosystem. *Journal of Marketing Management, 32*(5-6), 469-501.

Maurya, U. K., & Mishra, P. (2012). What is a brand? a perspective on brand meaning. *European Journal of Business and Management, 4*(3), 122-133.

McAlexander, J. H., Schouten, J. W., & Koenig, H. F. (2002). Building brand community. *Journal of marketing, 66*(1), 38-54.

McAlexander, J. H., Koenig, H. F., & Schouten, J. W. (2005). Building a university brand community: The long-term impact of shared experiences. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 14*(2), 61-79.

McAlexander, J. H., Koenig, H. F., & Schouten, J. W. (2006). Building relationships of brand community in higher education: a strategic framework for university advancement. *International Journal of Educational Advancement, 6*(2), 107 118.

McCarthy, J., Rowley, J., Jane Ashworth, C., & Pioch, E. (2014). Managing brand presence through social media: The case of UK football clubs. *Internet Research, 24*(2), 181-204.

McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview (Vol. 13).* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

McLaughlin-Volpe, T., Aron, A., Wright, S. C., & Lewandowski Jr, G. W. (2005). Exclusion of the self by close others and by groups: Implications of the self-expansion model. In D. Abrams, M.A. Hogg & J.M. Marques (Eds.), *The social psychology of inclusion and exclusion* (pp.113-134). NY: Psychology Press.

Megehee, C. M., & Spake, D. F. (2012). Consumer enactments of archetypes using luxury brands. *Journal of Business Research, 65*(10), 1434-1442.

Meyer, C., & Schwager, A. (2007). Customer Experience. *Harvard business review*, 1-11.

McKenna, K. Y., & Bargh, J. A. (1999). Causes and consequences of social interaction on the Internet: A conceptual framework. *Media Psychology, 1*(3), 249-269.

Milne, G. R., & McDonald, M. A. (1999). *Sport marketing: Managing the exchange process*. Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Mollen, A., & Wilson, H. (2010). Engagement, telepresence and interactivity in online consumer experience: Reconciling scholastic and managerial perspectives. *Journal of business research, 63*(9), 919-925.

Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *The journal of marketing, 38,* (20-38).

Morrison, S., & Crane, F. G. (2007). Building the service brand by creating and managing an emotional brand experience. *Journal of Brand Management, 14*(5), 410-421.

Muniz, A. M., & O'Guinn, T. C. (2001). Brand community. *Journal of Consumer Research, 27*(4), 412-432.

Muniz, A. M., & Schau, H. J. (2005). Religiosity in the abandoned Apple Newton brand community. *Journal of Consumer Research, 31*(4), 737-747.

Muñiz, A. M.,Jr. & O'Guinn, T. C. (2005). Marketing communications in a world of consumption and brand communities. In A.J. Kimmel (Ed.), *Marketing communication: New approaches, technologies, and styles*, (pp.63-85). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Musante, M., Milne, G. R., & McDonald, M. A. (1999). Sport sponsorship: Evaluating the sport and brand image match. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, 1*(1), 24-39.

Nambisan, P., & Watt, J. H. (2011). Managing customer experiences in online product communities. *Journal of Business Research 64*(8), 889-895.

Nunnally, J. (1978). *Psychometric methods*. NY: McGraw-Hill.

O'Guinn, T. C., & Muniz, A. M., Jr. (2005). Communal consumption and the brand. In R. Srinivasan & D.G. Mick (Eds.), *Inside consumption: Consumer motives, goals, and desires* (pp.252-272). NY: Routledge.

Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty? *The Journal of Marketing, 63*(3), 33-44.

O'Reilly, B. (2005). Brand Profile: The Devil You Know'. *Marketing*, 16-21.

193

Palmatier, R. W., Dant, R. P., Grewal, D., & Evans, K. R. (2006). Factors influencing the effectiveness of relationship marketing: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marketing, 70*(4), 136-153.

Park,W. C., MacInnis, D. J., Priester, J., Eisingerich, A. B., & Iacobucci, D. (2010). Brand attachment and brand attitude strength: Conceptual and empirical differentiation of two critical brand equity drivers. *Journal of marketing, 74*(6), 1-17.

Patwardhan, H., & Balasubramanian, S. K. (2013). Reflections on emotional attachment to brands: Brand romance and brand love. *Journal of Customer Behaviour, 12*(1), 73-79.

Pearl, J. (2001, August). Direct and indirect effects. In *Proceedings of the seventeenth conference on uncertainty in artificial intelligence* (pp. 411-420). Morgan Kaufmann Publishers Inc.

Pierce, J. L., Kostova, T., & Dirks, K. T. (2003). The state of psychological ownership: Integrating and extending a century of research. *Review of General Psychology, 7*(1), 84.

Pimentel, R. W., & Reynolds, K. E. (2004). A model for consumer devotion: Affective commitment with proactive sustaining behaviors. *Academy of Marketing Science Review,* (1). Retrieved from http://www.expectad.com/white_paper/A_model_for_consumer_expect_adverti sing_inc.pdf

Prahalad, C. K. (2004). The cocreation of value. *Journal of Marketing, 68*(1), 23.

Prasongsukarn, K., & Patterson, P. G. (2012). An extended service recovery model: The moderating impact of temporal sequence of events. *Journal of Services Marketing, 26*(7), 510-520.

Rageh Ismail, A., & Spinelli, G. (2012). Effects of brand love, personality and image on word of mouth: The case of fashion brands among young consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal, 16*(4), 386-398.

Rauschnabel, P. A., & Ahuvia, A. C. (2014). You're so lovable: Anthropomorphism and brand love. *Journal of Brand Management, 21*(5), 372-395.

Rauschnabel, P., Ahuvia, A., Ivens, B., & Leischnig, A. (2015). The personality of brand lovers. In M. Fetscherin, et al. (Eds.), *Consumer brand relationships* (pp.108-122). Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Reimann, M., & Aron, A. (2009). Self-expansion motivation and inclusion of brands in self. In D. J. MacInnis, C. W. Park, & J. R. Priester (Eds.), *Handbook of brand relationships* (pp.65-81). NY: Taylor & Francis.

Resnick, P. (2001). Beyond bowling together: Sociotechnical capital. *HCI in the New Millennium, 77*, 247-272.

Richardson, B., & Turley, D. (2007). It'S far more important than that: Football fandom and cultural capital. In S. Borghini, M. A. McGrath, & C. Otnes, (Eds.), *E-European Advances in Consumer Research Volume 8.* (pp.33-38). MN: Association for Consumer Research.

Richelieu, A. (2004). A new brand world for sports teams. In *Sharing best practices in sport marketing: the Sport Marketing Association's inaugural book of papers. Inaugural Conference, November, 2003* (pp. 3-21). Fitness Information Technology, Inc.

Riger, S., & Lavrakas, P. J. (1981). Community ties: Patterns of attachment and social interaction in urban neighborhoods. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 9*(1), 55-66.

Ross, S. D. (2007). Segmenting sport fans using brand associations: A cluster analysis. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 16*(1), 15.

Rossiter, J. R. (2012). A new C-OAR-SE-based content-valid and predictively valid measure that distinguishes brand love from brand liking. *Marketing Letters, 23*(3), 905-916.

Rousseau, D. M. (1989). Psychological and implied contracts in organizations. *Employee responsibilities and rights journal, 2*(2), 121-139.

Rosenberg, M. (1986). Self-concept from middle childhood through adolescence. *Psychological perspectives on the self, 3*(1), 107-136.

Rubin, Z. (1970). Measurement of romantic love. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 16*(2), 265.

Rubin, A. M., & Rubin, R. B. (1985). Interface of personal and mediated communication: A research agenda. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 2*(1), 36-53.

Rubin, A. M. (2002). 'The uses-and-gratifications perspectives of media effects', i Bryant, J. og Zillmann, D.(red.) Media effects. Advances in theory and research.

Sarason, S. B. (1974). The psychological sense of community: Prospects for a community psychology. Jossey-Bass.

Sarkar, A., Ponnam, A., & Murthy, B. K. (2012). Understanding and measuring romantic brand love. *Journal of Customer Behaviour, 11*(4), 324-347.

Schouten, J. W. (1991). Selves in transition: Symbolic consumption in personal rites of passage and identity reconstruction. *Journal of consumer research, 17*(4), 412-425.

Schau, H. J., & Muniz, A.M., Jr. (2002). Brand communities and personal identities: Negotiations in cyberspace. In S. M. Broniarczyk & K. Nakamoto (Eds.), *NA-Advances in Consumer Research Volume 29*. Valdosta, GA : Association for Consumer Research.

Schau, H. J., & Muniz, A.M., Jr. & Arnould, E. J. (2009). How brand community practices create value. *Journal of Marketing, 73*(5), 30-51.

Schmitt, B. (2009). The concept of brand experience. *Journal of Brand Management, 16*(7), 417-419.

_____. (2012). The consumer psychology of brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 22*(1), 7-17.

Schouten, J. W., & McAlexander, J. H. (1995). Subcultures of consumption: An ethnography of the new bikers. *Journal of Consumer Research, 22*(1), 43-61.

Shaw, C., & Ivens, J. (2005). *Building great customer experiences*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sherry, J. F., Jr. (1998). The soul of the company store: Nike town Chicago and the emplaced brandscape. In J. F. Sherry , Jr. (Ed.), *Servicescapes: The concept of place in contemporary markets* (pp.109-146). Lincolnwiid, IL: NTC Business Books.

Sherry, J. F. (2005). Brand meaning. *Kellogg on branding*, 40-69.

Sheth, J. N., Newman, B. I., & Gross, B. L. (1991). Why we buy what we buy: A theory of consumption values. *Journal of Business Research, 22*(2), 159-170.

Shilbury, D., Westerbeek, H., & Quick, S. (2003). Strategic Sport Marketing (2nd).

Shimp, T. A., & Madden, T. J. (1988). Consumer-object relations: A conceptual framework based analogously on Sternberg's triangular theory of love. In M. J. Houston (Ed.), *NA-Advances in Consumer Research Volume 15* (pp.163-168). Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research. Retrieved from http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?Id=6810

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

Siwarit P., & Schroeder, J. (2011). Understanding value co-creation in a co-consuming group. *Marketing Theory, 11*(3), 303-324.

Smith, A. C., & Stewart, B. (2010). The special features of sport: A critical revisit. *Sport Management Review, 13*(1), 1-13.

Smith, A. C., Graetz, B., & Westerbeek, H. (2006). Brand personality in a membership-based organisation. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 11*(3), 251-266.

Solberg, H. A., & Turner, P. (2010). Exporting sports rights to overseas markets: The case of European football. *Sport in society, 13*(2), 354-366.

Sprott, D., Czellar, S., & Spangenberg, E. (2009). The importance of a general measure of brand engagement on market behavior: Development and validation of a scale. *Journal of Marketing Research, 46*(1), 92-104.

Sridhar Balasubramanian, V. M. (2001). The economic leverage of the virtual community. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce, 5*(3), 103-138.

Stayman, D. M., & Deshpande, R. (1989). Situational ethnicity and consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research, 16*(3), 361-371. doi:10.1086/209222

Sternberg, R. J. (1986). A triangular theory of love. *Psychological Review, 93*(2), 119.

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

Stokburger-Sauer, N. E., & Teichmann, K. (2014). The relevance of consumer—brand identification in the team sport industry. *Marketing Review St. Gallen, 2*(31), 20-31.

Sutton, W. A., McDonald, M. A., Milne, G. R., & Cimperman, J. (1997). Creating and fostering fan identification in professional sports. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 6*, 15-22.

Sweeney, J. C., & Brandon, C. (2006). Brand personality: Exploring the potential to move from factor analytical to circumplex models. *Psychology & Marketing, 23*(8), 639-663.

Szmigin, I., & Carrigan, M. (2006). Consumption and community: Choices for women over forty. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 5*(4), 292-303.

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

Tajfel, H. (Ed.). (1978). *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations.* Oxford, England: Academic Press.

Thibaut, J. W., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). The social psychology of groups. NY: Weiley.

Thomson, M., MacInnis, D. J., & Park, C. W. (2005). The ties that bind: Measuring the strength of consumers' emotional attachments to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 15*(1), 77-91.

Thompson, S. A., & Sinha, R. K. (2008). Brand communities and new product adoption: The influence and limits of oppositional loyalty. *Journal of Marketing, 72*(6), 65-80.

Trail, G. T., & James, J. D. (2001). The motivation scale for sport consumption: Assessment of the scale's psychometric properties. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 24*(1), 108.

Trepte, S. (2006). Social identity theory. In J. Bryant & P. Vorderer (Eds), *Psychology of entertainment* (pp.255-271). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.

Turner, B. S. (1984). *The body and society* (Vol. 24). Oxford:Blackwell.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Basil Blackwell.

Unal, S., & Aydın, H. (2013). An investigation on the evaluation of the factors affecting brand love. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 92*, 76-85.

Underwood, R., Bond, E., & Baer, R. (2001). Building service brands via social identity: Lessons from the sports marketplace. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 9*(1), 1-13.

Van Doorn, J., et al. (2010). Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions. *Journal of Service Research, 13*(3), 253-266.

Vivek, S. D. (2009). *A scale of consumer engagement* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Alabama TUSCALOOSA).

Wann, D. L., & Branscombe, N. R. (1993). Sports fans: Measuring degree of identification with their team. *International Journal of Sport Psychology, 24*(1), 1-17.

Wann, D. L., Melnick, M. J., Russell, G. W., & Pease, D. G. (2001). *Sport fans: The psychology and social impact of spectators*. Routledge.

Whang, Y., Allen, J., Sahoury, N., & Zhang, H. (2004). Falling in love with a product: The structure of romantic consumer-product relationship. *Advances in Consumer Research, 31,* 320 – 327.

Whittaker, S., Isaacs, E., & O'Day, V. (1997). Widening the net: workshop report on the theory and practice of physical and network communities. *SIGCHI BULLETIN, 29*, 27-30.

Wang, Y. J., Butt, O. J., & Wei, J. (2011). My identity is my membership: A longitudinal explanation of online brand community members' behavioral characteristics. *Journal of Brand Management, 19*(1), 45-56.

Winterich, K. P. (2007). Self -other connectedness in consumer affect, judgments, and action (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ABI/INFORM Collection; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304836039). Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com/docview/304836039?accountid=8401

Wipperfürth, A. (2005). *Brand hijack: Marketing without marketing.* NY: Portfolio.

Woodside, A. G., Sood, S., & Miller, K. E. (2008). When consumers and brands talk: Storytelling theory and research in psychology and marketing. *Psychology & Marketing, 25*(2), 97-145.

Woratschek, H., Horbel, C., & Popp, B. (2014). The sport value framework–a new fundamental logic for analyses in sport management. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 14*(1), 6-24.

Wulf, K. D., Odekerken-Schröder, G., & Iacobucci, D. (2001). Investments in consumer relationships: A cross-country and cross-industry exploration. *Journal of Marketing, 65*(4), 33-50.

Yasin, M., & Shamim, A. (2013). Brand love: Mediating role in purchase intentions and word-of-mouth. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management, 7*(2), 101-109.

Zikmund, W. G., Babin, B. J., & Carr, J. C. dan Griffin, M.(2010). *Business research methods.*

Zinkhan, G. M., Haytko, D. L., & Ward, A. (1996). Self-concept theory: Applications in advertising. *Journal of Marketing Communications, 2*(1), 1-19.

APPENDICES

APPENDIXA

Part 1 Demographics and General InformationPlease put ✓ in box ☐ that best describes you)

Scr1. Are you a member of any football club fanpage (this includes liking and following a page)

☐1   Yes I am member   ☐2   No I am not a member (Terminate interview)

D1. Please indicate your age

☐1 15-20 years	☐2 21-25 years	☐3 26-30 years
☐4 31-35 years	☐5 36-40 years	☐6 41-45 years
☐7 46-50 years	☐8 51-55 years	☐9 56-60 years
☐10 61-65 years	☐11 over 65 years	

D2.Gender

☐1   Male   ☐2   Female

D3. Please indicate your occupuation

☐1   Student   ☐2   Private company employee   ☐3   Govt/State Enterprise

☐4   Own business   ☐5   Others please indicate ....

D4. Income

☐1   Less than 10,000 baht   ☐2   10,001 – 20,000 baht   ☐3   20,001-30,000 baht

☐4   30,001-40,000 baht   ☐5   40,001 – 50,000 baht   ☐6   Over 50,001 baht

D5. Please indicate your highest education level

☐1   Elementary school or less   ☐2   Highschool   ☐3   Vocational school

☐4   Higher Vocational   ☐5   Bachelor Degree   ☐6   Master degree or more

D6.Please indicate your marital status

☐1   Single   ☐2   Married   ☐3   Separated/Divorce

Part 2 Attitude towards Football Club

1. Do you have a football team that you like, love, or hate

1.1 I love this team..

(If no team loved indicated terminate interview)

Please indicate if you have made a purchase of products from your loved team in the past year	☐ Purchased ☐ Not Purchased
Please indicate purchase item and price	
1.	2.
3.	4.

1.1b If you make purchase of counterfeit products of your loved team please indicate

(Put"X" that best describes your purchase level)

7 = Most frequently purchase 6 = Purchase often 5 = Purchase regularly 4 =Purchase sometimes 3 = Not often 2 = Rarely 1 =Never

	Most frequent		← → Never purchase				
I buy counterfeit items of my loved team	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Part 3 Attitude towards Football Online Fan Page

2. What are the activities that you do with the fanpage of your loved football club indicated in 1.1

(Put"X" that best describes your activity level)

7 = Most frequently join 6 = Join often 5 = Join regularly 4 =Join sometimes   3 = Not often join 2 = Occasionally 1 =Rarely

		Most frequently	← →		Rarely		
1.	I go to search information about my favorite(loved) team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2.	I go to create content in the form of posts or comments.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3.	I invite friends to join the community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4.	I attend the activities created by the community	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5.	I contribute to the development of new ideas on how to improve the activities that show support for my favorite (loved) team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

202

3. Please indicate how you feel about the fanpage of your team.

7 = Strongly agree 6 = Agree 5 = Somewhat Agree 4 =Neither agree nor disagree 3 = Somewhat disagree 2 = Disagree 1 =Strongly Disagree

	Stongly agree ◄─────► Strongly disagree						
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. I feel strong ties to other members of the football club virtual community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I find it easy to form a bond with other members of the football club virtual community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I feel a sense of being connected to other members of the football club virtual community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. A strong feeling of camaraderie (friendship) exists between me and other members of the football club virtual community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. Supporting this team gives me a sense of community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel a sense of community with other fans of this team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Part 4 Football Team Engagement and Identification

4. Please indicate your engagement with your favorite (loved) football team.

7 = Strongly agree 6 = Agree 5 = Somewhat Agree 4 =Neither agree nor disagree 3 = Somewhat disagree 2 = Disagree 1 =Strongly Disagree

	Strongly agree ◄─────►Strongly Disagree						
1. Visiting the fan page gets me thinking about my favorite football team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I think about the football team when I use the fan page.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. Visiting the fan page stimulates my interest to learn more about the team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I feel very positive when I cheer this team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. Cheering for this team makes me happy.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel good when I cheer this team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. I am proud to cheer this team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. I spend a lot of time cheering this team when compared to other teams.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. Whenever I watch football, I usually watch my favorite team plays.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. The team is one of the football teams that I usually cheer when I watch football.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

5. Please indicate how you feel about the your favorite (loved) football team.

7 = Strongly agree 6 = Agree   5 = Somewhat Agree 4 =Neither agree nor disagree   3 = Somewhat disagree 2 = Disagree 1 =Strongly

Disagree

ความรู้สึกที่มีสโมสรบอล	Strongly agree ⟷ Strongly Disagree						
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I strongly identity with my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I strongly believe in my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I feel that my loved team is like a part of me.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I feel that my loved team has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

204

	Strongly Agree ← → Strongly Disagree						
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. I feel that using items from my loved team say something 'true' and 'deep' about who I am as a person.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I feel that my loved team is an important part of how I see myself.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I feel that supporting my loved team makes meappear to others like I want to.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I feel that supporting my loved team makes me feel like I want to.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I feel that supporting my loved team makes my life meaningful.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel ecstatic when my team wins.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. I often think of my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. I often find that my loved team keeps popping up in my head.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. I often seek opportunities to wear my team's T-shirt.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. I long to wear my team's jersey and own the accessories.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. I have a history in participating with my loved team by watching the matches and joining activities.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. I have a history of being highly involved with my love team's events and matches.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. I am ready to buy accessories and T-shirts that show my support for my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. I am ready to spend time to find products or create items show my support for my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. I felt that this is what I have been looking for from the first day I encountered my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. I felt that "this is it" from the day I first encountered my loved.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
17. I feel emotionally connected to my loved team.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
18. I feel that my loved team is like an old friend.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
19. If I compared my loved team to a brand, I find it is fun.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
20. I see myself supporting my loved team for a long time.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
21. If I compared my loved team to a brand, I find it is exciting.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
22. I feel that my loved team will be part of my life for a long time.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
23. I would feel very depressed if my team would go out of existence.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
24. I would feel apprehensive if my team would go out of existence.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

	Very satisfied ← → Not satisfied at all						
25. Considering my past experiences with the team I am satisfied with its performance.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

	Strongly agree ← → Strongly Disagree						
1. Considering my expectations I have about my loved team, they have perfomed accordingly.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I am certain of the answers I have provided so far.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I am confident of my evaluations and overall feelings that I have reported.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

<u>คำชี้แจง</u>

แบบสอบถามนี้ผู้วิจัยได้จัดทำขึ้น โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาเกี่ยวกับชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์ (virtual football community)ซึ่งเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของดุษฎีนิพนธ์ระดับ ปริญญาเอก หลักสูตรบริหารธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัย อัสสัมชัญ ข้อมูลที่ได้รับจากการสำรวจและรวบรวมความคิดเห็นของผู้มีส่วนร่วมในชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์ (virtual football community) ในครั้งนี้จะเป็นประโยชน์ในการเข้าใจ พฤติกรรม ผู้เข้าใช้ชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์ ที่ส่งผลดีต่อหน่วยงานและองค์กรที่เกี่ยวข้อง สามารถนำไปใช้เป็นฐานข้อมูลในการพัฒนาองค์ความรู้ และชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์ (virtual football community)ต่อไป

แบบสอบถามนี้แบ่งออกเป็น 4 ส่วน ประกอบด้วย
ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลทั่วไปของผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม
ส่วนที่ 2 ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอล
ส่วนที่ 3 ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับชุมชนออนไลน์ (สโมสร) ฟุตบอล
ส่วนที่ 4 อัตลักษณ์ และความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอล

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อขอความร่วมมือจากท่านในการตอบแบบสอบถาม โดยการรายงานผลวิจัยจะนำเสนอ ข้อมูลเป็นแบบภาพรวมความคิดเห็นเท่านั้นคำตอบของท่านถือเป็นความลับและจะไม่มีผลกระทบต่อท่านแต่ ประการใด

ขอแสดงความนับถือ และขอขอบคุณท่านล่วงหน้ามา ณ โอกาสนี้

มาริสา จันทมาศ ผู้วิจัย

<u>ส่วนที่ 1</u> ข้อมูลทั่วไปของผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม(โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย✓ลงในช่อง ☐ ที่ตรงกับตัวท่าน)

Scr1. ปัจจุบันท่านเป็นสมาชิกของชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์หรือไม่ (ทั้งนี้หมายความรวมถึงการเป็นสมาชิก
หรือกดไลค์ Facebook Fanpage (แฟนเพจ) ของทีม (สโมสร) หรือผู้สนับสนุนหรือ page บอลทั่วไป)

☐1   เป็นสมาชิก   ☐2   ไม่ได้เป็นสมาชิก(ให้ปิดการสัมภาษณ์)

D1. ปัจจุบันท่านมีอายุเท่าใดครับ/คะ

☐1	15-20 ปี	☐2	21-25 ปี	☐3	26-30 ปี
☐4	31-35 ปี	☐5	36-40 ปี	☐6	41-45 ปี
☐7	46-50 ปี	☐8	51-55 ปี	☐9	56-60 ปี
☐10	61-65 ปี	☐11	เกิน 65 ปี		

D2.เพศ

☐1   ชาย   ☐2   หญิง

D3. ปัจจุบันท่านทำอาชีพอะไรครับ/คะ

☐1	นักเรียน/นักศึกษา	☐2	พนักงานบริษัทเอกชน	☐3	ข้าราชการ/รัฐวิสาหกิจ
☐4	ธุรกิจส่วนตัว	☐5	อื่นๆ โปรดระบุ..		

D4. ท่านมีรายได้ต่อเดือนประมาณเท่าใดครับ/คะ

☐1	น้อยกว่าหรือเท่ากับ 10,000 บาท	☐2	10,001 – 20,000 บาท	☐3	20,001-30,000 บาท
☐4	30,001-40,000 บาท	☐5	40,001 – 50,000 บาท	☐6	มากกว่า 50,001 บาท

D5. ท่านจบการศึกษาระดับสูงสุดในระดับใด

☐1	ประถมศึกษาหรือต่ำกว่า	☐2	มัธยมศึกษา	☐3	ปวช.
☐4	ปวส.	☐5	ปริญญาตรี	☐6	ปริญญาโท หรือสูงกว่า

D6. ข้อใดสามารถอธิบายถึงสถานภาพสมรสของท่านได้ดีที่สุด

☐1	โสด	☐2	สมรส	☐3	หย่า/แยกกันอยู่

<u>ส่วนที่ 2ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอล</u>

ข้อ 1 ท่านมีสโมสรบอล ที่ท่านมีความรู้สึก เกลียด ไม่ชอบ เฉยๆ ชอบ และรักบ้างหรือเปล่า กรุณาระบุชื่อทีม ใน ช่องที่ตรงกับความรู้สึกของท่าน

1.2 ฉันรักทีมบอลทีมนี้ ....

(ถ้าไม่มีทีมที่รัก ให้ปิดการสัมภาษณ์)

โปรดระบุว่าในช่วงหนึ่งปีที่ผ่านมาท่านได้ซื้อสินค้า ของทีม (สโมสร)บอลนี้หรือเปล่า	☐ ซื้อ ☐ ไม่ซื้อ
โปรดระบุว่าท่านซื้อสินค้าอะไร ในราคาเท่าไหร่	
1.	2.
3.	4.

ข้อ 1.1b ท่านมีพฤติกรรมในการซื้อสินค้าปลอมของทีม (สโมสรบอล)โปรด(ที่ท่านระบุว่ารักในข้อ 1.1) ในระดับ ใด

(ทำเครื่องหมาย "X" ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความคิดเห็นของท่านดังนี้)

7 = ซื้อบ่อยที่สุด6 = ซื้อบ่อย 5 = ซื้อบ่อยพอสมควร 4 =ซื้อพอประมาณ 3 = ไม่ค่อยซื้อ 2 = ซื้อน้อย 1 = ไม่เคยซื้อเลย)

	ซื้อบ่อยที่สุด		← → ไม่ซื้อเลย				
ฉันซื้อสินค้าปลอมของทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรดของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

<u>ส่วนที่ 3 ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับชุมชนออนไลน์ (สโมสร) ฟุตบอล</u>

ข้อ 2 กิจกรรมที่ท่านร่วมในชุมชนออนไลน์ ของทีม (สโมสรบอล)โปรด(ที่ท่านระบุว่ารักในข้อ 1.1)ของท่าน

(ทำเครื่องหมาย "X" ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความคิดเห็นของท่านดังนี้)

7 = เข้าร่วมบ่อยที่สุด6 = เข้าร่วมบ่อย 5 = เข้าร่วมบ่อยพอสมควร 4 = เข้าร่วมพอประมาณ   3 = ไม่ค่อยเข้าร่วม 2 = เข้าร่วมน้อย

1 =เข้าร่วมน้อยที่สุด)

		เข้าร่วมบ่อยที่สุด		← → เข้าร่วมน้อยที่สุด				
1.	เข้าไปเรียนรู้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับ ทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรด ของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2.	เข้าไปแบ่งปันข้อมูล หรือร่วมสร้างเนื้อหา โดยการ เสนอ ความคิดเห็นในสเตตัส	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3.	ไปโปรโมทหรือชวนเพื่อนๆ มาร่วมเป็นสมาชิกใน ชุมชน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4.	เข้าไปมีส่วนร่วมในกิจกรรมต่างๆ ที่จัดขึ้น โดย ชุมชน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5.	เข้าไปร่วมพัฒนาแนวคิดสำหรับการปรับปรุง สร้างสรรค์สิ่งใหม่ๆ โดยการนำเสนอ แนวคิด กิจกรรม เพื่อแสดงการสนับสนุน ทีม (สโมสรบอล) โปรดของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

ข้อ 3 โปรดระบุความรู้สึกของท่านที่มีต่อ สมาชิกชุมชนออนไลน์ ของทีม (สโมสรบอล)โปรดของท่าน

(ทำเครื่องหมาย "X" ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความคิดเห็นของท่านดังนี้

7 = เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง 6 = เห็นด้วยมาก 5 = เห็นด้วย 4 = เฉยๆ 3 = ไม่เห็นด้วย 2 = ไม่เห็นด้วยมาก 1 = ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง)

ความรู้สึกต่อสมาชิกชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์		เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ◄──────► ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง						
		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1.	ฉันรู้สึกถึงสายสัมพันธ์อันดีกับสมาชิกคนอื่นๆของ ชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2.	ฉันรู้สึกสบายใจที่จะสร้างความสัมพันธ์กับสมาชิก คนอื่นๆของชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3.	ฉันรู้สึกมีส่วนร่วมกับสมาชิกคนอื่นๆของชุมชน สโมสรบอล ออนไลน์	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4.	ฉันรู้สึกเป็นมิตรกับสมาชิกคนอื่นๆของชุมชน สโมสรบอล ออนไลน์	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5.	ฉันรู้สึกเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของชุมชนสโมสรบอล ออนไลน์	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6.	ฉันรู้สึกว่าฉันและคนอื่นๆที่สนับสนุนสโมสรบอล เดียวกัน เป็นพวกเดียวกันและเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของ ชุมชนเดียวกัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

ส่วนที่ 4 อัตลักษณ์ และความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอล

ข้อ 4 เมื่อนึกถึงทีม (สโมสรบอล) โปรดของท่าน ท่านมีความรู้สึกอย่างไร กรุณาระบุ

(ทำเครื่องหมาย "X" ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความคิดเห็นของท่านดังนี้)

7 = เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง 6 = เห็นด้วยมาก 5 = เห็นด้วย 4 = เฉยๆ 3 = ไม่เห็นด้วย 2 = ไม่เห็นด้วยมาก 1 = ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง)

		เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ◄──────► ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง						
1.	เมื่อใดที่ฉันอยากตาม (คิดถึง) ทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอลโปรด ฉันมักเข้าไปเยี่ยมชมที่ชุมชน ออนไลน์ของทีมนั้น	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2.	เมื่อฉันเข้าไปเยี่ยมชุมชนออนไลน์ทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอลโปรด ฉันมักพอใจที่จะติดตาม ข้อมูล ข่าวสารความเคลื่อนไหว ของทีม	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3.	เพราะฉันเชียร์ ทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอลนี้ ฉันจึง มี ความรู้สึกอยากติดตาม ความเคลื่อนไหวของ ทีม	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4.	ฉันมักกลับเข้าไปที่ ชุมชนออนไลน์เพื่อติดตาม ความเคลื่อนไหวของทีมเพราะฉันลุ้นกับการ ติดตาม ทีมนี้	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5.	ฉันรู้สึกมีความสุขเมื่อได้ติดตามข่าวความ เคลื่อนไหว ของทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอลโปรด	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

209

		เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ◄─────────► ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง						
6.	ฉันรู้สึกสะใจ (ฟิน)ทุกครั้งที่ฉันได้รับรู้ข้อมูลข่าวสาร ของทีม(สโมสร) ฟุตบอลโปรด	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7.	ฉันรู้สึกภูมิใจที่เป็นแฟนของทีม (สโมสร) ฟุตบอลโปรด	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8.	ฉันใช้เวลาดูทีมโปรดของฉัน มากกว่า ดูการแข่งขันของทีมอื่นๆ	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9.	เมื่อฉันดูการแข่งขันฟุตบอลฉันมัก ดูทีมโปรดของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10.	ฉันไม่พลาดที่จะติดตามดูการแข่งขันของทีม (สโมสร)ฟุตบอลโปรด ของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

ข้อ 5 <u>โปรดระบุความรู้สึกของท่านที่มีต่อสโมสรบอลโปรดของท่าน</u>

(ทำเครื่องหมาย "X" ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความคิดเห็นของท่านดังนี้

7 = เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง 6 = เห็นด้วยมาก 5 = เห็นด้วย 4 = เฉยๆ   3 = ไม่เห็นด้วย 2 = ไม่เห็นด้วยมาก 1 = ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง)

ความรู้สึกที่มีสโมสรบอล		เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ◄─────────► ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง						
		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1.	ฉันรู้สึกว่าฉันเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของทีม (สโมสร) บอลโปรดของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2.	อัตลักษณ์หรือตัวตนของฉัน เป็นหนึ่งเดียวกับ ทีม (สโมสร) บอลโปรดของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3.	ฉันเชื่อมั่นใน ทีม (สโมสร) บอลโปรดของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4.	นี่แหละคือทีม (สโมสร) บอลของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5.	การเป็นแฟนของทีม (สโมสร)บอลโปรดของฉันสำคัญในการแสดง ความเป็นตัวตนของฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

ท่านเห็นด้วยแค่ไหนว่า....	เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ◄				►ไม่เห็นด้วยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง		
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. การใส่เสื้อทีม(สโมสร) หรือการใช้สินค้าของทีมโปรดของฉัน เป็นการสะท้อน ความเป็นตัวฉันอย่างแท้จริง	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. การได้ร่วมลุ้นทีม (สโมสร)โปรดของฉันเป็นการแสดงออกที่สำคัญต่อฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. การได้ร่วมลุ้นและแสดงการสนับสนุนทีม (สโมสร)โปรดของฉัน สำคัญต่อการแสดง ความเป็นตัวฉัน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. การได้ร่วมลุ้นทีม (สโมสร)โปรดทำให้รู้สึกสะใจใช่เลย	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. การได้ร่วมลุ้นทีม(สโมสร)โปรดของฉันให้ครองแชมป์ ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกมีความหมาย	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. การได้ร่วมลุ้นทีม(สโมสร)โปรดของฉันให้ครองแชมป์ ทำให้ฉันรู้สึกฮึกเหิม	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. ฉันมักคิดถึงทีม(สโมสร)โปรดของฉัน อยู่บ่อยๆ	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. เรื่องราวของสโมสรบอลดังกล่าวมักแวบเข้ามาในความคิดของฉันบ่อยๆ	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. ฉันมักหาโอกาสใช้เสื้อผ้า หรือสินค้าจากสโมสรโปรดเสมอ	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. ฉันใฝ่ฝันที่จะใช้เสื้อผ้า หรือสินค้าจากสโมสรโปรด หรือไปชมการแข่งขันเสมอ	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. ฉันมีส่วนร่วมกับสโมสร โปรดโดยการร่วมกิจกรรมที่จัดขึ้น และตามชมการแข่งขันตั้งแต่อดีต	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. ฉันติดตามสโมสรโปรดอย่างใกล้ชิดโดยการร่วมกิจกรรมที่จัดขึ้น และ ติดตามการแข่งขัน ตั้งแต่อดีต	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. ท่านพร้อมที่จะใช้จ่ายเงินเพื่อซื้อสินค้า ของทีม (สโมสร) โปรด เช่นเสื้อยืด ปลอกมือถือ ผ้าพันคอ	13.	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. ท่านพร้อมที่จะทุ่มเทเวลาเพื่อหาซื้อสินค้า หรือสร้างสรรค์สิ่งที่แสดงออกถึงความเป็นแฟน ของทีม (สโมสร) โปรดของฉัน เช่นซื้อ สติ๊กเกอร์มาแต่งรถ หรือไปต่อแถวซื้อเสื้อแบบ limited edition หรือไปร่วมกิจกรรมที่จัดขึ้นเพื่อสนับสนุนทีม (สโมสร) โปรดของท่าน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. เมื่อย้อนมองในวันที่ได้รู้จักกับสโมสรบอลนี้ในครั้งแรก ท่านรู้สึกว่าสโมสรนี้คือสิ่งที่ท่าน ค้นหามาโดนตลอด	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. เมื่อย้อนมองในวันที่ได้รู้จักกับสโมสรบอลนี้ในครั้งแรก ท่านรู้สึกว่าสโมสรนี้คือสิ่งที่ใช่เลย	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
17. ท่านรู้สึกผูกพันกับทีม (สโมสร) โปรดดังกล่าวอย่างมาก	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
18. ท่านรู้สึกว่าทีม (สโมสรบอล) โปรดเป็นเหมือนเพื่อนเก่าที่รู้จักมานาน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
19. หากเปรียบ ทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรดเป็นยี่ห้อสินค้า ท่านคิดว่าสโมสรนี้เป็นตราสินค้าที่ สนุกสนาน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
20. ท่านคิดว่าท่านจะยังคงจะสนับสนุน ทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรด อีกยาวนาน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
21. หากเปรียบ ทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรดเป็นยี่ห้อสินค้า ท่านคิดว่าสโมสรนี้เป็นตราสินค้าที่ ตื่นเต้น เร้าใจ	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
22. ท่านคิดว่าทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรดจะเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของชีวิตของท่านอีกนานเท่านาน	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
23. หากว่าทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรดของฉัน เลิกหรือยุบไปท่านจะรู้สึกหดหู่อย่างมาก	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
24. หากว่าทีม(สโมสรบอล) โปรดของฉัน เลิกเล่นหรือยุบไป ท่านจะรู้สึกเศร้า(จิตตก) อย่างมาก	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

	พอใจเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ←——→ ไม่พอใจเป็นอย่างยิ่ง						
25. เมื่อนึกถึงประสบการณ์ที่มีกับสโมสรบอลดังกล่าวที่ ผ่านมา ท่านมีความพึงพอใจแค่ไหน	26. 7	27. 6	28. 5	29. 4	30. 3	31. 2	32. 1

	เกินความคาดหวัง ←——→ ไม่เป็นไปตามความคาดหวัง						
26. เมื่อนึกถึงประสบการณ์ที่มีกับสโมสรบอลดังกล่าวที่ ผ่านมา ท่านคิดว่าสโมสรบอลดังกล่าวได้ตอบสนอง ความคาดหวังของท่านแค่ไหน	33. 7	34. 6	35. 5	36. 4	37. 3	38. 2	39. 1

	พอใจเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ←——→ ไม่พอใจเป็นอย่างยิ่ง						
27. ท่านมั่นใจว่าได้ตอบความรู้สึกที่แท้จริงและได้ ประเมินคำถามทั้งหมดที่ผ่านมาด้วยความถูกต้อง ใกล้เคียงความจริงที่สุด	40. 7	41. 6	42. 5	43. 4	44. 3	45. 2	46. 1
28. ท่านคิดว่าท่านมั่นใจในความรู้สึกที่ใช้ตอบคำถาม ทั้งหมดที่ผ่านมา	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

จบแบบสอบถาม

APPENDIX C

<u>คำชี้แจง</u>

แบบสอบถามนี้ผู้วิจัยได้จัดทำขึ้น โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาเกี่ยวกับการติดตามสโมสรบอล ซึ่งเป็นส่วนหนึ่ง
ของดุษฎีนิพนธ์ระดับ ปริญญาเอก หลักสูตรบริหารธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัย อัสสัมชัญด้วยความมุ่งหวังว่า ข้อมูลที่
ได้รับการสำรวจและรวบรวมความคิดเห็นของผู้มีส่วนร่วมติดตามสโมสรบอล ในครั้งนี้จะเป็นประโยชน์ในการ
เข้าใจ พฤติกรรมติดตามสโมสรบอลที่ส่งผลดีต่อหน่วยงานและองค์กรที่เกี่ยวข้อง สามารถนำไปใช้เป็นฐานข้อมูล
ในการพัฒนาองค์ความรู้ ต่อไป

      การสัมภาษณ์ในครั้งนี้แบ่งออกเป็น 3ส่วน ประกอบด้วย
      ส่วนที่ 1ข้อมูลทั่วไปของผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์
      ส่วนที่ 2 พฤติกรรมการติดตามสโมสรฟุตบอล
      ส่วนที่ 3 ความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับสโมสรฟุตบอล

      จึงเรียนมาเพื่อขอความร่วมมือจากท่านในการตอบแบบสอบถามโดยการรายงานผลวิจัยจะนำเสนอ
ข้อมูลเป็นแบบภาพรวมความคิดเห็นเท่านั้นคำตอบของท่านถือเป็นความลับและจะ ไม่มีผลกระทบต่อท่านแต่
ประการใด

                                ขอแสดงความนับถือ และขอขอบคุณท่านล่วงหน้ามา ณ โอกาสนี้

                                          มาริสา จันทมาศ ผู้วิจัย

In-Depth Interview Transcript 1
Tong, University Student aged 20, Monthly Income 10,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Tong is a fan of Manchester United. However, he is an avid football fan. He watches other Premier League matches as well as the Thai Premier League. Primarily he watches the matches online. He regularly checks the popular soccer sites to find out the latest news and fixtures. He admits that sometimes he gambles. He said that it made watching the match more fun.

As a student he said it is not often that he buys the T-shirt or team items. He said the prices were too high. However, he chooses not to buy counterfeit products because he said that was not a good way to support the team.

When probed further regarding the activities that he would join for his team, he said that he did not join many activities. He usually just discussed with his friends on social media. This is because many of the activities involve many people and he felt it was too troublesome to go. Besides most of his friends did not attend such events either. The most he would do will go watch a match at his friends' house.

Engagement

The respondent described that he enjoyed following the news about his favorite team. He makes sure that he knows the latest updates and sometimes discusses it with his friends on his own social network. For him getting to watch Manchester United play is an important activity (ติดตามไม่พลาดทุก match). He is willing to stay up late to do so. But for other matches unless it is really exciting he won't make such a sacrifice because he prefers to rest since he has to attend classes.

For him the ultimate brand experience would be to watch Manchester United play at Old Trattford. He said that once he started working maybe one day he can save up to go. This is because there are many tours that start to have special trips just to watch specific matches of the Premier League.

When asked how he felt when his team played, he explained that he felt very excited (ลุ้น). He said that he always believes his team will win even if sometimes the odds are quite bad. When the team wins he feels (สะใจ) especially when playing arch rival Liverpool.

In-Depth Interview Transcript 2
Yuth, Bachelor Degree, Company employee aged 30, Monthly Income 60,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Yuth is a fan of Manchester United. He also watches other Premier League teams play. Sometimes he also follows other leagues like the German Bundesliga, Italian Galcio Serie A, French League Un, and Spanish League. He also watches the teams play the Europa games. He admits he is addicted to soccer so when he travels anywhere he makes sure he can get to watch the matches he follows.

He follows the news on the fan pages and on sports radio pages. He does not gamble because he thinks it is a waste of money. But he enjoys analyzing the results and making projections about the possibility of the outcomes of the matches.

He always buys the latest T-shirt from the team and has many items from the team including scarves and many other accessories. He is proud that he has gone to watch Manchester United play a few times at Old Trattford. He also showed off his Manchester United Krungsri credit card. He also said he had a collection of old T-shirts that were special edition. When asked where or how he got it, he explained that he hunted for the items on Ebay and sometimes visited special shops in Jatujak Market.

However, he said he does not attend the events because he said he did not like the crowd.

Engagement

Yuth said that watching Manchester United was very important to him (ยังไงก็ต้องดู). He said that even if it was really late at night, it did not matter. For him winning or losing did not really matter much. He said he was proud (ภูมิใจ) to support Manchester United. He said that the team had a long history of pride. He said that it was alright to lose but the spirit of his support never fades. He said even during the worst times he still believe in the team. He said that he felt (ผูกพัน) with the team. He said he has been watching them play for a long time. For him he believed that the greatest players and coaches all started with Manchester United such as Sir Alex Ferguson, Eric Cantona, and even David Beckham.

He is also active in posting about the team on his own Facebook page. He often shares the content from Red Army page as well. He said that it is important to show support for the team and the other supporters as well. He said that they all shared the love for the same team.

In-Depth Interview Transcript 3
Ake, Master Degree, Company employee aged 49, Monthly Income 50,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Ake is a fan of Liverpool. He loves watching the Premier League so he watches most matches. However, for the other leagues he just watches the highlights. It is too tiring for him to follow everything. He admits to gambling but he only plays with his friends. It is nothing much he says.

He follows the news on websites, fan pages, news sites, and sports radio pages.

He always buys the latest T-shirt from the team. He even goes hunting for T-shirts that have special value such as having the name and number of the player or classic versions. These T-shirts have a very high price some are a few thousand but others that are really rare might even cost more. He also visits Ebay to try to bid for these items. He said many of these items are collector items and they are like an investment for the future.

He likes attending events because he enjoys the atmosphere where fans come together. He even went to Anfield to watch Liverpool play. He said he hopes he can go and watch the Battle of Reds one day.

Engagement

Ake said that watching Liverpool was very important to him (ยังไงก็ไม่พลาด). He said that time did not matter. Whatever time he will watch the match. In fact wherever he was he made sure he could watch the match. He explained that when the team performed poorly he often felt bad (จิตตก). He will support the team by posting on his Facebook that there is always hope. He said it is important to encourage the other supporters not to give up. Well, the team has been around for a long time and will be for a long time as long as fans do not stop supporting them. He said he was proud (ภูมิใจ) to support Liverpool because he felt he had a long history with the team. You will never walk alone, he said. When asked how he felt about the team he said that he felt (ผูกพัน) with the team.

216

In-Depth Interview Transcript 4
Nu, Master Degree, Consultant aged 52, Monthly Income 100,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Nu is a big supporter of Liverpool. He said he makes sure he gets to see every match. Part of this is because his job is more flexible so staying up late to watch a match is not a problem. He doesn't gamble because he only cheers for Liverpool.

He reads the foreign news, visits the fan pages, and reads the Thai sports commentaries as well. He often watches the highlights of the match again just because it makes him feel good.

He buys every T-shirt offered by the team. He also buys T-shirts that he can wear casually from the team. He has special edition watches and even carries a Liverpool Standard Chartered Bank credit card. He has a collection of scarves and other accessories at home as well.

He has gone to watch the matches at Anfield three times already. He said he still plans to go again. He said he just does not tire of going to see the football match. In fact he said that he will try to add it to his itinerary when he travels to Europe.

Engagement

Nu said that watching Liverpool was very important to him (ยังไงก็ไม่พลาด). He is a proud (ภูมิใจ) supporter of Liverpool because he felt he had a long history with the team. He felt (ฟิน) whenever the team scored a nice goal or won. Like a friend he felt that he would support the team through thick and thin. He said that the players may come and go but the team lives on.

217

In-Depth Interview Transcript 5
Tor, Vocational School Degree, Company Employee aged 27, Monthly Income
30,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Tor said he cheers for Leicester City. He said he has been watching football for a long
time but he has not found a team he really likes until Leicester City was bought by
King Power and started to perform very well in the Premier League of 2015 – 2016
season. He said that he invests more in gambling than really enjoying the game so
Leicester City winning against the odds is really good for him. He said he envies the
guy who bet on Leicester City from the very beginning and won big in the UK.

He does not watch all the matches choosing rather to follow the results from football
pages or in the newspaper. He will watch only if he gambles big on it. Since he has a
full time job he cannot let watching the game get in his way of work.

He also supports Thai Premier League Teams. He buys the T-shirts too like the pink
Buriram United T-shirts. In fact he queued up to get the T-shirt because he said it was
limited in number. However, he was disappointed when the counterfeit products came
into the market so quickly. He feels that Thai team T-shirts are more accessible
because they are cheaper than the foreign teams.

Engagement

Leicester City is a relatively new team for the Thai fans. For Tor the fact that it is
owned by a Thai company. The performance like a Cinderella story makes it
attractive to him. He said it is an encouraging story that "Siam Fox" can win over the
legendary football teams of the UK.

In-Depth Interview Transcript 6
Matt, Master Degree, Company employee aged 37, Monthly Income 45,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Matt says that he is a proud supporter of Chelsea. He has to watch every match. In a way having a young baby is good because he has to stay up anyway. His wife does not understand but he does not care.

He is an active follower of team information from all possible sources. He also loves to pass on this information on his personal Facebook page. He said he is very happy when talking about Chelsea. In fact he said he can go on talking for hours just because he is very proud to be supporting this team.

He also buys the Chelsea T-shirt and accessories, although less now because part of the money must be kept for the baby. However, he said he can tell fake from real. He said his wife tried to make him happy once by getting him a Chelsea towel. He knew the moment he touched it that it was fake.

Engagement

Like most people he too grew up watching football in Thailand but his love for Chelsea came from his experience in studying in the UK. At that time he was thinking what team would be good to cheer. Since he was in London he was going to choose one of those London-based teams. At that time he had an English friend who cheered for Chelsea. He went to dinner with him one day to watch the match. He was very impressed so he became a Chelsea supporter. He watched Chelsea in London as a student and also again when they came to Thailand. He even joked that if he was cut, blue would be the color of his blood.

In-Depth Interview Transcript 8
Pong, Vocational School Degree, Garage Owner aged 50, Monthly Income 80,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Pong said he watched Arsenal as a kid. He still watches them today as well as most of the Premier League Teams. He also watches the football of all the leagues. He and his friends will often get together at restaurants that put the competition on big screen. They will eat and drink and watch the match. He said it is the way he enjoys with his friends. Even now that he and his friends already have kids he still continues this behavior.

He follows every media that talks about football –radio, newspaper, websites, fanpages, and TV too. He loves to watch the replay of highlights because it is (ฟินมาก กกก)

He says he always buys the T-shirts and finds occasions to wear it often. Since he is the owner of his own garage. He says he can wear Arsenal T-shirts as often as he wants. He never buys the fake ones. In fact if some of his friends do he will condemn them. He said that it is their way to support the team. It is not fair if the money goes to cheaters rather than the team.

Pong said that he has gone to London recently to watch Arsenal play. He said that he went with a tour. Nowadays there are tours that take people to watch football. He hoped the economy will get better soon and if his business picks up more profits he will go again.

Engagement

Pong said that Arsenal is his inspiration. As a kid he started to play football. He said he was even on his school's team in high school. He dreamt of being a football player one day. He applied to the national team and that was when he realized he was not as good as he thought himself to be. So he decided to study being a mechanic because if he can't play football, he follow his second passion, cars. Pong said that his white Suzuki Swift has the red stripes and design to show his support for Arsenal. Whenever he is not busy with his work he will look up match highlights to watch.

In-Depth Interview Transcript 9

Lek, High School Student aged 17, Monthly Income 10.000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Lek likes watching football. He also loves playing football. He said he likes Leicester City because it gives him hope. If Leicester City can move from being a candidate team to fall out of the Premier League to being champions, the Thai national team can one day go to the World Cup too. Lek loves watching the national team play but not the Thai Premier League. This is because he feels there are too many hooligans.

As a student Lek said it is quite a challenge to watch the matches because of classes in the morning. Usually the matches he can watch are the ones on the weekend. The rest of the matches he will on watch the highlights. He primarily watches the highlights from the football fan pages.

Whenever he plays football with his friends in practice he will wear Leicester City T-shirts. He said that it makes his feel energetic (ฮึกเหิม). He buys the authentic T-shirts because the Leicester City ones are a bit cheaper especially if his parents buy it for him from the Duty Free Shop. When the team came to Thailand he said he wanted to go see the parade but his parents told him that the traffic would be so bad. So he had to watch it on TV.

When he graduates from university, his parents promised that he can go to study in the UK for masters. He said he will go to study in Leicester.

Engagement

Lek said when he plays football, he likes to think that he is a real professional player. He thinks he is Vardi (laughs). He said that he hopes the team will win again and one day he thinks they should come to play a friendly match with the Thai national team. He said he will queue up as long as necessary to get the ticket (เท่าไหร่เท่ากัน). He said that the performance of Leicester City during this season is so good. He is very proud of the team.

In-Depth Interview Transcript 10
Nueng, University Student aged 20, Monthly Income 10,000 baht

Behavioral Profile

Nueng is a fan of Manchester City. He said that it is very dramatic that it is in the same city as Manchester United. Both teams are very good. But for Nueng the one and only is Manchester City. He said that he likes the team because they are very good and he likes the color and symbol (เรือใบสีฟ้า). He watches the matches on streaming on line sources. He said that the options of the cable TV in Thailand is not good and expensive. He watches many of the matches of the Premier League in general because he likes football. He said he does not gamble because he learned from his friends that it is not easy to win. So he thinks it is a waste of money and time.

He follows the team on their Facebook Fanpage and the football page like Soccersuck. He said that his friends enjoy watching too. Sometimes they would go out to restaurants and watch football in big screen. He said it is really fun activity.

Nueng does not buy the T-shirts because he said they are expensive. But his girlfriend will buy it for his birthday present. So he will often wear it when he has no class.

Engagement

The team is the main reason he follows news about soccer. He said that he feel excited (ลุ้น) every time the team plays. He said it is funny but sometimes if the team is on a losing streak he really feels bad.
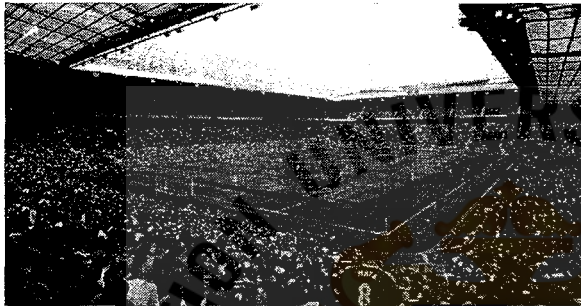
Questionnaire Link Posted on Target Facebook Pages
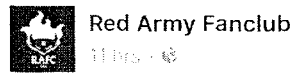
Red Army Fanclub

เชิญแฟนเพจร่วมตอบแบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับสโมสรฟุตบอล เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของวิทยานิพนธ์นักศึกษาคณะบริหารธุรกิจฯ มหาวิทยาลัยอัสสัมชัญ http://survey.au.edu/index.php?sid=37417

แบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับสโมสรบอล
survey.au.edu

Arsenal.in.th อาร์เซนอลไทย
15 mins

เชิญแฟนเพจร่วมตอบแบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับสโมสรฟุตบอล เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของวิทยานิพนธ์นักศึกษาคณะบริหารธุรกิจฯ มหาวิทยาลัยอัสสัมชัญ
http://survey.au.edu/index.php?sid=37417

แบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับสโมสรบอล
survey.au.edu

Liverpool Thailand Fanclub FC [LTF. Football Club]
2 hrs

เชิญแฟนเพจร่วมตอบแบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับสโมสรฟุตบอล เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของวิทยานิพนธ์นักศึกษาคณะบริหารธุรกิจฯ มหาวิทยาลัยอัสสัมชัญ

http://survey.au.edu/index.php?sid=37417
#พื้นที่โฆษณาLTF

แบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับสโมสรบอล
survey.au.edu

6 Comments 1 Share

224

APPENDIX E

Items Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
ps1	576	1	7	5.19	1.309	.523	.203
ps2	576	1	7	5.12	1.329	.295	.203
ps3	576	1	7	4.89	1.410	.134	.203
ps4	576	1	7	5.18	1.244	.145	.203
ps5	576	1	7	5.14	1.348	.110	.203
ps6	576	1	7	5.50	1.264	.834	.203
id1	576	1	7	5.83	1.136	.619	.203
id2	576	1	7	5.60	1.287	.828	.203
id3	576	3	7	6.13	.956	-.160	.203
id4	576	3	7	6.21	.969	-.139	.203
id5	576	2	7	5.91	1.155	-.399	.203
en1	576	1	7	6.06	1.060	.396	.203
en2	576	1	7	6.13	.968	.762	.203
en3	576	1	7	6.25	.981	1.412	.203
en4	576	1	7	6.14	1.040	.798	.203
en5	576	1	7	6.16	1.024	1.451	.203
en6	576	1	7	5.95	1.136	1.027	.203
en7	576	1	7	6.28	1.029	2.449	.203
en8	576	1	7	6.34	1.032	2.855	.203
en9	576	1	7	6.41	.947	2.840	.203
en10	576	1	7	6.04	1.112	.640	.203
bl1	576	1	7	5.46	1.288	.107	.203
bl2	576	1	7	5.91	1.109	.679	.203
bl3	576	2	7	5.78	1.107	-.536	.203
bl4	576	1	7	5.99	1.043	.045	.203
bl5	576	2	7	6.04	1.105	-.447	.203
bl6	576	2	7	6.08	1.077	-.393	.203
bl7	576	3	7	5.95	1.047	-1.039	.203
bl8	576	1	7	5.63	1.192	-.583	.203
bl9	576	1	7	5.26	1.450	-.035	.203
bl10	576	1	7	5.84	1.324	1.008	.203
bl11	576	1	7	5.19	1.456	.198	.203
bl12	576	1	7	5.28	1.399	.114	.203

225

bl13	576	1	7	5.50	1.334	-.064	.203
bl14	576	1	7	5.00	1.539	-.180	.203
bl15	576	2	7	5.73	1.228	-.823	.203
bl16	576	1	7	5.91	1.178	-.228	.203
bl17	576	3	7	6.03	1.087	-.709	.203
bl18	576	2	7	5.87	1.142	-.472	.203
bl19	576	1	7	5.80	1.156	.073	.203
bl20	576	2	7	6.33	1.014	1.259	.203
bl21	576	1	7	5.94	1.165	.182	.203
bl22	576	2	7	6.20	1.093	1.155	.203
bl23	576	1	7	6.28	1.076	2.451	.203
bl24	576	1	7	5.98	1.281	1.188	.203
bl25	576	1	7	5.95	1.090	.042	.203
bl26	576	1	7	5.11	1.296	.430	.203
bl27	576	3	7	5.89	.838	.210	.203
bl28	576	4	7	5.99	.844	-.105	.203
Valid N (listwise)	576						
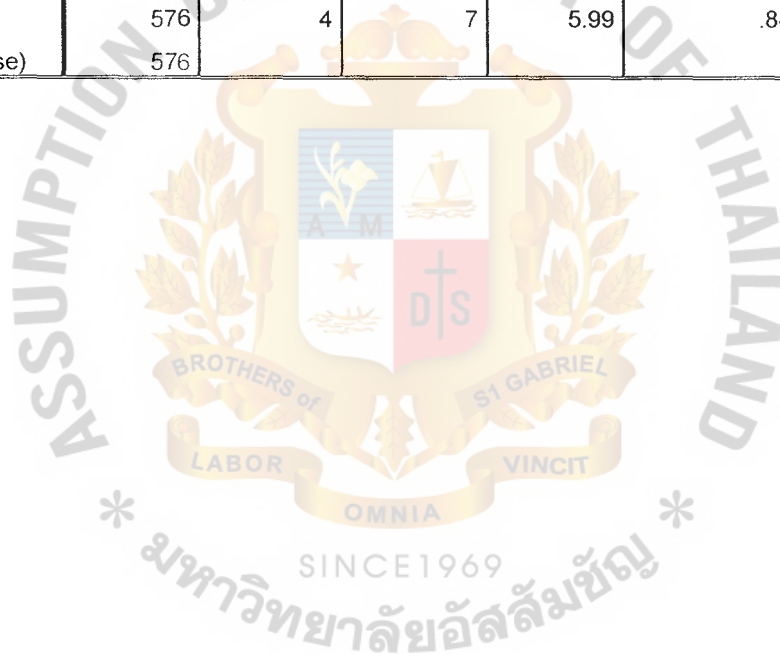
Factor Analysis New Brand Love Second Order Constructs
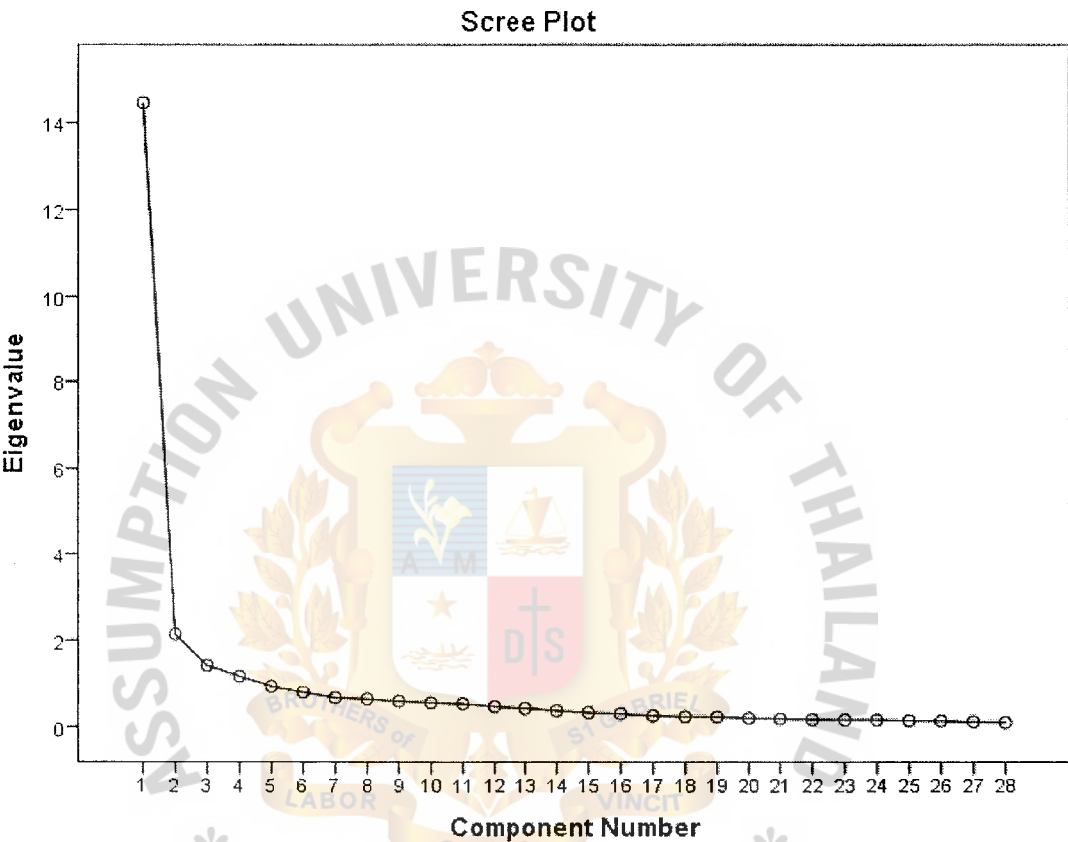
Scree Plot

Secree Plot show the five loading constructs of Brand Love

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
bl17	.770				
bl20	.738				
bl22	.731				
bl18	.730				
bl16		.712			
bl21	.682				
bl15		.638			
bl19	.642				
bl7			.428		
bl11		.786			
bl14		.774			
bl12		.759			
bl13		.758			
bl9		.735			
bl1			.535		
bl8			.576		
bl10		.563			
bl5			.715		
bl6			.691		
bl2			.637		
bl4			.636		
bl3			.603		
bl23	.550				
bl24	.466				
bl27				.908	
bl28				.878	
bl26					.787
bl25					.721

228