THE ROLE AND NATURE OF WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE IN MARKETING RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Abstract

Studies of human relationships in anthropology, religion, community studies and psychology have determined that willingness to sacrifice plays an important role in reinforcing and strengthening social bonds. It is remarkable that given the increasing prominence of the relationship marketing paradigm, marketers have spent little time investigating willingness to sacrifice as a potential variable of interest. This dissertation extends relationship marketing theory by defining, developing and testing the willingness to sacrifice construct in the context of brand communities. It not only establishes a role for willingness to sacrifice in the nomological network of relationship marketing, but also develops a typology of sacrifices members make in brand communities.

Results from two experiments and a field study of two brand communities suggest there are significant relationships between willingness to sacrifice and established constructs in relationship marketing research, such as identification, satisfaction with peers, and norms of reciprocity. Moreover, these findings indicate that willingness to sacrifice is positively associated with beneficial marketing outcomes such as word of mouth, purchase intentions and brand community longevity.

By integrating literature from personal psychology, sociology anthropology—all of which discuss sacrifice in terms of how it can benefit and strengthen relationships—this research challenges the conventional marketing assumption that sacrifice is merely “the price one pays.” Taken together, these studies enrich our understanding of willingness to sacrifice in a marketing context, and more specifically, identify a process through which it contributes to brand community success and related marketing outcomes.
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Statement of Originality

I hereby certify that all of the work described within this thesis is the original work of the author. Any published (or unpublished) ideas and/or techniques from the work of others are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

This research investigates the role of willingness to sacrifice in marketing relationships. The context I use to analyze this activity is the brand community, which prior research suggests is built on a rich network of mutually beneficial relationships (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001). Specifically, my research looks at how members’ perceptions of the brand community’s interpersonal relations and leaders’ motives impact their willingness to sacrifice for the community. The notion of sacrifice in consumption relationships offers an interesting counterpoint to conventional economic views of the rational marketplace, and adds to our understanding of relationship marketing. This work presents a compelling case for introducing and explicating a new concept in theories of relationship marketing: willingness to sacrifice.

Sacrifice is defined as an act in which one party subordinates his immediate self-interest to promote the wellbeing of a relationship (Bahr and Bahr 2001; Van Lange, Rusbult, Drigotas, Arriage, Witcher, & Cox 1997, 1374). Willingness to make personal sacrifice—i.e., the intention to act—is rarely discussed in marketing literature. However, research in other disciplines links willingness to sacrifice to favourable relationship outcomes that are also of interest to marketing researchers, including commitment, satisfaction, and relationship longevity (Bass 1985; Impett, Gable and Peplau 2005). Brand communities, with their complex webs of stakeholder relationships and social exchanges, are fertile ground for investigating willingness to sacrifice in a marketing context.

Brand communities are networks of social relations established around the consumption and shared enjoyment of a particular product, brand or company (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001). The existence of such communities can have positive impacts on the brand, including increased perceptions of company legitimacy (Anderson 2005); greater consumer loyalty (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001); and higher corporate
revenues (Flavian and Guinaliu 2005). Brand communities are particularly interesting settings because when successful, they appear to effectively bridge the gap between social and commercial motives of consumption. That being said, brands that want to appear as authentic expressions of cultural and social values must tread carefully between providing a forum for adherents to share brand experiences, and furthering corporate commercial goals (Holt 1997; Muniz and O’Guinn 2001).

Work in the brand communities area has extended our understanding of relationship marketing, an influential theoretical framework that underlies a growing expanse of contemporary market research. Relationship marketing has been called “the epitome of customer orientation” (Fournier, Dobscha and Mick 1998, 43) and merits its own academic periodical, the Journal of Relationship Marketing. Recently, marketing scholars have suggested that non-reciprocal exchange behaviors such as sharing (Belk 2007, 2010) and gift-giving (Sherry 1983; Geisler 2008) could be fundamental links between relationship-building and consumption. It is reasonable to assume that sacrifice, another type of non-reciprocal exchange, may also play a role in developing positive marketing relationships. As such, it would further extend our knowledge of relationship marketing theory if we could determine some of the mechanisms that facilitate consumers’ willingness to make personal sacrifices in a consumption context.

1.2 The Importance of Willingness to Sacrifice as a Marketing Construct

The Oxford English Dictionary defines sacrifice as “The destruction or surrender of something valued or desired for the sake of something having, or regarded as having, a higher or a more pressing claim; the loss entailed by devotion to some other interest.”\(^1\) Willingness to sacrifice can be motivated by the desire to maintain or repair relationships (Van Lange, Rusbult et al 1997), restore and build feelings of community (Hirsch 1990), and refine or enhance personal identity (van Baal 1976).

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It’s important to distinguish between *sacrifice*, which is a behavior, and *willingness to sacrifice*. Willingness is a psychological affect that reflects an individual’s openness to opportunities to carry out the behavior when appropriate situations arise (Pomery et al 2009).

Research based on the Prototype-Willingnessness model (PWM) finds that *willingness* is a good predictor for non-rational behaviours (Gibbons and Gerrard 1995; Gibbons et al. 1998b; Pomery et al, 2009). The PWM emerged as a means to help understand and predict the occurrence of behaviors that could be considered neither reasoned nor rational (Gibbons et al., 1998a; Gerrard et al 2008). It extends the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen 1991) by describing the role of social norms in predicting forms of *non-rational* activity (Gibbons and Gerard 1995). Given that sacrifice is also considered a non-rational behaviour, this model is an appropriate choice to justify the use of willingness to sacrifice as a proxy for the actual activity.

Sacrifice is a collective concept that occurs within the context of relationships. Just as joining a community addresses ongoing needs for affiliation, identity-construction and cultural definition (Muniz and Schau 2005; Belk and Tumbat 2007), so too does engaging in sacrifice for a greater good (Bahr and Bahr 2001; Bradley 1894). Given that marketing scholars are interested in such outcomes, investigating willingness to sacrifice within brand communities may further illuminate concepts of importance in marketing strategy, consumer behavior and theory. There is also value in understanding the significance of willingness to sacrifice in contemporary life because of its direct influence on the quality and duration of relationships in personal, social, political and commercial spaces.

Willingness to sacrifice could thus be an important link between two foundational—but often contradictory—concepts in marketing: exchange and relationships. For example, a long-standing assumption of exchange theory is that marketing is largely a rational economic concept in which parties “improve their assortment” as a result of the exchange (Kotler 1972; Bagozzi 1974; Alderson and Martin 1964). Relationships in marketing, on the other hand, are far more messy, dynamic and often irrational (Fourner 1998).
Most extant marketing research regards sacrificial acts in a negative light. This is in contrast to findings in the anthropology and sociology domains, where sacrifice is defined as a form of exchange that is essential for the ongoing wellbeing of relationships (Sahlins 1972). Indeed, willingness to sacrifice has long been considered an index of kinship solidarity, and the essential glue of healthy relationships (Myers 1983). In marketing, however, sacrifice is often presented in terms of the price one pays for the product, or the time and effort involved in obtaining it. In this context, sacrifice is considered an unfortunate but necessary part of a transaction, as opposed to an integral part of a positive relationship-building experience. The negative perspective ignores the transformational aspect of willingness to sacrifice, which is thought to confer benefits to both the person who willingly sacrifices and to the relationship itself. Currently, the marketing literature pays little attention to the notion that willingness to sacrifice might play a beneficial role in marketing relationships. Fournier (1998) submits that the conventional exchange paradigm driving most marketing assumptions ignores asymmetric dependencies that often characterize relationships, emphasizing instead “the ideal of symbiotic exchange among equal partners,” (361). Bringing the concept of willingness to sacrifice into the relationship marketing literature could help refine current theories.

In marketing, one of the richest concentrations of relationships is found in brand communities, which are sustained networks of personal and commercial social relations. If the theoretical principles around sacrifice and relationships from other social science disciplines are generalizable, it is reasonable to assume that willingness to sacrifice would play a significant role in brand community relationships – and therefore, their sustainability. As such, exploring how sacrifice is manifested and facilitated would have interesting managerial implications for brand community developers and managers.

1.3 The Importance of Brand Community Studies in Marketing

Evidence from a number of studies indicates that brand communities contribute to a wide range of positive outcomes for the corporations and brands around which they form (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002; Anderson 2005; Carlson, Suter and Brown 2008). These researchers suggest that
marketers may be able to nurture brand community by facilitating the development of relationships among community stakeholders. If we can identify some of the mechanisms—such as the ones that facilitate willingness to sacrifice—that foster healthy brand community relationships, we may then suggest institutional frameworks or policies that practitioners can apply to support ongoing community commitment.

Brand communities are implicated in several positive marketing activities, including building company legitimacy (Anderson 2005); shaping the brand story (Brown Kozinets and Sherry 2003); and catalyzing corporate innovation (Fuller, Matzler and Hoppe 2008). Membership in such communities may also promote individual loyalty (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001); positive word of mouth (Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrman 2005); and increased revenues (Flavian and Guinaliu 2005). Successful brand communities, such as those of Harley Davidson, Jeep and Apple Newton are oft-studied examples of how community can increase consumer and brand value. But there are also failed communities, such as those of Saturn, Vespa and Wal-Mart. These failed to gain traction and faded into oblivion. Given the promise that brand communities hold as a marketing strategy, it would be helpful to understand the conditions under which healthy brand community relationships are sustained. What conditions make it possible for some communities to thrive and contribute towards their eponymous brands’ success, while others struggle to establish a foothold in their consumers’ frame of reference?

I propose that an important piece in this puzzle is developing an understanding of what mechanisms drive willingness to sacrifice for the sake of these community relationships.

1.4 Research Purpose

This goal of this research is to determine the existence and role of willingness to sacrifice in marketing relationships in brand communities.

Marketers, with few exceptions (see e.g. Belk 2010) have yet to incorporate willingness to sacrifice into studies of marketing relationships. In the humanities literature, however, there are many examples describing the important role that sacrifice—both the act and intention—plays in both personal and
community relationships (e.g. Bahr and Bahr 2001; Evans Pritchard 1954; Kanter 1972). It is therefore reasonable to assume that willingness to sacrifice would also be a factor in the success of marketing relationships, and marketers might find it useful to determine the mechanisms that encourage community members to make sacrifices. Specifically, after a member joins a brand community, what are some of the factors that encourage willingness to sacrifice for the betterment of the community? Identifying and facilitating these mechanisms may result in greater community sustainability and associated positive outcomes. This connection is supported in the literature by Glynn (1981) who suggests that a strong predictor of community success is the number of additional years one plans to remain in the community.

The studies in this work are designed to test the notion that where brand community norms and conditions encourage willingness to sacrifice, community sustainability—which I measure in terms of the probability a participant will still be a member in five years— is more likely.

1.4.1 The Research Questions

To investigate the role that willingness to sacrifice plays in marketing relationships, my research investigates three questions:

1) What comprises the nomological network of willingness to sacrifice in a brand community? In other words, what are some of the factors associated with and resulting from willingness to sacrifice in this context?

2) What are the kinds of things that people are willing to sacrifice in brand community contexts?

3) Does willingness to sacrifice lead to pro-brand community outcomes?

Question 1 examines willingness to sacrifice as an individual-level phenomenon. The model I suggest in Chapter 3 proposes that willingness to sacrifice is the outcome of a range of established relationship marketing success factors such as social satisfaction, social distance and identification. These relationships are facilitated by perceptions of two conditions in the community: norms of reciprocity and the perceived motives of community leaders. Question 1 thus investigates willingness to sacrifice as a
micro-level outcome, and explores two potential mechanisms through which it contributes towards the collective good.

Question 2 attempts to identify what types of things people are willing to sacrifice in brand community contexts. This particular question gets at individual perceptions of sacrifice. Here I investigate the nature of sacrificial acts that community members are willing to make on behalf of their community. For example, are most sacrifices framed in terms of time or money? Or are there symbolic and intangible sacrifices taking place as well, e.g., do people give up personal values, traditions and beliefs? When people perceive themselves as willing to make a sacrifice, what is it, exactly, that they are they willing to forgo?

Research Question 3 builds on the findings of the first two questions at the community level of analysis. It examines actual brand communities and tries to determine whether willingness to make sacrifices is implicated in positive brand community outcomes such as positive word-of-mouth, propensity to buy brand products and services, and community longevity.

1.5 Proposed Contribution

This research investigates the existence and role of willingness to sacrifice in marketing relationships. Greater insight into such activities will be fundamental to a more profound understanding of consumer behaviour, brand communities, and relationship marketing phenomena. In the following section, I elaborate on contributions to marketing theory and practice.

1.5.1 Contribution to Marketing Theory

This work improves our understanding of four important concepts in marketing contexts: willingness to sacrifice, brand community, relationships and exchange theory. First, it unpacks willingness to sacrifice, which remains a relatively unexplored variable in marketing contexts. It adds insights to a growing area of consumer behavior studies that explores non-rational forms of consumer activity, including sharing and gift giving. Belk (2010) suggests that such phenomena are often overlooked because they are not well explained by theories of exchange, long thought to be the core
paradigm of marketing. Marketing scholars currently tend to view the act of sacrifice in a negative light: it is the price one pays for the product, or the stick that must be endured in order to get the carrot (Zeithamel 1988; Teas and Agarwal 2000; Ravald and Gronroos 1996).

That may well be the case for many marketing transactions, but this perspective can’t fully explain some consumption phenomena such as volunteer tourism (see e.g. McGehee and Santos 2005) and boycotting (Klein, Smith and John 2004), in which willingness to sacrifice becomes an integral part of the experience. For example, Klein et al. suggest that if boycotts are to be successful, NGOs must minimize perceptions of the sacrifice involved in order to encourage participation, but this overlooks the transformational aspects of willingness to sacrifice, which may also comprise an important form of value to the consumer.

Second, the research augments the growing body of brand community literature (e.g. Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; Schouten and McAlexander 1995) by drawing from findings on community in other literatures. For example, it applies Kanter’s theory of community and commitment (1968; 1972) and Sahlin’s (1972) theories of reciprocity to shed light on the dynamic nature and motivations associated with patterns of social exchange in brand communities. Kanter concludes that successful communities inspire several forms of commitment, one of which is based on sacrifice. Ongoing willingness to make sacrifices is not a steady state behaviour, but a fluid, personal decision-making strategy that responds to norms and social interactions within the relationship. Determining what happens at the intersection of community relationships and willingness to sacrifice in a marketing setting will be a valuable contribution to the academic literature.

Third, studying willingness to sacrifice in a marketing context increases our understanding of relationship marketing theory. Relationship marketing comprises “all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges,” (Morgan and Hunt 1994: 22). It is an important topic for research in both strategy and consumer behavior domains (Sheth 2002; Sisodia, Wolfe and Sheth 2007; Gronroos 2002) Relationship marketing emerged because “the hitherto prominent exchange paradigm of marketing will be insufficient to explain the growing marketing
phenomena of collaborative involvement,” (Sheth and Parvatiyer 1995, 397). A great deal of study has been carried out on its key antecedents, moderators and mediators (see Palmatier, Dant, Grewal and Evans 2006 for a review). As I have noted earlier, these studies tend to overlook non-reciprocal exchange motivators such as willingness to share or make sacrifices, both of which are thought to be fundamental processes in the development and maintenance of human relationships (Sahlins 1972). By definition, sacrifice is an act performed for the collective good, and by investigating members’ intentions to sacrifice within brand community relationships we may learn more about the mechanisms that determine community success or failure.

Fourth, marketers have tended to view exchange as an activity in which the parties make reciprocal exchanges of relatively equal value (Belk 2008, 2010). Willingness to sacrifice, however, implies an intention to take part in an exchange that is neither balanced nor reciprocal, and which clearly contradicts the rational economic paradigm that informs so many marketing assumptions. This dissertation thus extends the work of scholars who have sought to integrate exchange and relationship theories of marketing, such as Bagozzi (1975), Houston and Gassenheimer (1987) and Brodie, Coviello, Brookes and Little (1997). For example, Bagozzi suggests that exchange alone cannot capture the complexity of many marketing activities, and that we should look instead at “exchange systems” (320) that consider social forces and relationship factors, such as time and norms of reciprocity. Similarly, Houston and Gassenheimer propose that exchange theory can be extended, and should be framed to accommodate consumer activities –such as self-production and boycotting– that transcend rational or economic approaches to market transactions. They argue that notions of marketing exchange cannot effectively be separated from the context of the relationship in which it takes place. Exchanges by definition are social interactions, and they take place along a relationship continuum anchored by negative relational value at one end (e.g. fraud or coercion) and positive relational value at the other (e.g. willingness to act on behalf of the collective good). As a result, marketing should not be viewed through the same lens as economics, as it does not always involve “the joint maximization of any exchange dyad's utility function.” (17). Houston and Gassenheimer suggest we should consider how value distribution
across the parties affects the relationship entity as a whole, so that exchange theory can also be applied to situations in which consumers are willing to engage in behaviours such as sharing and sacrifice.

This perspective may help us to apply marketing theory to activities that are not conventionally viewed in consumer behavior terms, such as sharing and willingness to sacrifice. Investigating such non-reciprocal consumer activities ultimately builds and extend our understanding of exchange theory specifically, and marketing in general (Houston and Gassenheimer 1987; Belk 2010).

### 1.5.2 Contribution to Management Practice

The consensus in the marketing literature is that a thriving brand community can generate significant economic and symbolic value for the brand or product at its centre. Yet there is little information that would help practitioners understand the fundamental mechanisms at work within brand communities. Clearly, some communities fail, as I have noted earlier in this chapter. One survey featuring Fortune 100 companies suggests that most firms with on-line communities are unable to build the critical mass necessary to sustain them, even after spending up to $1 million (Deloitte 2008). Fifty percent of the respondents in that study said that encouraging member engagement was the biggest obstacle to success, and the study concluded that firms must dedicate more human and financial resources to community maintenance. Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) concur from a research perspective, suggesting that the brand community literature lacks a “detailed understanding of the social and psychological variables that lead a firm's customers to [contribute towards brand community goals],” (46).

However, as Muniz says, “all brand communities are unique in the way they manifest, and how each one functions day-to-day differs,” (quoted in Cook 2003:2). This suggests that the generic prescriptions for building brand community in the business press (see e.g., Dysart 2010; Fournier and Lee 2009) may not entirely address the gap between theory and practice. Most of these articles assume that the *community* is the unit of management, yet communities themselves are complex networks of context-specific social relationships. It may be prudent to treat the *relationships* as the unit of analysis, and to explore the underlying motives, expectations and norms –such as willingness to sacrifice– that shape
them in a given community context. As Belk (2010) notes, marketers have overlooked non-reciprocal motivators of exchange such as willingness to share and sacrifice, even though they are important factors in relationship engagement and commitment. Understanding what community conditions facilitate and promote such intentions may help practitioners foster institutional frameworks in which healthy, engaged relationships around the brand can form and thrive.

Finally, the Marketing Science Institute observes, “In a dynamic marketplace, firms need to continually find ways to understand the decision-making processes of both consumers and individuals and groups within organizations.” The act of sacrifice manifests an individual’s decision to defer his own self-interest in favour of benefiting another in a relationship. Given the growing importance in marketing research of building both successful relationships and a sense of community, the role of willingness to sacrifice in establishing and maintaining such relationships bears further investigation.

1.6 Summary

Marketers have paid little attention to the concept of sacrifice, a non-reciprocal consumer activity. In looking at other non-reciprocal consumer activities such as sharing and gift-giving, Belk (2010) suggests that one reason marketers have paid little attention to these is that they do not align with conventional exchange theory, which idealizes the notion of self-interested transactions. Communal exchanges are therefore hard to place in marketing contexts. Belk notes that even “[G]ift giving can be as agonistic and as selfish as market transactions,” (716), citing several studies that find consumer gift-giving is not entirely free of self-interest and rational calculation (e.g. Fischer and Arnold 1990; Marcoux 2009; Sherry, McGrath, and Levy 1993).

The same may hold true of the concept of sacrifice. However, with a growing movement to define marketing more in terms of relationships –as opposed to exchange– phenomena such as sharing and sacrifice may have a greater role to play in our understanding of consumer behaviour. Literatures in anthropology, sociology and psychology have identified willingness to sacrifice as a key element in building successful relationships. It is reasonable to assume therefore that this construct will also play a
role in marketing relationships. This research investigates links and mechanisms between community membership and willingness to sacrifice on behalf of the community.

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the research topic, explained the rationale for studying it, and suggested how it contributes to the marketing literature. Chapter 2 is a review of relevant literature that defines sacrifice and provides a foundation upon which to build a conceptual argument. Chapter 3 is an orienting conceptual framework that integrates the various concepts and literatures from which this argument is drawn. Chapter 4 outlines and justifies the methods to be used, and describes the research context. It also provides a summary and discussion of the findings from the studies.

Chapter 5 concludes the document by outlining the contribution to marketing theory, discussing limitations of the method, and suggesting further research that might improve our understanding of these concepts and their relationships. It will also present implications for marketing practitioners.
Chapter 2

Literature Review: Willingness to Sacrifice

“Accepting sacrifice for a community forms identity.”
– Cochran 1989, 434.

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to further develop an understanding of willingness to sacrifice and its potential to generate positive brand community outcomes. In order to do so however, we must first step back and look at the act of sacrifice itself. Recall that most of the literature on sacrifice is based on the act, as opposed to the willingness to sacrifice. Willingness signals an individual’s openness to opportunities to enact the behavior (Pomery et al 2009) and is therefore intimately related to the act. Willingness has been shown to be a good predictor of non-rational behaviours (Gibbons et al, 1998a), of which sacrifice is an example. Moreover, since the Prototype/Willingness Model (PWM) places willingness immediately prior to the behaviour in conceptual frameworks, willingness to sacrifice is likely an important construct that is currently overlooked in many relationship studies.

In this Chapter, I review and integrate the sacrifice literature, and explain how it relates to my dependent variable, willingness to sacrifice. The review provides a foundation that will facilitate readers’ understanding of the hypotheses presented later in this document. It consists of five major sections. The first is an overview of some challenges associated with studying the act of sacrifice in a marketing context. In the second, I discuss the underlying assumptions associated with sacrifice based on three main schools of thought reflected in the literature. The third section explains the key distinctions between sacrificial behaviour and other variables with which it is often conflated, and offers a definition for use in studying marketing relationships. Fourth, I discuss some of the outcomes of acts of sacrifice in relationships, to highlight the importance of studying the mechanisms that precede them. I also discuss
antecedents to willingness to sacrifice, to introduce some of the variables I will examine in my model. Finally, the fifth section provides a brief description of brand community and explains why it provides a rich context for studying willingness to sacrifice. I conclude this chapter with a brief synthesis that sums up the major points and sets the stage for proposing the conceptual model in Chapter 3.

2.2 Challenges of Studying Willingness to Sacrifice In Non-Theological Contexts

Sacrifice, once a common theme in social sciences research, now appears rarely in contemporary non-theological literature (Mizruchi 1998; Whitton et al 2002). “There is not much place for [sacrifice] in an era dominated by rational choice theory, market models of human relationships and ‘having it all’ individualism,” (Bahr and Bahr 2001, 1232).

Where sacrifice was once profoundly implicated in shaping and maintaining social order (Hubert and Mauss 1988 [1964]), it has been supplanted by a cultural motif of self-interest and individualism (Etzioni 1993), particularly in western cultures. Changing socio-cultural paradigms are but one challenge of developing a cohesive interpretation of sacrifice. Others include the range of social contexts that drive individual perceptions of sacrifice; a lack of consensus in the social sciences as to its valence and dimensions; and its conflation with other concepts.

A second barrier to understanding sacrifice is the socially constructed nature of sacrificial acts, and the need to consider their context: an individual’s willingness to sacrifice is profoundly impacted by both personal belief systems and cultural norms, as is others’ perception of the act. For example, sacrificing for the greater good is a highly valued trait in collectivist societies such as the Japanese and Chinese (Kagitcibasi 1997), but is less so in more individualistic western cultures (Suzuki & Greenfield, 2002; Miller 1999). In settings where making a sacrifice is valued, it acts as a public demonstration of members’ affiliation with the collective. To this end, the judgment of others (i.e. evaluations of individuals’ sacrificial behaviour against social norms) can be an important motivating factor. It can also add an element of confusion around how acts of sacrifice are perceived and defined.
For example, an act that constitutes a customary rite of passage in one culture may be perceived as a great personal sacrifice in another. Traditional Korean marriages are arranged primarily to strengthen the two families involved, notwithstanding any personal preferences of the bride and groom (Hart 2001). For the marital couple immersed in collectivist values and filial obligation from birth, an arrangement that benefits the families may be considered merely the right thing to do. In such societies, the benefit to the collective—the extended family and society as a whole—transcends personal concerns. In more individualistic Western societies however, the same act would likely be viewed as a significant individual sacrifice (Jensen 2003). Western cultural norms are oriented towards maximizing individual utility; most would consider forgoing a love match in lieu of an arranged marriage to be a sacrifice of personal interest.

Further complicating the issue is that the same act of sacrifice within a given relationship may be viewed as such by one partner, but not by the other. For example, Rob might consider an evening with his wife Lynn watching the movie *The Titanic*—instead of *Transformers*—to be a considerable act of sacrifice, albeit one that will strengthen the relationship by communicating commitment and attentiveness. Lynn might not see it in those terms at all. Indeed, Lynn might easily give up *Titanic* for *Transformers* and not give it another thought, yet Rob—reflecting on his own experience—might consider Lynn’s act as a genuine sacrifice. If one person’s sacrifice is another’s reflexive action, this creates difficulties around capturing instances of sacrifice in relationships and determining their aggregate outcome. Ultimately then, personal and social perceptions of what constitutes a sacrificial act vary according to many factors.

A third challenge results from the lack of consensus over whether the outcome of sacrifice is positive or negative, and to whom any benefits accrue. Many researchers view sacrificial behaviour as an essential component of healthy relationships: incurring a loss that strengthens a relationship is associated with greater feelings of personal wellbeing, relationship satisfaction and commitment (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, & Agnew 1999; Bahr and Bahr 2001; Myers 1983). From an organizational perspective, Kanter’s (1972) findings suggest that intentional communities are more likely to thrive when they establish a requirement for member sacrifice; this is because sacrifice leads to greater continuance
commitment and identification, while also providing more resources for the community. Other researchers conclude that sacrifice is a negative behavior, particularly in the feminist literature, where it is linked to codependency, relationship dissatisfaction, and depression (Gill-Austern 1996; Jack and Dill 1992; Lerner 1988). This research tends to frame sacrifice in terms of “self-sacrifice”, abnegation and self-denial. But what is the difference, if any, between self-sacrifice and sacrifice? Recall that the Oxford definition of sacrifice is “The destruction or surrender of something valued or desired for the sake of something having…a more pressing claim.” It follows then that self-sacrifice entails the destruction of the self. In the context of a personal relationship, the destruction of one party may benefit the other party, but cannot benefit the relationship, because all parties must be satisfied in order for the relationship to be considered healthy. Millbank (1999) takes a similar position in his argument that self-sacrifice is unethical, i.e. it does not produce a positive outcome overall. I suggest that some of the confusion around the valence of sacrificial behaviour is based not only on the failure to distinguish between the sacrifice of one’s self and the sacrifice of things of value to the self, but also on the failure to consider the outcomes of the act: e.g. does the behaviour indeed benefit the collective? In much of the feminist work, sacrifice is viewed as a negative behavior because it is defined in terms that suggest the destruction or degradation of the person; these acts are more appropriately defined as self-sacrifice, distinct from sacrifice.

A fourth barrier impeding our understanding of sacrificial behaviour is that there is little consensus on its boundaries, conceptualization and structure. For example, Kanter (1972) and Gardner (1978) propose that sacrifice is one of two dimensions of continuance commitment. Others find evidence to argue that sacrifice is a consequence of commitment (Wieselquist et al, 1999; Rusbelt et al 1993; Van Lange, Agnew et al 1997). There are also wide-ranging differences in how researchers define and measure sacrifice. In marketing, sacrifice is often portrayed in purely rational, cost-based terms. Zeithamel et al. (1988) define sacrifice as the costs an individual incurs for a product or service, while Pine and Gilmour (1999) view it in terms of customer-perceived gaps in expectations between mass-produced and customized consumer goods. Sacrifice is also used interchangeably with other concepts, such as helping behaviours, which are distinguished by different motives and outcomes (Impett and
Gordon 2008). And unlike sacrifice, personal goals are not typically subordinated in the process of helping (Killen & Turiel, 1998). For example, imagine that Joe, the senior moderator of an on-line brand community, asks Lisa, a veteran member, to take over his duties while he is on vacation. Lisa is likely to feel that she is helping the community—not sacrificing for it— if she does not give up anything of significance to her, such as an activity she had planned during that time. However, if Lisa cancels her own vacation in order to help the community, she may be more likely to perceive her actions as sacrifice. In the latter case, Lisa’s outcome is different: she still helps the community, but at the cost of forgoing her vacation. This makes her action more of a sacrifice, as opposed to merely a helpful act.

The range of empirical studies on the various roles of sacrifice suggests that it is a particularly powerful construct in relationships.

2.3 Three Perspectives that Inform Willingness Sacrifice

Despite its origins as a form of religious expression, and notwithstanding the increasingly secular nature of society (Taylor 2007), willingness to sacrifice has the potential to be an important concept outside theological domains (see e.g. Mizruchi 1998; Firth 1963; Whitton, Stanley and Markman 2002; Lockwood 2007; Elshtain 1991). In this section I discuss three broad interpretations of sacrifice, in order to build a foundation for the definition I use in this study.

As I have already noted, there is little agreement as to how sacrifice is defined, and indeed, whether it is even a coherent concept (Overvold 1980; Millbank 1999). Evans-Pritchard (1956) acknowledges this problem when he suggests that no single formula for viewing sacrifice adequately explains all forms of this activity. Sacrifice was first studied in a religious context, but has also been explored from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives such as anthropology, sociology, psychology and economics. As a result, it is hard to define sacrifice such that its meaning is not restricted to a particular context, research paradigm and set of conditions.

This apparent lack of consensus around a definition adds an element of complexity to efforts that correlate sacrifice with marketing phenomena. It is critical, however, that we establish a meaningful
definition in order to determine how it relates to marketing concepts of interest (MacKenzie 2003). When we don’t have a coherent understanding of a particular construct, it is very difficult to effectively measure it or determine its location in a nomological net (Cook and Campbell 1979). This impedes our understanding of how the concept relates to other behavioural processes.

As I noted earlier, sacrifice has been interpreted variously across the literatures, and there are three widely accepted conceptualizations: sacrifice as gift; sacrifice as rational choice; and sacrifice as communion. In this section, I provide a brief review of each perspective, and relate it to the construct *willingness to sacrifice*. I then identify four principles of sacrifice that are common to all three perspectives in an attempt to find the dimensions that distinguish it from other, similar concepts.

The lens most often used by social science scholars is the sacrifice-as-gift perspective. Here, sacrifice is viewed as a collective concept involving material or symbolic offerings that embody some essence of the self, and for which there is an implied obligation of generalized reciprocity (Tylor 1871; Mauss 1924; Evans-Pritchard 1954; Van der Leeuw; Milbank 1999). Sacrifices maintain and preserve institutional structures and norms, in return for which the sacrificer benefits two ways: First, as an individual, he earns social status, an internal sense of wellbeing, and an enhanced self-concept or personal identity. Second, as a member of the community that requires the sacrifice, he contributes towards ongoing community stability, thus providing himself with a secure, supportive environment. The psychology literature uses a gift analogy to explain individual sacrifice in close relationships, such as marriage or family. Here, willingness to sacrifice is the intent to forego one’s immediate self-interest for the benefit of the relationship (e.g. Van Lange, Rusbult, Drigotas, Arriage, Witcher, & Cox 1997, 1374).

In the second perspective, sacrifice can be interpreted in terms of an economic trade-off, in which one party exchanges one form of value for another in order to satisfy a particular need. The underlying assumption here is usually one of balanced reciprocity. This is common in the marketing literature, where an act of sacrifice is often rather narrowly defined in terms of the costs an individual is willing to incur for a product or service (e.g. Ravald and Gronroos 1996; Monroe 1991; Bolton, Warlop and Alba 2003). Note that this conceptualization of sacrifice is the least common perspective, as most work defines
sacrifice in opposition to commodity exchange. Economist Raymond Firth (1963) takes a somewhat broader approach to defining sacrifice, examining it at both individual and group level analyses. He agrees that sacrifice is a voluntary, symbolic gift of the self, but also notes that it be viewed as “a lightening of the economic load on each participant” in the group (19). He argues that in practice, the nature of any given sacrifice is guided by economic pressures, such as environmental factors, social expectations and resource availability. For example, he describes how the Nuer people of Evans-Pritchard’s studies consider an ox to be the ideal sacrifice to God. However, when oxen are scarce, they will substitute a wild cucumber, even referring to it as an ox during the ritual. He concludes that the value of a sacrifice is a dynamic concept that reflects perceptions of current economic conditions and community wellbeing. From an economic perspective, individual willingness to sacrifice is based purely on rational decision-making skills and cost-benefit analyses.

The third perspective in the literature regards sacrifice as a form of communion that creates a bond between the secular and the sacred (Hubert & Mauss 1899[1964], Roberston-Smith 1907, Loisy 1923). In religious studies and tribal ethnographies that explore sacrifice, the force to which the sacrifice is made is considered too powerful for direct communication. The sacrificial act is the vector that conveys respect, atonement, propitiation or requests for future consideration. For example, in the Christian practice of Lent, individuals abstain from certain luxuries, give alms to the poor, and make other sacrifices that they believe bring them closer to God. The sacrificial act is the medium that expresses their commitment to higher principles. Willingness to sacrifice in this conceptualization is motivated by religious belief, social convention, and tradition, as opposed to the economic considerations of the community or its members. Moreover, sacrifice is a symbolic communication of group identification, belonging and collective concern that reinforces social norms and expectations. In more recent literature, we also see this approach in secular settings, such as communities and institutions (Gardner 1976; Douglas 1987). Here, the individual’s act of sacrifice is perceived as a bonding mechanism that addresses the perceived higher calling of social solidarity and global benefits.
There are four underlying principles that connect the three perspectives around sacrifice. These include social context, loss, mindfulness and exchange. Identifying and analyzing these common threads is an essential step in getting at the essence of a definition for willingness to sacrifice.

First, acts of sacrifice are performed in the context of institutional structures, social relationships and norms. Individuals make personal sacrifices, but sacrifice is ultimately a collective act made within a dyad or network of social relations. This applies whether the sacrificial act occurs between a husband and wife, a buyer and seller, or a deity and its followers. This principle—that acts of sacrifice are embedded in social relations, and made for the good of the collective—distinguishes sacrifice from asceticism, which is a form of personal self-denial with the goal of individual transformation (Nietzsche 1887; Mizruchi 1998). There is ample support in the scholarly literature for the argument that sacrifice is a social, yet profoundly personal act carried out within dyads or groups. For example, the psychology literature tends to study sacrificial acts in terms of their role in preserving healthy relationships (Van Lange, Rusbult, Drigotas, Arriage, Witcher, & Cox 1997; Bahr and Bahr 2001). In her analysis of sacrifice in English literature, Mizruchi defines it as “[acts that consider] group risks and benefits, and are addressed to higher powers on the group's behalf,” (1998:29). Loisy’s account of sacrifice is “renunciations which…human discipline imposes on whomever wants fully to play his human role in the family and city,” (1923: 292). Firth (1967) describes sacrifice as a symbol of group unity and an economic solution that is “performed in terms laid down by evaluations of society.” As is the case in physical communities (Kanter 1972; Gardner 1976) sacrificial acts in brand communities could be perceived as a means of communion between the member and the community entity, and a signal of commitment to the relationships that bind members together.

Second, engaging in a sacrificial act implies the loss of something meaningful with no expectation of reciprocal benefits to the individual. Any benefits that result from the sacrifice accrue to the social network within which the sacrifice is made, whether that relationship is between two people, within a religious group, or part of a community of Jeep drivers. Willingness to sacrifice therefore suggests that one accepts the inevitability of loss associated with subordinating personal needs or goals to the greater
good. According to Myers (1983), it is the sense of loss itself that binds people together, enhancing both organizational commitment and identification.

Third, sacrificial behaviour implies that individuals *voluntarily* give up something personally important in favour of a superordinate goal. For example, many scholars define sacrifice in terms of acts that “are morally good or morally praiseworthy, but not the agent's duty to perform” (Jacobs 1987: 97; Bahr and Bahr 2001; Berman 1998). The willingness to offer something of personal significance—a part of oneself, as it were—is inherent to the concept and value of sacrifice (Bahr and Bahr 2001). The mindful and voluntary nature of sacrifice, and the acceptance of personal loss, is a key element in the impact it has on self-concept and identity building. Indeed, in brand communities, where membership is voluntary by definition (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001), there is evidence that excessive normative pressure to interact and cooperate can have negative effects on community engagement (Algesheimer et al 2005). An object that is coerced or forcibly removed cannot be perceived as sacrifice by either the donor or the recipient (Bahr and Bahr). Such aggression would directly contradict commonly accepted views of sacrifice as a gift (e.g. Hubert and Mauss) and sacrifice as a rational economic choice (Firth). By definition then, if all sacrifice is considered voluntary, there must be a corresponding prior willingness to engage in the act.

Fourth, regardless of which perspective drives the research, sacrifice is usually framed in terms of exchange. To sacrifice is to offer something of value in the expectation of eventual reciprocity (Firth 1963), although the nature, degree and beneficiaries of such reciprocity vary. For example, the sacrifice-as-gift lens aligns with concepts of redistributive and communal exchange (Pandya and Dholakia 1992; Sherry 1983; Bagozzi 1975); sacrifice-as-communion evokes the relational exchanges noted in brand community studies (Cova and Cova 2001; Muniz and Schau 2005); and sacrifice-as-trade-off may be understood in terms of market exchanges (Bagozzi 1975). Discussions of sacrifice in the extant marketing literature tend to focus on this exchange formulation of sacrifice (see Belk 2010 for an exception). A willingness to sacrifice suggests that one voluntarily participates in a reciprocal exchange whose terms are set by the social norms that shape and motivate the act.

If social context, loss, mindfulness and exchange are defining characteristics of sacrifice, what does
this tell us about willingness to sacrifice, the intention that precedes the act? This analysis suggests that willingness to sacrifice manifests in social settings, as opposed to in isolation, and in conditions under which the individual has a genuine choice to sacrifice or not. Those contemplating sacrifice do not engage in the act reflexively, but are aware of the value of the personal loss to be incurred. Finally, individuals who are willing to make sacrifices for the group do so with the understanding that the exchange is reciprocal, but communal, in that the act is of primary benefit to the collective.

2.4 How is Sacrifice Different from Similar Concepts?

Marketing literature tends to conflate the concept of sacrifice with three other constructs: market exchange, sharing and gift-giving. While these concepts are similar to sacrifice, there are some key distinctions. In this section I synthesize the literature around types of relationship exchanges to distinguish sacrifice from other forms of relational exchange. This analysis sheds some light on some of the factors that drive willingness to sacrifice, differentiating it from willingness to engage in a market exchange, share something, or give a gift.

In the marketing literature, when sacrifice is mentioned at all, it is usually to express the activities around market exchanges (Monroe 1991; Zeithamel 1988; Teas and Agarwal 2000), although see Weiner (1993) for an exception. As Zeithamel notes, “From the consumer's perspective, price is what is given up or sacrificed to obtain a product… Defining price as a sacrifice is consistent with conceptualizations by other pricing researchers,” (10). As I have already noted, there is a paucity of references to “willingness to sacrifice” as a distinct marketing construct in the marketing literature. For brevity’s sake in this section, and given the validity of using “willingness” as a reasonable proxy for the act, I refer to the act of sacrifice and compare it to its behavioural counterparts: exchange, sharing, gift-giving.

Sacrifice is also used interchangeably with so-called non-exchange behaviours such as gift-giving (Belk 1996; Sherry 1983) and sharing (Belk 2010). Sacrifice actually varies from these activities on a number of dimensions, such as motivation, outcome, reciprocity and the social distance that separates the
actors. I have touched upon some of these aspects in previous sections, but I now elaborate further on the differences between these four constructs.

Clearly, there can be significant overlap among these activities – particularly between sharing, gift giving and sacrifice. Prior to making a sacrifice, individuals are unlikely to go through the mental process of parsing personal motives or gauging the likely outcome of the act. I suggest that what most distinguishes these four activities is whether there is a perceived sense of loss associated with the act. It ultimately may be one’s personal perception that determines whether one is making a sacrifice, or is merely sharing or giving a gift.

2.4.1 Sacrifice

In the symbolic interactionism school of marketing research, sacrifice is often conflated with sharing and gift-giving (see e.g. Belk 2010, Geisler 2006; Sherry, McGrath and Levy 1983). It is true that all three of these activities establish and build social connections that go beyond immediate self-interest. However, the essence of sacrifice is rooted in the notion that the act is carried out with no expectation of direct personal benefit, and at a meaningful personal loss to the sacrificer (Sque et al 2006; Firth 1963; Hubert and Mauss 1964). Individuals engage in sacrifice for the good of their relationship, whether it is a marriage, a congregation, or a network of fellow community members. For example, spending your last $10 to take your child’s friend to the movies with your family would constitute a gift to the child’s friend. Giving your child your last $10 so she can go to the movies without you is sharing. Giving your child’s friend your last $10 to go to the movies at the expense of your own child is a sacrifice that would benefit the relationship your family has with the friend’s family.

There may be a ceremonial or public aspect to sacrificial behaviours, such as during Lent (or in a more consumer-focused example, “Buy Nothing Day”). Sacrificial acts are usually guided by social norms and expectations, and generate not only feelings of personal wellbeing, but also communion or bonding between the parties. Of particular note is that during and after the act of sacrifice, the donor himself becomes transformed through the processes of transcendence and communion (Hubert and Mauss
1964). In other words, the sacrificer’s identity undergoes a shift along the continuum from a “me” to “we” orientation. This transformational aspect is one of the key distinguishing features of sacrifice.

Furthermore, in acts of sacrifice, the item being given up is completely relinquished, as opposed to re-allocated, as it is in sharing. Sacrifice is performed for the sake of collective goals, consecrates one’s individual commitment to the network of relationships within which he is immersed, and symbolizes the significance of social relations (Peters, 1984). Willingness to sacrifice therefore, is spurred by different motives, projected outcomes and rooted in the notion that the act is carried out with no expectation of direct personal benefit. Its most distinctive characteristics, however, are the acceptance of personal loss and the personal transformation that willingness to sacrifice entails. These clearly distinguish sacrifice from exchange, sharing and gift-giving, as I note in the following sections.

2.4.2 Market Exchange

In economics and marketing, the word sacrifice is often used to describe the process of value exchange between a buyer and seller. For example, Zeithamel et al. (1988) use it as a proxy for price: “[P]rice is what is given up or sacrificed to obtain a product,” (1988:10). As I have already mentioned, sacrifice in the marketing literature is generally defined in terms of the total costs incurred by a buyer when making a purchase, including price, acquisition costs, maintenance and installation fees, and risk of failure (Zeithamel et al; Ravald and Gronroos 1996; Monroe 1991; Bolton, Warlop and Alba 2003). For many reasons, however, sacrifice is not the same as cost. As van Lange, Rusbult et al. (1997) point out, sacrifice is a behavior (i.e., the act of forgoing self-interest), while cost is a psychological experience (i.e., the feeling that an event has negative implications). Furthermore, an act may be costly, but is not necessarily a sacrifice. Consider the husband who is asked by his wife if “these pants make me look fat.” Answering in the affirmative is probably costly, but unlikely to be construed as sacrifice. An act of sacrifice always evokes a sense of personal loss. If, on the other hand, the husband in this scenario had vowed always to be truthful at all costs, telling his wife a little white lie would necessitate sacrificing a value of central importance to his identity, albeit for the sake of her self-esteem. Willingness to sacrifice
involves accepting the subordination of one’s own self-interest specifically for the purposes of achieving a positive collective outcome, e.g. greater relationship wellbeing.

Sacrifice involves communal, or what Bagozzi (1975) might call “generalized” reciprocity. Unlike sacrifice, market exchanges are typically a form of self-interested exchange, or balanced reciprocity in which the parties enact trades of relatively equal value. There is no sense of loss, because the exchange is considered fair. Parties initiate exchanges to satisfy their needs or “increase the potency of [their] assortment,” (Alderson and Martin 1965, 121), and decisions are guided by cost-benefit analyses and comparing alternatives. Formal market exchanges are governed by legal authority, which replaces social proximity as a means of facilitating trust between the parties. A willingness to engage in a market transaction implies considerably different expectations of outcomes than does willingness to sacrifice. Intentions to buy reflect an inclination to engage in a transaction that will benefit the buyer by satisfying a need. Willingness to sacrifice suggests a disposition to forgo something of personal importance to satisfy someone else’s need. Thus for the purposes of this dissertation there is a clear distinction between willingness to sacrifice and market exchanges.

Beyond market exchanges though, the other similar constructs of gift-giving and sharing are less easy to tell apart from willingness to sacrifice. In particular, addressing the needs of others is the element of sacrifice that leads to the most confusion among those who conflate sacrifice with gift-giving and sharing. The following sections discuss this in more detail for both gift-giving and sharing.

2.4.3 Gift-Giving

Across the social sciences literature, giving gifts is sometimes described in terms of personal sacrifice (Hubert and Mauss 1964; Clarke 2005; Sherry et al 1993). For example, Belk (1996) and Clark suggest that sacrifice is a key dimension of gift-giving, and that the receiver’s evaluation of a gift depends in part on his perception of how much the giver sacrificed to offer it. In marketing, gift giving is usually defined as a self-interested or reciprocal exchange process embedded in a network of social relations (Sherry 1983; Giesler 2006). Gift-giving is thought to establish a social norm of obligation in which all
participants demonstrate their commitment to the relationship by giving, receiving and reciprocating. It implies an obligation on the receiver to acknowledge and return the gift at some point in the future (Mauss 1990).

As with sacrifice, the act of gift-giving often takes place with attendant rituals and ceremonies that can enhance the perceived value of the offering. Gift Exchange Theory, as described by Mauss (1924) suggests that gift-giving—like sacrifice—is a primary mechanism of social integration and relationship building. However, gift-giving is motivated not only by the need to establish and preserve social bonds, but also by the expectation that the gift is offered within a system of self-interested exchange. In other words, the giver has not really experienced a loss of value, but merely temporarily transferred it to someone else. This suggests another distinction between the two concepts: unlike gift-giving, which is a form of balanced reciprocity within a given relationship, sacrifice is generally considered to be a type of generalized reciprocity, in which one relinquishes ownership of the offering without the expectation of direct personal benefits in return.

2.4.4 Sharing

Sharing is similar to gift-giving, but has some nuances that distinguish the two behaviours. Price (1975) defines sharing as an allocation system in which goods are redistributed within a social group, without cost-benefit analyses or expectations of direct reciprocity. Sharing is an evolutionary behavior rooted in social roles and division of labour, and as such, it is the most fundamental form of human economic activity. Sahlins (1972) describes it in terms of “pooling”, a collective behaviour bounded by close social relations, such as those implied by kinship. Sharing “defines something as ours” (Belk 2007:127). Like gift-giving, sharing is a communal act that establishes and maintains social relations (Belk 2010; Benkler 2004). Motivated as much by emotional as rational concerns, sharing is often carried out unconsciously, without acknowledgement by either giver or receiver, as in the case of a mother who shares food with her children (Price 1975). Sharing is thus chiefly distinguished from gift-giving by the ceremony, acknowledgements and social ritual associated with the latter.
Literature on sharing tends to classify it as a communal—or generalized—reciprocal behaviour (Gouldner 1960; Hawkes 1991; Trivers 1971; Gurven 2006; Sherry, McGrath and Levy 1993). Belk (2010) is an exception, suggesting that such conceptualizations are grounded in economics and fail to consider the implications of emotions and caring on social behaviours. Communal reciprocity refers to situations in which an individual offers goods to another person or members of a group with no expectation of return other than the personal satisfaction and social cohesion that the action entails (Putnam 2000; Sahlins 1972). This dynamic can also be expressed as “what goes around comes around”, in that acts of altruism on behalf of a group strengthen it, and help secure the long term benefits that group membership provides. Sharing is more accurately described as a pooling or re-allocation of resources (Sahlins 1972; Price 1975) and is often carried out at the subconscious level (Price). It is thus distinct from sacrifice, which—in order to be meaningful—requires that the sacrificer surrender something she recognizes is of significant personal value.

Sacrifice thus transcends the conditions of gift-giving, sharing and market exchange. It represents a collective appeal to a higher authority, which may be interpreted in terms of religious beliefs (Robertson Smith 1907), the values of a real or imagined community (Stern 1995) or the needs of a relationship that binds people together (Bahr and Bahr 2001). The act of sacrifice asserts the value of such relationships, and motivates individuals’ commitment to a shared identity. In doing so, it strengthens and reinforces the individual’s identification and satisfaction with the relationship. Table 1 presents a summary of comparisons and contrasts among the four activities.

<p>| Table 1: Differences between sacrifice, sharing, gift-giving and exchange |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                             | Sacrifice       | Market Exchange | Sharing           | Gift Giving       |
| Definition                  | A transformational behaviour that evokes a sense of meaningful personal loss, and is performed for the benefit of the relationship in which the act is embedded. | A form of self-interested exchange in which parties enact trades of relatively equal value (Alderson and Martin 1965, 121) | An allocation system in which goods are redistributed within a social group, without cost-benefit analyses or expectations of direct reciprocity (Price, 1975) | A self-interested or reciprocal exchange process embedded in a network of social relations (Sherry 1983) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Lee forgoes buying a house in order to tithe to the Church.</th>
<th>Lee buys an iPod.</th>
<th>Lee buys a gift for a friend.</th>
<th>Lee shares salary with spouse, who stays home with kids.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motive for activity</td>
<td>Increase social bonds</td>
<td>To satisfy need</td>
<td>Increase social bonds</td>
<td>Increase social bonds and/or future reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition of item</td>
<td>Relinquish ownership</td>
<td>Transfer ownership</td>
<td>Distribute ownership</td>
<td>Transfer ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome of the act</td>
<td>Personal and relationship wellbeing, transformation</td>
<td>Personal wellbeing</td>
<td>Personal and relationship wellbeing</td>
<td>Relationship wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>Communal</td>
<td>Self-interested</td>
<td>Communal</td>
<td>Self-interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of personal loss</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceremonial aspect</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social distance</td>
<td>Low social distance</td>
<td>High social distance</td>
<td>Low social distance</td>
<td>Low social distance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of the analyses in Sections 2.2 to 2.4, I develop a definition of sacrifice that addresses each of the scholarly perspectives, distinguishes it from other concepts, and can also be applied to a wide range of marketing research:

Sacrifice is a transformational behaviour that evokes a sense of meaningful personal loss, and is performed for the benefit of the relationship in which the act is embedded.

As noted earlier, the variable of interest in this particular study is actually willingness to sacrifice, so this term also requires a definition. In the personal relationships literature, willingness to sacrifice tends to be conflated with the act. For example, willingness to sacrifice is commonly defined in terms of a behavior, such as “foregoing one’s own immediate self-interests to promote the well-being of the partner or relationship” (Van Lange, Agnew, Harinck, & Steemers 1997, 1331; Etchevery and Le 2005). In order to be conceptually precise, I use my own definition of sacrifice as the basis for a definition of willingness to sacrifice:
Willingness to sacrifice is a psychological affect that reflects the propensity to carry out a transformational behavior that will benefit the relationship within which it is enacted, despite the sense of meaningful personal loss incurred.

2.5 What are the marketing-related outcomes of willingness to sacrifice?

While willingness to make personal sacrifices is rarely discussed in marketing literature, there is considerable evidence in other disciplines that links sacrifice to positive relationship outcomes. For example, it is associated with a range of pro-social outcomes, such as satisfaction and relationship continuity. In this section, I discuss some research that establishes a link between sacrifice and outcomes that facilitate relationship wellbeing. I do so to present evidence to the effect that willingness to sacrifice is very likely a significant mediator of pro-relationship outcomes, albeit one that has been largely overlooked. I now discuss two of the most important outcomes of willingness to sacrifice: relationship satisfaction and longevity.

2.5.1 Relationship Satisfaction

Of the two outcomes discussed here, relationship satisfaction is perhaps a stronger indicator than duration, since longevity can also reflect inertia or lack of alternatives. Several studies of close personal relationships have established the link between willingness to sacrifice and satisfaction with the relationship (Kogan, Impett, Oveis, Hui, Gordon and Keltner 2010; Van Lange et al 1997; Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, & Agnew, 1999). Kogan et al suggest that individuals who make sacrifices within romantic relationships experience positive emotions, feelings of being appreciated, and greater relationship satisfaction. Impett et al (2005) find that when the focus of a particular sacrifice is to generate a positive outcome for the other partner, or to enhance the bonds of the relationship, sacrifice increases relationship satisfaction for both partners. Their findings begin to address feminist concerns that willingness to sacrifice can be harmful (e.g. Lerner 1988) by identifying specific conditions under which it does and does not benefit the relationship and its partners.
2.5.2 Longevity

Longevity, or relationship persistence, refers to the duration of a relationship. In studies of personal relationships, longevity is often associated with greater willingness to sacrifice (Impett et al 2005; Van Lange et al 1997; Etcheverry and Le 2005). In their longitudinal study of married couples, Stanley et al (2006) find that willingness to sacrifice is a significant predictor of marital success over time. Findings are similar in studies of more complex relationships, such as those in organizations and communities (Kanter 1972; Garder 1976).

There are two important processes underlying the association between sacrifice and longevity: transformation and expressiveness. They occur simultaneously, and each reinforces the other. First, the act of sacrifice is thought to be a transformative process. In relationship terms, when individuals make sacrifices for one another, they evolve an increasing pro-relationship orientation that encourages them to think more in terms of “we” than “me.” Such pro-social attitudes create a climate of mutual trust and cooperation that facilitate “patterns of ongoing reciprocal sacrifice,” (Van Lange et al 1997, 1376). These in turn reinforce identification with relationship parties. Second, sacrifice is also viewed as an act of self-expression that conveys personal identity and adherence to shared values. When one individual demonstrates a willingness to sacrifice for the relationship, he signals his commitment to his partner, confirming that he can be relied upon to subordinate self-interest for the sake of a better relationship (Wieselquist et al, 1999). This leads not only to an increased willingness to reciprocate from the other partner, but also to further interdependence and continuity (Holmes, 1989). Willingness to sacrifice may thus be a distinctive feature in brand community longevity.

2.6 What are the Antecedents of Willingness to Sacrifice?

Research in psychology and sociology has identified several antecedents to the act of sacrifice, including social satisfaction, psychological sense of community, identification and perceived community authenticity. Since willingness to sacrifice is one of the most proximal predictors of the act of sacrifice, it
is reasonable to assume that these antecedents also apply to willingness to sacrifice. I describe each in the following section.

### 2.6.1 Social Satisfaction

Social satisfaction can be defined as the extent to which social interactions with peers or partners are gratifying and fulfilling (Dwyer and Gassenheimer 1992; Geyskens and Steenkamp 2000). An individual who is satisfied with the social outcomes of a relationship tends to appreciate and personally like his relationship peers because he perceives mutual understanding, respect and concern (Geyskens, Steenkamp, and Kumar, 1999). Furthermore, members with higher levels of social satisfaction are more likely to work at strengthening the relationship –even in the face of problems. Both Goodwin (1996) and Van Lange et al (1997b) suggest there is a strong positive association between this form of satisfaction and willingness to sacrifice, but make no conclusions about causality. Note that I define social satisfaction in terms of peer relationships. This does not necessarily capture the valence of the relationship between the member and the community at large. In the next section, I describe how the psychological sense of community helps capture this dimension, and how it might play a role in facilitating members’ willingness to sacrifice.

### 2.6.2 Psychological Sense of Community

Sarasen (1974) defines psychological sense of community (PSC) as a “sense that one is… meaningfully a part of a larger collectivity… [in which there is] an acknowledged interdependence with others [and] a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them,” (1; 157). Research suggests there is a positive relationship between PSC and greater community engagement (Hunter, 1974), social bonding (Riger & Lavrakas, 1981), positive peer relations (Ahlbrandt & Cunningham, 1979) and increased contributions to the community (Davidson & Cotter, 1986). Greater PSC is also linked to an increased willingness to sacrifice, e.g. through personal and financial investments (McMillan and Chavis 1986); and volunteerism (Okun and Michel 2006; Haski-
Leventhal, Ben-Arieh, and Melton 2008). Psychological sense of community is distinct from social satisfaction in that the latter is a dimension of interpersonal relationship quality; PSC on the other hand is an affect held towards the community at large.

Scales measuring the Psychological Sense of Community construct vary in terms of dimensionality. Some instruments (e.g. Glynn 1981, Nasar and Julian 1995) conceptualize PSC in terms of a single factor. The McMillan and Chavis scale (1984) identifies four dimensions: Belonging; Fulfillment of Needs; Influence; and Shared Connections. Riger and Lavrakas (1981) find two factors: Social Bonding and Behavioral Rootedness. The items common to all four of these scales coalesce around the concept of social distance, the level of comfort and openness that members experience in their interactions (Bogardus 1941). I suggest that perceptions of social distance may also be implicated in members’ willingness to sacrifice on behalf of the community.

2.6.3 Social Distance

Social distance is defined in terms of the affective distance between group members. “Where there is little sympathetic understanding, social farness exists. Where sympathetic understanding is great, nearness exists” (Bogardus, 1941:106). Houston and Gassenheimer (1987) suggest that in marketing relationships, social distance is implicated in an actor’s willingness to sacrifice for the sake of that relationship. They propose that as social distance diminishes, so too do expectations of purely rational exchange. Thus, norms of reciprocity are strongly linked to perceptions of social distance within a relationship framework. Perceived social distance ranges along a continuum from low to high, and ultimately influences the motivation and nature of exchanges. For example, where social distance is low, the parties are more likely to know and identify with one another, and the more they know about their relationship partners, the more likely they are to care about their welfare (Schelling 1968). Low social distance tends to result in communal reciprocal exchanges, such as those in which the giver willingly offers a gift and the receiver willingly accepts it, but there is no expectation of an equivalent counter gift. For example, an individual who donates money to the local no-kill animal shelter does so with no
expectation of a commensurate gift from the shelter. Levels of moderate to high social distance between parties are typical of conventional market transactions, and imply conditions of self-interested norms of reciprocity in which both parties exchange something of equal value within a relatively short time frame. For example, a baseball fan readily exchanges part of his disposable income for season tickets at the local ball field.

2.6.4 Identification

Stanley (1998) suggests that willingness to sacrifice is more likely when relationships are characterized by a strong shared identity. Identification with a group is part of a symbiotic process governing its relationships with members: members who identify with the group are more likely to make sacrifices on its behalf, which in turn reinforces ongoing commitment to the group. This is supported by observations from Firth (1967) and van Baal (1976) who note that the motivation to give freely, with no expectation of reciprocity, is often linked to identity enhancement, personal status and prestige. As long as the community’s values are expressed in terms of a collective identity with which members wish to be associated, the community will continue to be a valid source of identity-building materials. Community identification influences members’ attitudes and behaviours, orienting them to the collective good rather than to individual self-interest (van Vugt 2001). Members who identify strongly with their communities are more likely to invest in the community, and be willing to sacrifice individual interests on behalf of the collective good (Meyer and Allen 1991; Bergami and Bagozzi 2000; Brewer 1979; Kramer and Brewer 1984). Expressing a willingness to sacrifice is one of the ways that individuals convey their identification, sense of belonging and collective concern, which in turn reinforces social norms and expectations of what membership entails. Since sacrifice is shaped by social norms, it is likely that such environmental cues play an important role in facilitating its willingness among community members. Recall that norms of reciprocity can be measured along a continuum between negative or egoistic exchange and positive or communal exchange, which I associate with willingness sacrifice. In the following section, I elaborate on how norms of reciprocity play a role in facilitating willingness to sacrifice.
2.6.5 Norms of Reciprocity

Willingness to sacrifice reflects a level of personal responsibility to the collective. It suggests that an individual accepts the likelihood of significant personal loss, has no expectation of direct benefit, and intends to make a sacrifice regardless. Here it is important to distinguish between reciprocity as a shared value—i.e. social norms—and reciprocity as a system of mutual exchange. The latter is a pattern of informal distribution or exchange that takes place outside the market economy. The norm of reciprocity, however “engenders motives for returning benefits even when power differences might invite exploitation… [It] safeguards powerful people against the temptations of their own status [and] inhibits the emergence of exploitative relations which (sic) would undermine the social system,” (Gouldner 1960, 174). In other words, norms of reciprocity are social expectations that group members will respond to each other in kind: those who behave honorably are rewarded with positive results, while those who behave poorly are castigated. Such norms regulate the cooperative behavior required for social stability, and control the damage that would otherwise be done by the unscrupulous (Sahlins 1972; Gouldner).

Gouldner (1960) proposes that activities such as sharing and sacrifice are driven by “generalized norms of reciprocity” within a group. Generalized—or what I have been calling communal—norms of reciprocity underlie relationships in which individuals assume obligations to group members not necessarily because they will receive direct benefits from them, but because of the history of aggregate interactions within the social network (Gouldner 170). Reciprocation is not a function of mutual interdependence, but of the shared moral belief in the value of ongoing social exchange and interaction. This runs contrary to classical economic theories of exchange, which hold that actors always seek maximum utility from their transactions. Indeed, empirical research on relationships where communal reciprocity norms exist indicates that individuals will make an effort to ensure that they do not over-benefit in exchange relationships (Uehara 1995). It seems likely that members will be more willing to sacrifice in communities with clear and well-established norms of communal reciprocity.
Few marketers have paid attention to communal forms of exchange and the conditions under which they are likely to occur (Belk 2010). The marketing domain, which emerged to study exchange and distribution phenomena (Shaw 1912; Bartels 1951), has generally adopted a classical economic perspective, which assumes that actors in a transaction are rational optimizers making self-interested exchanges. Indeed, marketing is considered to be “the discipline of exchange behaviour” (Bagozzi 1975, 39), and its transactions, regardless of whether they are direct or complex, are presumed to be both rational and self-interested (Levy and Zaltman 1975; Kotler 1984). Reciprocity is an important aspect of exchange theory, and by exploring its role in willingness to sacrifice we may also increase our understanding of marketing exchanges in general.

2.6.6 Perceived Authenticity of the Community

*Authenticity* is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “being what it professes in origin or authorship, as being genuine; genuineness.”

In the sacrifice literature, authenticity is associated with both the nature of the offering and the parties to the relationship within which the sacrifice takes place. First, the item being sacrificed must be perceived as authentic – i.e. represent a meaningful loss – in order to have the desired effect on the relationship (Daly 2003). This is exemplified in O. Henry’s short story, *The Gift of the Magi*. A young husband and his wife sacrifice their dearest possessions to buy Christmas gifts for each other: he sells his heirloom pocket watch to buy a set of jeweled combs for his wife’s beautiful hair, while she sells her hair to a wigmaker to buy her husband a chain for his watch. Yet on Christmas Day, they are thrilled with their gifts. Each loses a favorite possession, but gains more in the knowledge that they are deeply committed to one another and to the relationship itself. Ultimately, willingness to sacrifice is a deeply personal decision that represents an intention to give of the self or part of the self (c.f. Firth

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1963). The material goods that one is willing to offer must therefore be of genuine –authentic– value, or the self would be considered worthless.

Second, community members are more willing to sacrifice when they perceive the parties involved in the relationship have authentic motives for participating. There is some empirical evidence supporting this proposition in a marketing context: Mathwick, Wiertz, DeRuyter (2008) suggest that perceived authenticity of the community experience may underlie extra-role behaviours such as volunteerism in brand communities. Communities in which some participants express genuine commitment to shared goals while others pay only lip service have little chance of cultivating a culture that encourages willingness to sacrifice.

2.6.6.1 The role of leadership in perceived community authenticity

In the management literature, willingness to sacrifice on behalf of the organization is positively linked with perceptions of leadership authenticity (Avolio, Gardner, Wlaumbwa, Luthans and May 2004; Bass 1985). Authentic leaders are those whose thoughts, words and actions align with the organization’s shared vision, and whose motives are regarded as both ethical and transparent. Perceptions of leadership authenticity are linked to extra-role behaviours, such as an increased willingness to make personal sacrifices that realize organizational objectives (Sully de Luque, Washburn, Waldman and House 2008).

Etzioni (1996) suggests that leaders play a vital role in maintaining the authenticity of a community over time. He defines an authentic community in terms of its responsiveness, i.e. the ability of community leaders to respond genuinely to both individual and group needs without destroying the sense of community. In a brand community context, therefore, we might link perceived authenticity to how closely the community aligns with its stated goals, as manifested through the actions of community leaders and the socio-cultural norms they establish. Where the actions of the community leaders suggest they have different motives than those of the community-at-large, perceived authenticity is compromised.

For example, in 2006, WalMart was forced to dismantle its social networking site The Hub just ten weeks after launch, following widespread criticism for its “inauthenticity and lack of transparency” (Kay 2006). The site, whose tagline was “School My Way” was meant for teenagers, and was populated
by four supposedly real teens who posted comments like “I’ll school my way by looking hot in my WalMart clothes...to catch a cute boy's eye,” (Furbur, 2006). Both the media and blogosphere derided WalMart’s attempt to “fake” a community for obvious commercial motives. Wikipedia is experiencing an “unsustainable” downward trend in contributor numbers (Ortega 2009), which members attribute to growing frustration with the organization’s increasing bureaucracy and perceived hidden agenda to concentrate editorial power in the hands of the very well-qualified (Ahmed, 2009). The Wikipedia community initially attracted hundreds of thousands of members who identified with its values, which include access to information, the power of open-source collaboration and equality. While many acknowledge the need for quality control, they claim that Wikipedia has strayed too far from its original values to merit the tagline: “The free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.” In cases like these, where authenticity of the leaders of the communities is clearly in question, one would expect members’ willingness to sacrifice to be extremely low.

2.7 How Might Willingness to Sacrifice Fit into the Brand Community Literature?

Humans have evolved a profound need for community that transcends the collective benefits of physical proximity. A community –like sacrifice– addresses innate psychological needs for social bonding and relationships (Maslow 1943); builds identity (Cuba, 1987) and facilitates personal expression (Kempers 2002). Notwithstanding obstacles posed by modernity (Toennies 1957 [1887], the quest for community has ventured into new territories –such as consumption– as individuals find themselves increasingly alienated from its conventional forms (Nisbett 1953; Bell 1993). Our social nature is not entirely suppressed by a market-driven, individualistic culture, and we adapt to find community where we may. Brand communities reflect this adaptation.

A brand community is “a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand” (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001, p. 412). For example, members of Apple Macintosh internet forums are part of an Apple brand community that is globally dispersed. Their connection to each other manifests itself in terms of typical community
characteristics: distinctive feelings of in-group belonging augmented by feelings of out-group opposition; pro-community behaviours, such as helping other Mac users and recruiting new devotees; and ritual practices, such as extolling founder Steve Jobs on user forum sites (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001; Belk and Tumbat 2007). While members of some brand communities may gather together at intervals to reinforce bonds and enrich their experience (e.g. the Jeep owner rallies studied by McAlexander et al, 2005), brand communities are primarily what Anderson (1983) calls “imagined communities.” It is the patterns of social relations within the group that enhances the experience and enjoyment of the brand (McAlexander et al 2002; Muniz and Schau 2005). Facilitating positive relationships is essential for the continued success of brand communities.

Studies throughout the social sciences link willingness to sacrifice to positive outcomes in personal, social and community relationships. Brand communities encompass many different types of relationships, all of which are founded on shared involvement with a particular brand, product or service. This makes brand communities an excellent setting for investigating the role of willingness to sacrifice in a marketing context.

Several researchers have proposed that companies can play a role in developing and maintaining brand communities by creating opportunities that promote customer-to-customer relationships (Algesheimer et al 2005; McAlexander et al 2005). They do not, however, shed light on the mechanisms that make these particular relationships –as opposed to those between consumer and brand, for example– critical to brand community success. Willingness to sacrifice may well be one of these mechanisms.

2.7.1 Defining and Facilitating Willingness to Sacrifice in Brand communities

If members’ willingness to sacrifice for the community does indeed facilitate brand community success, then it would be helpful for us to understand what types of activities and behaviours members believe constitute sacrifice in these settings. The marketing literature tends to associate sacrifice with money, but it may also be that brand community members make significant contributions that are more
accurately framed as sacrifices of time, personal beliefs or identity materials. Furthermore, it would be useful to determine whether certain perceptions of brand community relationships are linked to greater propensity to sacrifice. My second and third research questions attempt to address these issues.

2.8 Synthesis

In this chapter, I’ve reviewed much of the literature on sacrifice as an act. Sacrifice in behavioural terms is discussed much more frequently than willingness to sacrifice, the dependent variable in this study. That being said, I have invoked the Prototype/Willingness Model to establish the direct link between willingness to sacrifice and the act of sacrifice. I have discussed the implications of findings in the sacrifice literature for my variable of interest: willingness to sacrifice. I also provided a brief introduction to the brand community phenomenon, and argued that its complex web of relationships makes it both appropriate and likely as a rich context for studying willingness to sacrifice.

The literature review suggests that sacrifice and its motives are complex phenomena, and ones that are not easily defined. Studies of social relations in anthropology, religion, community studies and psychology have determined that willingness to sacrifice plays a substantial role in reinforcing and strengthening social bonds. It is curious that given the focus on relationship-building in marketing, marketers themselves have spent little time investigating willingness to sacrifice as a potential variable of interest. When sacrifice does appear in marketing research, it is often conflated with other concepts such as gift-giving, sharing and market exchange. In my attempt to distill many definitions of sacrifice into a generalizable form that distinguishes it from other social interactions, I identify several key dimensions, including a sense of meaningful loss; the motivation to benefit a higher purpose; the voluntary and transformational nature of the act; and the social context. That being said, the perception of personal loss and the identity transformation associated with giving up something for a greater good are key distinctions in determining whether or not an action is sacrificial.

Mutual willingness to sacrifice is associated with a range of favourable outcomes, including relationship satisfaction and longevity. In the social sciences, these variables are important indicators of
community and/or relationship health. In a thriving community, members signal their commitment in a number of ways, one of which is sacrifice; indeed, communities may fail when members are no longer willing to sacrifice for the greater good (Kanter 1972). It is therefore reasonable to hypothesize that willingness to sacrifice may also underlie the relative health of brand communities, which are networks of relationships in a consumption context.

As discussed above, empirical research across a wide range of the humanities literature suggests that there are several antecedents of sacrifice, including identification, social satisfaction and psychological sense of community. I have proposed that social distance is also a likely antecedent, and that norms of reciprocity play an important role in establishing social expectations for sacrifice. My review demonstrates how these variables are also linked to success in a variety of personal and organizational relationships.

Marketing is characterized as the study of exchange relationships, yet the lack of research on willingness to sacrifice in marketing settings suggests a gap in our understanding of both exchange and relationship marketing theories. Further investigating the role of willingness to sacrifice may provide us with new insights into consumer behavior, brand communities and relationship marketing in general.
Chapter 3

Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to build a rationale for the model that I test in this study. The model demonstrates some of the mechanisms that facilitate willingness to sacrifice in community relationships.

In this chapter, I build on the literature review to develop conceptual support for several hypotheses. I define the terms used to develop a theoretical model (Figure 3.1) that may help illuminate and predict some of the relationships between various antecedents and willingness to sacrifice. Demonstrating that willingness to sacrifice has a significant role in relationship marketing models reflects the main contribution of this thesis. For example, it might help reduce some of the unexplained variance in established relationship marketing models such as those on commitment and trust (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and consumer-corporate identification (Bhattacharya and Sen 2003).

This research improves our understanding of how to facilitate positive brand community outcomes by integrating the concept of willingness to sacrifice with other relationship marketing constructs. It also provides information about some of the conditions under which community members are more willing to sacrifice for the community. I begin with an overview of relationship marketing, and explain how this model could inform our understanding of the various mechanisms at play in brand community relationships.

3.2 A Relationship Marketing Framework

Relationship marketing is a meta-theory that bridges several streams of marketing thought. Many believe that it has unseated exchange theory as the dominant paradigm in marketing research (Gronroos 1994; Gummesson 2008). It emerged from studies in service marketing, and originally focused on channel relationships, especially in the business-to-business context. Since then, the growing literature on brand community phenomena has broadened our understanding of relationship marketing and its processes.
(Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002). For example, research suggests that social interactions and exchanges in brand communities reflect an elaborate network of relationships, including those between the focal consumer and the brand, the marketer, the product and other consumers (Figure 1a). I suggest there is a fifth relationship that helps explain why brand community members may continue their membership in the group: individual members form a relationship with the community entity itself (Figure 1b), and I elaborate on this in the following section.

As I noted in my literature review, the *mutual* willingness to sacrifice solidifies and reinforces relationships in both personal and community contexts. We should therefore expect to see that Willingness to Sacrifice is an ongoing affect in thriving brand community relationships, and that it is associated with the likelihood of continuing community membership – and ultimately, community success. That being said, within a brand community context, it is unlikely that the consumer will perceive that mutual sacrifice is taking place between himself and the corporate brand, the marketer and the company itself. Deep corporate discounts and special offers to community members are unlikely to be recognized as meaningful forms of sacrifice. Instead, these are likely to be perceived as mere commercial
inducements. As Duska (2000) argues, meaningful social bonds “demand self-sacrifice with no expectation of reward...[yet] business functions on the basis of enlightened self interest... Attempts to create one big happy family ought to be looked on with suspicion,” (81). In a marketing setting, therefore, it is difficult to conceive of commercial entities making genuine sacrifices for the sake of the relationship. Yet sacrifice must be mutual, and in some indirect fashion, reciprocal, if the relationship is to thrive.

To whose benefit then will brand community members be willing to sacrifice something meaningful? I suggest that there is another organizational relationship that may have been overlooked in the brand community literature, and that is the notion of the community itself as an aggregate entity of members. In this sense, the brand community is a collective made up of both corporate and consumer members. Building on McAlexander et al.’s (2002, 39) Customer Centric Model of Brand Community, I propose that there is a relationship representing the interactions between the individual and the community-at-large, i.e. a relationship that is distinct from one with the brand, marketer or corporation. In other words, individual members visualize their community as an entity comprised of the aggregate personal identities and values of other members, and view this entity as separate from the brand.

This may help explain the popularity of Off Topic forum headings in many on-line communities, where members gather to discuss things that are unrelated to the brand; members may even arrange events or get-togethers that allow them to build relationships outside the context of the brand. For example, a member of the Equestria Daily (Bronies) community reported “I donated over a hundred dollars to a charity the community was interested in.” Another member noted “In order to prevent tension within the ‘real life’ branch of the community in which I participate, I forced myself to remain friends with an individual that betrayed my trust and broke my heart, even though I did not want to,” (Matear, 2012).

These examples illustrate members’ willingness to sacrifice not for the brand, the company, the marketer, or for particular members in the community, but for the community as a self-contained entity unto itself. The latter comment also demonstrates how a consumer’s relationship with the community-at-large may differ in valence from the relationship he or she has with a particular member or group of members.
Viewed through this lens, Willingness to Sacrifice is expressed in the context of two mutually-reinforcing relationships in brand communities: Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) interactions; and consumer-to-community-at-large (C2CaL) interactions.

Visit the website of any established brand community, and you’ll find online exchanges replete with examples of C2C sacrifice. One of the most common manifestations of this occurs when members respond to requests for help from individuals in the community. When asked if he had ever made sacrifices in his role as an Apple NewtonTalk community member, one survey respondent wrote, “I personally purchased old PCMCIA cards, loaded software onto them and distributed them for free to members who asked for them.” Another stated, “I once spent two hours or so researching and writing a post on the security of wireless networks when I should have been doing something else,” (Matear 2012). In such cases, the member who responds to requests for assistance sacrifices time, often incurring financial or opportunity costs in the process, to help another specific member. These sacrifices may also extend to issues outside the brand. For example, a survey respondent in the Equestria Daily (Bronies) community commented “I needed to get some homework done, but a very close friend of mine, whom I met through the community, was having very rough times. So I sacrificed my time and doing of my homework just so I could make sure that they were feeling their normal amazing self, this truly matters to me,” (Matear 2012).

The second channel for sacrifice –C2CaL– occurs in relationships between individual members and the aggregate membership, or community-at-large. Forming social bonds with a community-at-large is known as depersonalized belonging (Mael and Ashforth 2001; Brewer 1981). This is a type of fellowship arising from shared social identity and is entirely distinct from a member’s interpersonal relationships in the group. The C2CaL relationship is evident in shared traits such as consciousness of kind (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001), which is in turn reflected by constructs such as identification (Algesheimer et al 2005; Cova 1997) and psychological sense of community (Friedman, Abeele and De
Vos 1993). Moreover, community members often anthropomorphize the community, imbuing it with a human element that can be perceived as genuine and authentic.

For example, EffortlessAnthropologie-blogspot.com is a community of several thousand members devoted to the clothing and lifestyle store Anthropologie. On its Trade Market forum, it’s common to see posts such as this: “I just saw the last pair of Bowtied Beauty Boots (sz 38) at the Santa Monica store. If anyone wants them let me know and I’ll pick them up and ship to you,” (Matear 2012). Here, a member is offering to go to the physical store, pay for the boots, package them and ship them to any interested member of the community. The poster is willing to make a considerable sacrifice for the community at large, by risking her money and spending the time needed to carry out her offer. She does this in order to express her affiliation and commitment to the community. Similarly, when a brand community member arranges a contest, posts a link to a limited special offer, researches an issue of interest to the group at large, or coordinates a get-together, it benefits the community—at-large. Such activities are motivated by depersonalized belonging, a sense of community that generates a range of so-called extra-role behaviours. These behaviours include volunteering for extra tasks and participating in activities that benefit the organization (O’Reilly and Chatman 1986), both of which are cited by brand community members as forms of sacrifice.

Feelings of depersonalized belonging among community members may overcome difficulties associated with interpersonal conflicts. Recall the example of Joe and Lisa that I used to distinguish between helping and sacrifice. If Lisa disliked Joe, she might be unwilling to assume moderator duties if she believed this act would benefit only Joe. However, Lisa’s relationship and implied obligations to the community itself might transcend her personal dislike and motivate her to sacrifice for the greater good. In such instances, the community continues to benefit from Lisa’s willingness to sacrifice even though her relationships with other members may not all be ideal.

I suggest that Willingness to Sacrifice is an affect experienced in the context of some, but not all forms of brand community relationships. The particular relationships of interest in this study are those formed between members and other members, and between members and the aggregate body of members,
or community-at-large. These bonds may transcend the relationship formed with the brand, the company and the marketer because they are founded on the sense of identification that comes from group membership, and reinforced by social expectations that encourage extra-role behaviours. This dissertation investigates the mechanisms through which brand community members in these relationships become willing to sacrifice. By doing so, we may move closer to understanding why some marketing relationships—including those in brand communities—thrive, while others fail.

3.3 Theoretical Context and Description of the Model

The model in Figure 2 illustrates the six hypotheses I propose to study. It places Willingness to Sacrifice in a nomological network that integrates aspects of both relationship marketing and exchange theories. The model also draws attention to the multi-dimensional nature of sacrifice, i.e. that it is a complex activity that occurs in both individual and group relationships. By doing so, I hope to expand the sacrifice-as-price perspective taken in much of the marketing literature, and bring Willingness to Sacrifice more conclusively into the relationship marketing domain. Before launching into the rationale for the hypotheses, I provide a brief description of the model and its key constructs. This will provide a framework that supports and helps to organize the arguments.

3.3.1 An Overview of the Model

A willingness to sacrifice for one’s community doesn’t spontaneously arise as a simple function of membership. In the literature review, I described several antecedents of willingness to sacrifice, including social satisfaction, social distance, identification and perceived leadership motives. I also explained how norms of reciprocity set the tone for social patterns of exchange within a given relationship. I now suggest a model that demonstrates how these constructs may interact, and identify conditions under which the impact on relationships might be expected to change.
As shown in Figure 2, I propose that satisfaction with peers, low social distance and identification with the community are prerequisites of willingness to sacrifice. Under certain conditions – specifically, the norms of reciprocity that govern social interactions–satisfaction with peers and low social distance may not have the expected impact on willingness to sacrifice. For example, an individual may perceive very low social distance between himself and other members of the community, but if the norms of reciprocity in the community are tit-for-tat, he may be less willing to sacrifice, as this may confer an unwelcome feeling of obligation on his fellow community members.

Members who make the effort to join a community are usually motivated by a sense of identification – feelings of one-ness manifested in shared values, beliefs and goals– with the group. The social bonds that develop through identification can influence how individuals approach relational exchange and community interactions. Staunch identification can lead to a range of pro-social community behaviours, but on its own may not necessarily result in a willingness to sacrifice. Factors such as perception of community leadership may also impact willingness to sacrifice. For example, in 2010, donations to the Toronto Humane Society fell by 45% after several years of scandal and mismanagement by its executive team (Hammer 2010). Said one long-time supporter on a news forum, “I am looking forward to a clean sweep at the society, and when that happens, I will gladly volunteer and support them.
with financial donations again,” (CBC News, 2009). In this case, the writer’s organizational identification has likely been moderated by other factors, one of which may have been the perceived motives of the Society’s leaders: they had strayed too far from the values of the membership at large. In the case of brand communities, I argue that when leadership motives don’t align with those of the community, there is a negative impact on willingness to sacrifice. In particular, I propose that if members perceive their leaders as having overtly commercial as opposed to social motives, the members will become less willing to sacrifice for the community.

3.3.2 The Hypotheses

In this section, I begin by placing Willingness to Sacrifice in brand communities within a framework of relationship marketing. This introduces the theoretical foundation used to develop my model. I then describe how my integration of the literature resulted in the development of this particular model. Throughout this process, I discuss the six hypotheses I plan to test:

H1: Higher levels of Satisfaction with Peer Relationships lead to increasing Willingness to Sacrifice.

H2: The relationship between Satisfaction with Peer Relationships and Willingness to Sacrifice is moderated by Perceived Norms of Reciprocity.

H3: As Perceptions of Social Distance move from high to low, and Perceived Norms of Reciprocity move from self-oriented to communal, Willingness to Sacrifice increases.

H4: Perceived Norms of Reciprocity mediate the relationship between Social Distance and Willingness to Sacrifice.

H5: Greater levels of Identification lead to greater Willingness to Sacrifice.

H6: The relationship between Identification and Willingness to Sacrifice is moderated by Perceived Motives of Leadership.

3.4 Satisfaction with Peer Relationships as a Predictor of Willingness to Sacrifice

Geyskins and Steenkamp (2000) identify two dimensions of satisfaction in marketing relationships: economic and social. In brand communities, economic satisfaction refers to a member’s satisfaction with the focal product or brand. Social satisfaction, on the other hand, relates to the
psychosocial aspects of the relationship, and can be measured in terms of gratification with social interactions among peers or partners. The literature suggests that satisfaction with peers is an important factor in the success of marketing relationships. For example, it is theoretically considered a prerequisite for the expansion and commitment phases of business channel relationships (Dwyer, Shurr and Oh 1987). There are also some empirical studies that demonstrate satisfaction with peer relationships (SPR) has a role in facilitating positive brand community outcomes, such as duration of membership (Anderson 2005; De Valck, Langerak, Verhoef and Verlegh 2007).

While brand community researchers have yet to explore the SPR-Willingness to Sacrifice (WTS) link explicitly, sociological studies of close personal relationships find that mutual partners’ satisfaction is positively associated with WTS (Van Lange et al, 1997). Research on network marketing organizations, such as Mary Kay and Amway, also suggests that individuals are more likely to devote greater resources to jobs where they experience higher levels of satisfaction with their peers (Bhattacharya and Mehta 2000).

This leads to my first hypothesis:

**H1: Higher levels of Satisfaction with Peers are associated with an increasing Willingness to Sacrifice.**

Satisfaction with the other parties in a relationship doesn’t automatically predicate willingness to sacrifice, however. The theory of reciprocity (Falk & Fischbacher 2006) suggests that there are certain conditions under which it may do so. For example, consider a scenario involving several neighbours in a residential suburb: Steve, Anne and Luke. Each lives in his or her own house and is vaguely acquainted with the others. On occasion, Steve has borrowed sugar or eggs from Anne, and is careful to return the items within a week. Anne waters Luke’s garden when he’s out of town, and Luke collects her mail for her when she’s on vacation. Every spring Luke borrows Steve’s rototiller, and in return pays a local mechanic to tune it up for the season. All parties are satisfied with the relationships they have with their neighbours, but none is particularly interested in making a sacrifices that might benefit the neighbourhood as a whole. If the relations between these three neighbours are representative of the area, it would appear
that the neighbourhood’s expectations of social relations are not communally-oriented. The moderating factor that impacts the relationship between SPR and WTS is the norm of reciprocity that frames the relationship. In this neighbourhood, the norm of reciprocity is tit-for-tat, or self-interested: you do something for me and I’ll do something for you. Despite the fact that neighbours are satisfied with their relationships with each other, such patterns of self-interested reciprocal exchange are not likely to promote willingness to sacrifice.

3.5 The Role of Perceived Norms of Reciprocity in Willingness to Sacrifice

“Reciprocity is the dynamic through which the mutual dependence of individuals is realized”

– (Gouldner 1960).

According to Ferrell and Perrachione (1980) and O’Shaughnessy (1992), theories of marketing exchange are limited by continuing assumptions of ultimate self-interest; they fail to consider aspects of reciprocity that might explain the logic of redistributive activities in close relationships. Reciprocity, and the social norms that guide it, is necessary for long-term stability in relationships and groups (Gouldner 1960; Sahlins 1972). I suggest that reciprocity, rather than exchange, may be an especially instructive lens for understanding some of the behaviours in complex marketing relationships. Reciprocity expands the notion of exchange and helps to explain some marketing behaviours that might otherwise appear decidedly irrational. In keeping with the marketing foundations of this study, in this section I define reciprocity in terms of a group’s informal and formal economic systems, and explain how it is used to describe both the processes and norms that govern exchange behaviour. Next I discuss the three forms of reciprocity, and in so doing identify types of individual transactions that occur within brand communities, but that are not well explained by current exchange theory.

3.5.1 Definition and Types of Reciprocity
Reciprocity is defined as a pattern of social exchange in which individuals respond in kind to transactions from which they acquire direct or indirect benefits (Gouldner 1960; Falk and Fishbacher 2006). Sahlins’ seminal work (1972) on reciprocity in pre-industrial communities identifies three forms of reciprocal behaviour: negative, balanced and generalized. He suggests that these are manifested in a set of shared moral norms that promote reciprocal continuity, and further that they are distinguished in terms of motive, the immediacy of exchange and the relational distance between parties. A community’s norms of reciprocity serve as a feedback mechanism that reflects and reinforces members’ expectations of how relational exchanges should be carried out.

The first mode in Sahlins’ typology (1972) is generalized reciprocity, which I refer to as communal reciprocity. Communal reciprocity involves reallocating personal resources—either material or symbolic—to others, without expecting benefits from those others in return. Examples include the sharing and sacrifice that takes place in kinship units and other close relationships (Sahlins). Parties in these transactions are more interested in long term relationships with the community at large than in short term gains (Plattner 1989), and may never receive anything back from those with whom they have shared. Communal exchanges are still considered reciprocal at some level, because in the process of sharing, giving or sacrificing, the actor benefits from internally-generated feelings of satisfaction, wellbeing and social closeness. Moreover, by contributing towards the strength of the collective, the actor benefits externally from the ongoing security imparted by a stable relationship. Sahlins (1972) suggests that communal reciprocity is likely to occur under conditions of low social distance, where norms of altruism are prevalent in the relationship. In a brand community, communal reciprocity might take the form of sacrificing a personal need in order to promote or defend the community’s mission. For example, members of the Harrisburg Humane Society community donate time and money towards the care of abandoned pets, but don’t expect the pets or the Humane Society to return the good deed (Humane Society of Harrisburg 2010). Similarly, the EffortlessAnthropologie member’s offer to buy and ship a

pair of boots for any interested member demonstrates a willingness to sacrifice time and risk her money as a means of demonstrating her commitment to the community at large. Such activities may be encouraged by perceptions of low social distance within the community.

The second type in Sahlins’ framework is balanced reciprocity. From this point on, I refer to it as self-interested reciprocity. Self-interested reciprocity is exemplified by the typical commercial transaction, in which one party exchanges something of relatively equal value with another party. These activities are distinguished by the immediacy of the exchange, expectations of fairness and balanced exchange, and moderate social distance. Parties to such transactions may or may not repeat the process with one another, but there is no formal expectation of a continuing relationship. Both parties to the transaction experience fair outcomes, and may or may not choose to repeat the process at another time.

Self-interested reciprocity is governed by institutional norms such as the legal system, and social norms such as trust. Exchanges of this nature also occur in brand communities. For example, the marketer may ask community members to fill out a survey in exchange for a discount coupon. Similarly, one member may offer to sell something to another at fair market value.

Sahlins’ third type of reciprocity is negative, and is defined as “an attempt to get something for nothing with impunity” (1972:195). It includes a wide range of behaviours such as gambling, bargaining, theft and free riding, and is usually characterized by impersonal social relations and a highly self-interested approach to the transaction. One of my assumptions regarding brand community is that it is comprised of individuals who strongly identify with and share their enjoyment of a given brand. Therefore, I assume communal or self-interested social relations predominate, and leave the potential impact of negative reciprocity to future research.

3.5.2 The Impact of Norms of Reciprocity

Communities, as I have noted earlier, are networks of social relations formed around a shared interest. The foundation for establishing and determining the types of social interaction that take place within these relationships is reciprocity (Goulder 1960). When a community’s Norms of Reciprocity are
When members who engage with a community perceive that its norms are communal, they should be inclined to align their own exchange relations with these norms. In a study of close personal relationships, for example, Wieselquist et al. (1999) find that Partner A’s perception of Partner B’s pro-relationship acts (e.g. willingness to sacrifice) is positively related to A’s tendency to engage in pro-relationship acts. In other words, where one party to the relationship observes willingness to sacrifice among others, he or she is likely to be more willing to engage in sacrifice too. The group’s expectation of what is appropriate in terms of social interaction influences individual member behavior. In Wieselquist et al.’s circular model, willingness to sacrifice and the norms of the relationship are treated as one construct, “pro-relationship behavior”. This behavior appears as both an outcome and a precursor of commitment (i.e. satisfaction). Indeed, they state that a limitation of their research is that they cannot make any claims of causality, and suggest additional experimental research to shed further light on the relationship. In my model, I hypothesize that perceived Norms of Reciprocity and Willingness to Sacrifice are actually two separate constructs.

As I discussed earlier, Satisfaction with Peers alone is likely insufficient to motivate willingness to sacrifice. Consider a relationship that is based on short-term, rational market exchanges, such as the occasional trip to a convenience store. The norms of the interaction you have with the convenience store
are generally self-interested, based on a quick, tit-for-tat exchange: money for product, and off you go. Under these circumstances, sacrificial behavior on the part of the convenience store might actually disturb the equilibrium of the relationship, introducing a degree of discomfort to the relationship. It is thus reasonable to assume that a community member who is highly satisfied with fellow peer relationships should be more willing to make sacrifices when Norms of Reciprocity are perceived as communal, and less likely to do so when the Norms of Reciprocity are self-interested. This suggests a moderation role for Norms of Reciprocity.

**H2: The relationship between Satisfaction with Peer Relationships and Willingness to Sacrifice is moderated by perceptions of Norms of Reciprocity.**

### 3.6 Perceived Social Distance

Social distance is defined in terms of the affective distance between group members. “Where there is little sympathetic understanding, social farness exists. Where sympathetic understanding is great, nearness exists” (Bogardus, 1941:106).

Perceived social distance ranges along a continuum from low to high, and ultimately influences the motivation and nature of exchanges. For example, where social distance is low, the parties are more likely to know one another. The more that members know about their relationship partners, the more likely they are to care about their welfare (Schelling 1968). Low social distance tends to be associated with patterns of communal reciprocity, such as those in which the giver willingly offers a gift and the receiver willingly accepts it, but there is no expectation of an equivalent counter gift.

Levels of high social distance between parties are typical of conventional market transactions, and imply conditions of self-interested reciprocity in which both parties exchange something of relatively equal value within a relatively short time frame. We engage in such transactions every time we buy a token for the subway, or pay our electricity bill. Such relationships may be satisfactory, but the social
distance between the parties is relatively high, which leads to fewer opportunities to develop communal norms of reciprocity.

Thus:

**H3: As Perceived Social Distance moves from high to low, perceptions of Norms of Reciprocity move from self-interested to communal.**

Houston and Gassenheimer (1987) suggest that social distance is implicated in an actor’s willingness to sacrifice for the sake of an exchange relationship. As social distance decreases, individuals get to know each other better, and they develop mutual empathy, solidarity and understanding. In the context of communities, members’ sense of shared goals results in perceptions of lower social distance (Kozinets 2002). This in turn reinforces personal bonds and should make it more likely that members will help each other.

However, the relationship between Social Distance and Willingness to Sacrifice may not be direct, i.e. just because Social Distance is high, Willingness to Sacrifice is not necessarily low, since other factors such as Norms of Reciprocity have been shown to impact the relationship between the two variables. For example, in one experiment (Charness, Haruvy and Sonsino (2007), high social distance between participants did not result in the anticipated levels of self-interested behavior, because norms of generalized reciprocity established by first movers during the experiment tended to promote like behaviours in second movers. In the Charness et al experiment, social distance is used as a control variable. They suggest that Norms of Reciprocity have a positive impact on the second movers' decision to also sacrifice his self-interest, although no inferences about causality are made. Similarly, low Social Distance may not always increase Willingness to Sacrifice because – as per my discussion of neighbor relations in Section 3.3 – the environment in which the relationship takes place may establish norms of self-interested behavior. This hypothesis is also supported by the Prototype/Willingness Model.

At this time, the literature on the directionality and order of the relationship between Social Distance, Norms of Reciprocity and Willingness to sacrifice appears ambiguous. In the absence of any
evidence in the empirical literature to support the direction of this hypothesis, I follow Sahlins (1972) and predict that Norms of Reciprocity will have a direct impact on WTS, which also implies that it has a mediation role in the model. Moreover, as experiments by other researchers suggest, social distance alone may not be sufficient to predict one’s willingness to sacrifice for the community. The relationship between the two is likely mediated by the patterns of exchange—or Norms of Reciprocity—that frame the relationship.

Thus:

**H4: Perceived Norms of Reciprocity mediates the relationship between Social Distance and Willingness to Sacrifice.**

### 3.7 Identification

Dwyer et al (1987) propose that marketing relationships begin with a process in which the parties evaluate potential benefits of participation, including those grounded in “perceived similarity of beliefs, values, or personality” (16). Such “identity bonds” are the building blocks of organizational identification, which is defined as an individual’s feelings of psychological attachment to a desirable reference group (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Hogg and Abrams 1988). In the model, identification is a catalyst that draws potential community members into the fold and provides them with opportunities to make sacrifices. Community identification influences members’ attitudes and behaviours, orienting them to the collective good rather than to individual self-interest (van Vugt 2001).

Identification provides a foundation for community based on a shared social identity and common goals, values and beliefs (Cheney 1983). It reinforces a sense of personal competence and fosters feelings of belonging among group members (Dwyer et al 1987). It also encourages members to assume a long-term outlook on the relationship, which in turn establishes greater trust and more communally-oriented reciprocation norms (Sahlins 1972). Group identification encourages members to perceive others in the group in positive terms (Brewer 1979) and as being similar to themselves (Kramer et al., 1996).
All relationships, whether with individuals or communities, provide identity-building materials (Bahr and Bahr 2001, Bradley 1894). According to social identity theory, individuals who identify strongly with a group are more likely to develop in-group biases that lead them to regard fellow members in a positive light, and to engage in cooperative behaviours with them (Kramer 1991). Identification with a group—such as a brand community—increases the likelihood that members will invest in the relationship by sacrificing individual interests on behalf of the collective good (Meyer and Allen 1991; Bergami and Bagozzi 2000; Brewer 1979; Kramer and Brewer 1984). Indeed, Stern (1995) argues that national identification can become so powerful it overwhelms considerations of self-interest, and may explain why individuals are willing to sacrifice their lives to fight in their nations’ wars.

Many theorists propose that group identification and Willingness to Sacrifice are components of a continuous feedback loop, each reinforcing the other (Elshtain 1994; Turner 1977). My model assumes that Identification is an antecedent (as per Dwyer et al 1987), since it is likely that individuals would first identify with the brand community before they would consider making a sacrifice on its behalf. This analysis suggests that Identification with the brand community motivates members to maintain a level of social interaction that inspires a willingness to sacrifice on its behalf.

This leads to the fifth hypothesis:

**H5: Greater levels of Identification lead to greater Willingness to Sacrifice.**

### 3.8 Perceived Motives of Leaders

As I noted in Chapter 2, the organizational literature suggests that perceived community authenticity is implicit in members’ willingness to sacrifice on the organization’s behalf (Bass 1985; de Nijs 2006). Recall that the network of relationships within brand communities is very complex; it includes relationships between individual community members; between the consumer and the corporate entity—whether it is the brand, the marketer or the company—; and between the consumer and the community as a whole. When brand community members interact with the corporate entity, they do so through the proxy of the community moderators and leaders. If community leaders hope to inspire
sacrificial behaviour on the part of their membership, they must demonstrate their authenticity as leaders and forge genuine relationships with members in the pursuit of a shared vision. Members must therefore perceive that their leaders’ actions align with the community’s stated values and goals, i.e. that their motives for community participation are genuine. As one member of the Leonard Cohen Forum wrote,

The webmaster, Jarkko Arjatsalo, is a HUGE reason for the success of this community…He is exceedingly concerned with our satisfaction with his site and with the Leonard Cohen experience, and goes above and beyond at all times in an amazing number of ways to make us feel loved and appreciated (Matear 2012).

As I have described elsewhere, articles in the business press on brand community failure often allude to members’ unhappiness with the perceived motives of community leaders or hosts (e.g. WalMart and Sony). One informant on the website EffortlessAnthropologie noted that “I wouldn’t be here if I thought it was all about getting me to buy more [Anthropologie],” (Matear, 2012). Indeed, commercial motives are thought to be in direct opposition to willingness to sacrifice (Kozinets 2002; Grayson and Martinec 2004), yet there are countless examples of sacrificial behaviour across the brand community spectrum.

I hypothesize then that members who perceive that their **community leaders’ motives** are social and community-oriented –rather than commercial and economically-oriented– are more likely to express willingness to sacrifice for the brand community. Reciprocation of social concern from community leaders should reinforce and solidify the relationship between the member and the community, and increase the likelihood that patterns and norms of reciprocation will be institutionalized.

When community leaders renege on the shared vision or otherwise behave in ways contrary to expected norms, it can lead to especially negative consequences when members strongly identify with the group (Bhattacharya and Sen 2003). For example, Sony was widely excoriated when community members discovered that its Play Station Portable site alliwantforxmasisp.com –supposedly owned by an up-and-coming hip-hop artist and his teenaged buddy– was actually developed by Sony’s public
relations firm, Zapatoni (Graft 2006). Comments attached to one of the videos from the site reveal the level of indignation that resulted:

**JENeration:** Sony's definatly dead to me. Especially if they actually thought that anybody would believe this crap.

**Firuinthehouse:** Corporate whoring at it's finest

**SZF123456:** dear sony: i'll buy your products on the integrity and the quality of them, not on how many demographics you try and tap into for the sake of shoveling your shit onto me. signed, a potential customer.

Thus:

**H6:** The relationship between Identification and Willingness to Sacrifice is moderated by the Perceived Motives of Leaders.

### 3.9 Covariates

I also measure three variables that are not explicit elements of the model, including purchase probability (Juster 1966), positive word of mouth (Thomas 2007) and community longevity (Algesheimer et al, 2005). These constructs represent established marketing outcomes that are already explored in the marketing literature. Measuring them helps support my assumption that community members’ sacrifices will contribute to brand community wellbeing and ultimately, to better outcomes for the brand.

#### 3.9.1 Purchase Probability

Research suggests that membership in a brand community may encourage members to increase their purchases of the brand and related services. Wright and MacRae’s meta-analysis on bias in measuring purchase intent (2007) suggests that purchase probability measures are more accurate at predicting future buying patterns than “purchase intention” scales. I use the Juster purchase probability scale (1966) to estimate the likelihood of future brand purchases. This scale has been successfully used to estimate demand for a range of products and services, including specific brands (Day, Gan, Gendall and Esslemont 1991; Brennan and Esselmont 1994). Various visual representations of the scale have been

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used effectively in web-based surveys (Parackal and Brennan 1998). I anticipate that purchase probability will be positively correlated with willingness to sacrifice in the community.

3.9.2 Positive Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is a particularly credible form of brand promotion in which satisfied consumers relate their experiences with a product or service to others (Thomas 2007). Research suggests that membership in a brand community can generate positive word of mouth communication (Schau, Muniz and Arnould 2009; McAlexander et al 2002; Pimentel and Reynolds 2004). My model proposes that willingness to sacrifice is a condition under which we might expect to see more instances of positive word of mouth.

3.9.3 Community Longevity

Given the non-longitudinal nature of my study, I use membership continuance intentions as a proxy for community longevity (Algesheimer et al, 2005). Continuance intentions are defined as members’ plans to keep their membership and ties to the brand community in the future. Such an intention implies a willingness to remain committed to the community and to meet the requirements for membership. Continuance intentions are essential for brand community survival, and a continuation of the various positive outcomes the community generates for the brand. My model proposes that willingness to sacrifice will increase continuance intentions.

3.10 Contributions of this Model

A key contribution of this model is that it places willingness to sacrifice in the context of relationship marketing theory. It highlights how willingness to sacrifice can be viewed outside the traditional marketing perspective, which views it as the “cost of goods” or as one half of a balanced transaction. I suggest that willingness to sacrifice in marketing relationships—as it is in other literatures—should be viewed as an iterative and reinforcing process, motivating and shaping positive interactions among parties. Sacrifice in such cases is not carried out in isolation, but is an integrated and mutually-
beneficial process underlying healthy brand community relationships. To this end, I have also hypothesized causal relationships to add further rigor to the analysis.

3.11 Conclusion

In this section, I have proposed a number of hypotheses about likely antecedents, mediators and moderators of Willingness to Sacrifice in marketing relationships, particularly in brand communities. I have also suggested a range of covariate relationships that I expect will support the underlying assumptions of this work.

In the next chapter, I elaborate on the rationale for using brand community as the context to study Willingness to Sacrifice. I then describe the studies, methods and measures I used to collect and analyze data.
Chapter 4

The Studies, Experimental Design and Results

4.1 Introduction

Because social phenomena are particularly complex, I use a multi-method approach to explore the processes that facilitate Willingness to Sacrifice in community relationships. Using several methods tends to neutralize the limitations inherent to all forms of data collection, and may even help to explain seemingly contradictory results (Morse 2003). I use regression, structural equation modeling, and qualitative analysis to find support for my hypotheses and answers to the overarching research questions.

This dissertation describes a preliminary experiment and two subsequent studies: one experiment and one field study which includes a cross-validation exercise. Each research method was designed to test particular aspects of my theoretical framework. I also collect some qualitative data in these studies to facilitate my ability to interpret the results and add richness to the discussion.

I begin this section by explaining why brand community is an appropriate context in which to study Willingness to Sacrifice. I then describe the approach I use to explore the three research questions, and identify the purpose, approach and measures used in the four studies.

4.2 The Brand Community Context

There are two main reasons that brand communities provide an excellent setting for investigating the mechanisms underlying Willingness to Sacrifice in a marketing context. First, Willingness to Sacrifice is strongly linked to positive outcomes in personal, social and community relationships. Brand communities encompass a wide range of relationships that include all three of these: personal, social and community relationships. Additionally situations in brand communities present ample opportunities to sacrifice for the collective good.

Second, brand communities are a subgroup of “communities of interest”, defined in general as groups that gather around a shared passion or pastime. Communities of interest differ from other types,
such as geographically-bound communities, in that their members’ commitment is closely bound to identification with shared values and goals. For example, most of us live in the communities we do as a matter of convenience, e.g. our jobs, schools or families are there. We do not necessarily choose to live in a particular community because we share its philosophy, vision and values (although those living in ecovillages and communes are exceptions). My model depends on Identification with the community as a starting point for facilitating Willingness to Sacrifice, therefore brand communities are a much more likely setting than others in which to explore this effect.

4.3 An Overview of the Three Studies

I first conducted a preliminary study as the initial test of the theory that willingness to sacrifice is not only a part of the brand community nomological network, but also a function of perceived social relations in the community. The study tested the prediction that willingness to sacrifice for a community of interest is a positive outcome of identification, and explored the extent to which perceived leadership motives, social distance and peer relations might impact pro-community outcomes. This study also helped refine the survey instrument by allowing me to test the factor structure of existing scales in a brand community context.

Study 2 begins to address my first research question: “What is the impact of perceived social relations within a community on willingness to sacrifice?” It does so by investigating the relationships between constructs to determine the validity of the hypotheses described in Chapter 3. I use an experiment consisting of several scenarios to provide a controlled setting in which to study the variables in the model. Scenario-based experiments are well established in management research (McGrath 1982; Weber 1992). Although external validity is sometimes questioned because of the requirement to simplify and limit information for participants, internal validity is usually very good. In this case, I used one of four randomly-assigned community membership scenarios to explore the relationships between variables and lend empirical support to my proposed model. I then used SPSS to conduct a series of regression analyses to examine whether these relationships existed. Study 2 also helps answer my second question: “What are
the kinds of things that people are willing to sacrifice in brand community contexts?” when it asks respondents to indicate the things they have sacrificed for groups in the past. Finally, it lends insight to the third research question: “Does willingness to sacrifice lead to pro-brand community outcomes?” by using regression to determine whether there are positive relationships between WTS and pro-marketing outcomes.

Study 3 addresses external validity concerns by administering the instrument from Study 2 in a real-life brand community setting, instead of under experimental conditions. For this study, I removed the scenarios from the instrument and revised the questions somewhat to reflect respondents’ actual community experience. The study was designed to shed additional light on the first research question by using structural equation modeling (SEM) to further test the interactions between latent constructs in my conceptual model. SEM can be used for both theory testing (i.e. exploratory factor analysis) and theory development (confirmatory factor analysis). It is especially appropriate in this research context because it takes measurement error into account, thus addressing concerns around measurement error bias. The third study also adds support to the findings for the second and third research questions. I repeated the method from this study in a second brand community to determine the generalizability of the results.

4.4 Measures

Most of the measures in this study are established scales used in other community or relationship-oriented research. Refer to Table 2, which presents a sampling of the type of items in each construct. To measure identification, I use two items: one that asks about identification with the community, and the other that asks about identification with other members. All scales, with the exception of Likelihood of Continued Survival, use 7-point Likert scales from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. I measure Likelihood of Continued Survival using a 7-point Likert scale anchored by Very Unlikely and Very Likely.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Scale Authors</th>
<th>No. Items</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>Sample Questions (Adapted for Community)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification (Study 1)</td>
<td>Bergami and Bagozzi (2000)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Single item graphic zipper scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification (2) (study 1)</td>
<td>Study-specific</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>How similar are you to most people in this community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification (Studies 2-3)</td>
<td>Study-specific</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>How closely do your own personal values overlap with those of the community? How closely do your own personal values overlap with those of other members in the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Norms of Reciprocity</td>
<td>Shore et al 2006</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>Community members provide benefits to me that exceed my contributions to them. It seems important to community members that what I get from the community is no more than what I give.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to Sacrifice</td>
<td>Randall, Fedor, &amp; Longenecker, 1990</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>I am willing to volunteer for tasks in the community. I am willing to give personal time to the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Motives of Leaders</td>
<td>Glynn 1981 and Schaefer and Pettijohn 2006</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>I feel that leaders of this community are participating mostly because they want to sell more products. Leaders of this community are always shaping it to meet the needs of the members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Peer Relationships</td>
<td>Asher, Hymel and Renshaw 1984</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>It's easy for me to make friends in this community. I have nobody to talk to in this community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Social Distance (Study 1-Preliminary)</td>
<td>Bogardus 1937, as adapted by Dietrich et al 2004</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>I would feel comfortable working on a school project with a member of this community. I would feel comfortable eating lunch with member of this community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Social Distance (Study 2)</td>
<td>Bogardus, as adapted by Dietrich et al 2004</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>I would accept a member of this community as a close personal friend. I would accept a member of this community as my next door neighbour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Word of Mouth</td>
<td>Chitturi, Raghunathan and Mahajan, 2008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Given your experience with this community, how likely are you to recommend its products and services to others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Probability</td>
<td>Juster 1966</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>What is the probability that you will buy a product that this community supports in the next three months?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood of Continued Survival</td>
<td>Study-specific</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>How likely is it that this community will exist in its current form 5 years from now? (Very Likely→Very Unlikely, Likert Scale 1-7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the original Randall, Fedor and Longnecker (1990:215) study on sacrifice in an organizational context, the three scale items were:

1. Willingness to volunteer for tasks.
2. Willingness to take on additional responsibility.
3. Willingness to give up personal time for the organization.

I added several items to this measure on the basis of face validity, on the assumption that they might load onto two factors: WTS for the community, and WTS for individual members.

To measure Satisfaction with Peer Relationships, I used seven questions in Asher et al.’s original scale to measure feelings of social adequacy and peer status. In order to use Structural Equation Modeling, which depends on multi-item factors, I measured two dimensions of identification to develop a two-item factor: the dimensions were Identification with Brand Community and Identification with Members.

Note that as discussed in Chapter 3, I also included three measures for marketing constructs that my theory suggests should be positively correlated with Willingness to Sacrifice in brand communities. These include Positive Word of Mouth (WOM), Purchase Probability, and a brand community longevity measure –Likelihood of Continued Survival– which I use to test the association between Willingness to Sacrifice and community longevity. I expect to find that vibrant, successful brand communities will be distinguished not only by instances of perceived sacrifice among members, but also a corresponding increase in these positive marketing outcomes. Linking the incidence of sacrifice to such results helps place this particular work more firmly in the marketing literature.

To determine what kinds of things respondents are willing to sacrifice in group settings, I also asked them to recall their own experiences in brand communities (or communities of interest if they have no brand community experience). Without labeling them as such, I listed several activities that could

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5 I did not use the 8th item in this set of survey questions “I feel like I’m a part of something enjoyable here” as this was meant to measure a different construct that is not part of this particular study.
constitute sacrificial behaviours, and ask respondents to select all that apply to them, relative to their own experience in a community. I also asked them to explain why they engaged in this type of behavior. Next, I defined sacrifice, and explicitly asked if they ever sacrificed anything for their community. My intent here was twofold: first, to identify other activities that members feel constitute sacrificial behavior; and 2) to get at the notion of whether they believe their activities are actually sacrifices, and whether this perception has any impact on their likelihood of continuing membership. This section provides the qualitative data I needed for my second research question, which is aimed at identifying the behaviours in communities that members consider sacrificial.

4.5 Study 1: Preliminary Study

4.5.1 Introduction

This study is a scenario-based experiment that investigates constructs and their relationships in the hypothesized model. Scenarios are well established in management research (McGrath 1982; Weber 1992). Although external validity is sometimes questioned because of the requirement to simplify and limit information for participants, internal validity is usually very good. In this case, I used one of four randomly-assigned community environment scenarios to determine whether my hypothesized relationships were plausible, and to fine-tune the survey instrument for use in Study 2. The actual scenarios—which describe various social norms and dilemmas in a university volunteer group— are included in Appendix 1.

4.5.2 Data Collection

One hundred and twenty students from a University Research Pool participated in a 2X2 (Norms X Social Distance) between-subjects experiment. Students completed the survey on-line, and were offered additional course credit for their participation. Each was randomly assigned one of four scenarios that manipulated Norms of Reciprocity (Communal versus Self-interested) and the Perceived Motives of Leadership (Social versus Commercial). Respondents were asked to read some information about a hypothetical brand community, and asked to answer a series of questions as though they were the
community member in the scenario. To encourage students to spend more time on understanding the scenarios, each information section was accompanied by a picture that represented its main message.

4.5.3 Analysis and Results

Using IBM’s SPSS software, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to determine whether the scales were valid. With the exception of Perceived Leadership Motives (PLM), all scales loaded on single factors and had very good internal reliability values (Table 3). Unexpectedly, PLM items loaded onto two factors, so I forced a single-factor extraction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>WTS</th>
<th>SPR</th>
<th>PLM</th>
<th>Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s α</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation analysis indicated that most factors correlated at the .05 significance level (Table 4). Both the Social Distance (SD) and Identification measures were problematic. Upon closer investigation of the data, it was apparent that participants had not treated the SD scale as a cumulative indication of increasing social comfort. In other words, the four choices in the scale were meant to represent relationships of decreasing social distance (i.e. increasing comfort), and if a participant ranked the first choice as high, he should not have awarded a lower rank to the choice below it. Bogardus’ measure, on which this was based, was developed in 1925 to measure an individual’s willingness to interact with others of different racial groups. As Eveland et al (1999) note, the measure can create difficulties in that “Researchers have made a priori assumptions about the relative ordering of groups along the social distance construct.” (279) and “Research on social distance has failed to actually measure social distance perceptions, despite calls from researchers to do so.” That being said, many researchers have used proxy constructs to measure social distance, such as social status (Dickson and MacLachlan 1990), urbanization (Danzon 1984) and physical distance (Charnessa, et al 2007). Some researchers have suggested that social distance is better understood as a function of perceived similarity (McLeod et al 1997; Perloff 1996).
therefore changed the nature of this scale for use in Study 2 to see if another measure might address the issue.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Key Constructs: Study 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ident</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SPR</th>
<th>Norms</th>
<th>WTS</th>
<th>PML</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ident</strong></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.057</td>
<td>.261**</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.270**</td>
<td>.281**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.539</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.315**</td>
<td>.230*</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.240**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPR</strong></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.261**</td>
<td>.315**</td>
<td>.517**</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.598**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Norms</strong></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.230*</td>
<td>.517**</td>
<td>.649**</td>
<td>.284**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WTS</strong></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.270**</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.649**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PML</strong></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.281**</td>
<td>.240**</td>
<td>.598**</td>
<td>.284**</td>
<td>.280**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Also of note, Identification appeared uncorrelated with Norms of Reciprocity (Norms). There are several possible explanations for this: first, the scale used to measure Identification may not have been appropriate in this context; second, Identification may not be a factor in this model, although the literature review and several quantitative studies support its inclusion; third, Norms might actually be another independent variable, as opposed to the mediator I initially hypothesized.

Simple regressions demonstrated that Satisfaction with Peers (SWP), Norms, Identification and PLM were significant predictors of Willingness to Sacrifice (WTS) (F’s (1, 118) 32.58, 86.03, 9.17 and 10.01, p’s<.005). As expected, SD was not a significant predictor of WTS (F(1,118), 3.41, p=.064), as I
had posited in H4 a relationship mediated by Norms. However, contrary to H4, Norms did not mediate the relationship between SD and WTS (p=.772).

Despite the issues with the SD measure, WTS showed significant effects of the experimental manipulation (H3). Consistent with my hypothesis, participants in the Low (Self-Interested) Norms condition were less willing to sacrifice (M=-.332, p=.002) than those in the High (Communal) Norms condition (M=.371, p=.002). Likewise, those in the Low SD scenarios showed greater tendencies to sacrifice (M=.712, p=.000) than did those in the Commercial PML condition (M=-.970, p=.000). H2, which posited that Norms moderated the relationship between SPL and WTS was supported (Beta of the interaction=.313, p=.001). PML also moderates the relationship between Identification and Willingness to Sacrifice (H6) (Beta of the interaction =.276, p=.003).

4.5.4 Discussion

The findings in the preliminary study support H1, H2, H3, H5 and H6, but not H4. In general, these results confirm my predictions that both SPR and Identification have a positive effect on WTS in brand community contexts (H1 and H5). The study also provides evidence that high (communal) levels of Norms and low SD perceptions are associated with greater WTS (H3).

However, the findings cast some doubt on the role of SD in this model, as it was uncorrelated with both Norms and WTS. This would be expected if the relationship between SD and WTS were fully mediated by another variable –such as Norms– as suggested in H4. However, Norms does not appear to mediate this relationship, although it does have a direct impact on WTS, thus partially supporting H4. It may be that the measure used to capture SD in this study is problematic, or it may be that it does not fit in this model. If this is the case, Norms may actually be an independent variable. Given its impact on SPR and WTS (H2), it may be that SPR is in fact a mediator in the model, as opposed to an independent variable. As discussed earlier, the literature has little to say on the specific nature of the relationship among these constructs. However, one recent study in the brand community literature finds evidence to suggest that satisfaction is not an independent variable, but an outcome of identification (Stokberger-
Sauer 2010). This would support the notion that SPR is not independent, but is more likely a mediator in my hypothesized model.

4.6 Study 2

4.6.1 Introduction

Study 2 is a more refined attempt to address my first question: “What is the impact of perceived social relations within a community on willingness to sacrifice?” It does so by further examining the relationships between the constructs in my model to determine the validity of the hypotheses described in Chapter 3. I repeated the method in Study 1, using the same four scenarios and additional measures for the SD and Identification constructs, both of which had proved to be somewhat problematic in the initial study.

The results from this study also help answer my second question: “What are the kinds of things that people are willing to sacrifice in brand community contexts?” as it asks respondents to indicate the things they have sacrificed in communities of interest in which they are members. Finally, it addresses the third research question: “Does willingness to sacrifice lead to pro-brand community outcomes?” by determining whether there are positive relationships between WTS and pro-marketing outcomes such as Word of Mouth, Purchase Probability and Community Longevity.

4.6.2 Data Collection

Two hundred and seventy six students from a University Research Pool participated in a 2X2 (Norms X Social Distance) between-subjects experiment, following the same method and using the same scenarios as in Study 1. Students completed the survey on-line, and participants were entered into a draw for a chance to win a range of prize incentives offered through the auspices of the Research Pool system.

4.6.3 Analysis and Results

Correlation analysis (Table 5) shows significant relationships between all constructs, (P<.002) including between SD and Identification, which showed insignificant relationships in Study 1. This may
be a function of the different measure used to capture SD, as well as the increased statistical power from the larger sample size. That being said, as in Study 1, respondents again failed to use the SD scale correctly. Instead of ranking the ascending levels of social distance represented in the scale using a linear approach, participants often ranked items that suggested low social distance as being less comfortable than those meant to represent high social distance.

Linear regressions demonstrated that SPR, Norms and Identification were significant predictors of WTS (F (3, 268) 75.35, p<.005), lending support to H1 and H5, and partial support to H4. Again however, SD was not significant when added into the regression model (Beta = .052, p=.275). Not surprisingly then, as in Study 1, Norms did not mediate the relationship between SD and WTS (p=.506), as predicted in H4.

Table 5: Correlations Analysis of Key Constructs: Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WTS</th>
<th>PML</th>
<th>SPR</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Norms</th>
<th>Ident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTS</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.401**</td>
<td>.552**</td>
<td>.239**</td>
<td>.602**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PML</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.401**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.555**</td>
<td>.229**</td>
<td>.546**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPR</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.552**</td>
<td>.555**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.253**</td>
<td>.562**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.239**</td>
<td>.229**</td>
<td>.253**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.191**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.602**</td>
<td>.546**</td>
<td>.562**</td>
<td>.191**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ident</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
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<td>.279**</td>
<td>.284**</td>
<td>.242**</td>
<td>.307**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
WTS continued to show significant effects from the experimental manipulation (H3). Consistent with my hypothesis, participants in the Low (Self-Interested) Norms condition were less willing to sacrifice (M=.981, p=.000) than those in the High (Communal) Norms condition (M=.919, p=.002). However, while the directionality was correct, the Low SD scenarios were not significant.

My second hypothesis (H2), which posited that Norms moderated SPR and WTS was supported (Beta of the interaction=-.095, p=.05). However, H6 was not supported. PML did not moderate the relationship between Identification and Willingness to Sacrifice (H6) (Beta of the interaction =.031, p=.924).

Results from this study also begin to help answer my second research question. Specifically, regression analysis of Community Survival, Purchase Intention and Positive Word of Mouth suggests they are significant outcomes of WTS (F’s (1, 272) 21.07, 34.97 and 51.86. The effect sizes are small, ranging from .07 to .16, but all are positive and significant at the p<.001 level.

In an open-answer question, participants were asked to identify the types of things they had sacrificed as members of a community. I used content analysis techniques to scan the data, develop an initial set of categories, then refine the groupings as I made subsequent passes through the data. The results are in Table 6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Alignment with Kanter’s 3 Categories of Community Commitment Mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Sacrifice</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>Continuance (Investment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Continuance (Investment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs/Habits</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Cohesion (Renunciation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>Continuance (Sacrifice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical &amp; Emotional Health</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Control (Mortification)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.4 Discussion

The second study reinforces the results of Study 1 by finding support for H1, H2, H3 and H5. H6 was not supported. As in Study 1, H4—which proposes that Norms mediates the relationship between SD and WTS—was only partially supported. Given the continuing difficulties in capturing the hypothesized SD dimension, it is possible that SD is not a meaningful part of this model. In established communities of interest, particularly those on-line, conventional definitions of social comfort may have less meaning, especially since the scenarios used to measure social distance are less likely to manifest themselves in reality. Kozinets (2002) suggests as much in his observations of participants at the annual Burning Man festival, where its “rules encourage the temporary adoption of a more social, even sacrificial, attitude toward exchange. [S]ocial distance is temporarily bridged, and a temporary form of caring, sharing community is built that is viewed by participants as existing at a distance from the market,” (29).

Contrary to findings in Study 1, H6 was not supported in Study 2. Moderation analysis in SPSS demonstrated that in this sample of respondents, PML does not moderate the relationship between Identification and WTS. The lack of a significant finding may be a function of the forced extraction of a single factor for this construct, in combination with a Type II error in Study 1. The third study, which uses structural equation modeling, will involve a more rigorous factor analysis to account for the possibility of shared variance that may be skewing the results for this relationship.

Study 2 also generated some qualitative data to address my third research question, which was to determine the types of things that community members will sacrifice for the community at large. Participants were given the definition of sacrifice as a prelude to the question. As illustrated in Table 6, just under 11% of respondents reported they had never made a meaningful sacrifice for a community of which they were a member. Of the remaining 89%, the majority had sacrificed personal time. This was followed by opportunities, which included such statements as “I had an opportunity to join a play but had to turn down the offer because it would take away from my volunteer time,” and “Instead of celebrating my friend's birthday, I was volunteering at the Canadian's Blood Service.” The fourth category of sacrifice was money, followed by physical and emotional health, which included such items as “I have
played sports to the point of injury simply to benefit my team as much as possible,” and “My main sacrifice was social discomfort”. The last category is beliefs and habits, which includes reports such as “I gave up certain beliefs because of my cultural community,” and “I gave up some personal beliefs to coincide with a group.” These sacrifices for the betterment of the community also align with Kanter’s Theory of Community Commitment, which has been tested in physical settings (Kanter 1972; Gardner 1978) but not in communities of interest. Kanter proposes that the more commitment mechanisms a community is able to facilitate in its members, the more successful in terms of longevity that community will be. It’s important to note that in Study 2, respondents were reporting on the types of sacrifices they felt they had made for communities of interest of which they were a member; they identified more than a hundred such communities, so I am unable to make any generalizations about the distribution of such sacrifices in communities at large.

4.7 Study 3

4.7.1 Introduction

Study 3 addresses external validity concerns by administering the questionnaire from Studies 1 and 2 to respondents in actual brand communities. I used the same measures as in prior studies, augmented by some additional questions that asked respondents for their perceptions of community leadership. Using the data from one community, I used structural equation modeling (SEM) to further test the interactions between latent constructs to see if they align with my conceptual model. I then cross-validated the model against another brand community to establish generalizability.

4.7.2 Data Collection

Between June 2011 and December 2012, I approached the moderators of fifty-two communities requesting permission to post my survey (Appendix A) and collect responses. Communities ranged from restaurant Facebook pages to corporate software forums to music fan sites. Eight moderators gave their permission. No corporate-run communities—including those that originally agreed to participate when I approached them during the proposal development stage—would approve the posting; they gave no
reasons for the decision. Many of the individually-managed community moderators who declined to participate were concerned that either a) the survey would be used for commercial purposes despite my reassurances or b) that community members might perceive the survey as spam, and it might erode the trust that members have in the community.

Participants in the brand communities were advised that in return for completing the survey, they would be entered into a draw to win one of five $50 gift certificates from Amazon.com. Only two of the eight communities surveyed generated a sufficient number of responses to test the structural equation model (Table 7). This was sufficient for me to build the model on the basis of one community’s data (i.e. Equestria Daily), and to validate it with the other (i.e. Leonard Cohen Forum).

Table 7: Number of Responses from Communities Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Name</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equestria Daily (Bronies)</td>
<td>30,000+</td>
<td>A large community of Bronies, mostly teen and adult male fans of the television show “My Little Pony.”</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard Cohen Forum</td>
<td>26,500</td>
<td>Fans of the music of Leonard Cohen.</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the questions asked in Studies 1 and 2, I asked respondents whom they thought was managing the brand community. In the previous studies, this condition had been manipulated by means of information given in the scenarios. Specifically, I asked “Who do you believe manages this brand community?” and provided a list of choices ranging from “the corporation” to “a group of individuals with shared interests”.

I posted the survey instrument in a popular area of each forum. The moderators of both sites endorsed the survey and encouraged participants to respond.

4.7.2.1 The Bronies Community:

Established in 2011, Equestria Daily is a large community of fans of the television show “My Little Pony”. In 2013, it boasted more than 30,000 members, and has collected more than 300 million page views (Sethisto 2013). Reflecting its largely male membership, members are typically known as
Bronies, a portmanteau of the words “bro” – short form for brother – and “ponies”. Female members are often referred to as “Pegasisters.” A 2012 survey (Edwards and Redden 2012) found the average age of respondents to be 21.4 years, with more than 63% pursuing post-secondary education; 86% are male. The forum is owned by Shaun Scotellaro, a part-time community college student who wanted to establish a place where fans could share news, experiences and fan fiction about the show (Vara and Zimmerman 2011).

4.7.2.2 The Leonard Cohen Forum (LCF)

LCF was established in 2004 as a gathering place for fans of musician, songwriter, poet and novelist Leonard Cohen. For nearly fifty years, Cohen’s music and writing have attracted a devoted following of fans known for their intensity and enthusiasm. Owned and managed by 62-year-old Finnish auditor Jarkko Arjatsaloto, the site is a venue for sharing concert information, reviews and thoughts on Cohen’s music, writing and cultural impact (Vanhanen 2002). As of June 2013, there were 26,883 members.

4.7.3 Analysis and Results

To test the relationships in my theoretical model, I used AMOS, the structural equation modeling (SEM) module in SPSS 21.0. SEM is a multivariate analytic method that estimates all model parameters simultaneously, and provides an indication of measurement error (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2005). It is especially helpful in testing the plausibility of mediated relationships. I ensured the reliability of the research method by applying consistent procedures for data collection, cleaning and analyses. I modified the model only on the basis of theory-driven as opposed to data-driven decisions, thus reducing the introduction of error by over-analysis. I applied content analysis techniques to categorize open-ended responses. Using SPSS I generated a bivariate correlations table reporting one-tailed significance (to reflect the fact that I am hypothesizing directional effects).

As in Studies 1 and 2, the perceived Social Distance construct remained challenging. All items to be used in the theoretical model with the exception of Social Distance were significantly correlated at
P<.01). Field (2005) suggests dropping items that correlate poorly with or do not correlate with most other items in a model, as long as there is a reasonable basis in theory for doing so. The correlation matrix indicates that Social Distance correlated significantly with only three of the 26 items in the model (Appendix 3). Given the ongoing problems encountered with this construct in all three studies, it seemed unlikely that Social Distance was implicated in the Willingness to Sacrifice mechanism, so I dropped it from the model.

4.7.3.1. Initial Factor Analysis

I conducted factor analyses on the remaining items used in my theoretical model: WTS, Norms, Identification, SPR and PML. See Table 4.7 for a summary of key indices – KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy; Bartlett’s test of Sphericity; value of Factor loadings; and Cronbach’s Alpha – demonstrating a good fit between the indicators and the underlying factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy test determines the appropriateness of factor analysis. Values above 0.5 suggest that factor analysis may proceed. Kaiser (1974) describes KMO scores between .7-.8 as good, .8-.9 as very good, and above .9 as excellent. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity tests whether group variances are the same and whether dependent variables are correlated. The outcome of this test should be significant (Field 2005). Factor loadings indicate the extent to which an indicator correlates with its factor; the squared factor loading represents the percent of variance the factor explains in that observed variable. Stevens (1992) suggests removing items with loading values of 0.4 or lower. Cronbach’s Alpha tests the internal consistency, or reliability of the factor. Values above .9 are considered excellent; .8 to .9 good; .7 to .8 acceptable; .6 to .7 questionable; and below .5 unacceptable (Kline 1999).

4.7.3.2 Willingness to Sacrifice WTS

Factor analysis of all ten items indicated a two-factor solution with items a,b,d (the Randall et al original scale items) f,g,h and j loading on Factor 1. It did not appear that “sacrifice for individuals” and
“sacrifice for the community” were two distinct factors, as I hypothesized earlier. Furthermore, items c, e and i demonstrated signs of collinearity, with strong loadings on both Factors 1 and 2. I subsequently dropped items c, e and i from the scale.

Following factor analysis, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .795. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity tests whether group variances are the same and whether dependent variables are correlated. Results were $\chi^2=1683.991$, df=21. $p=.000$. Factor loadings were .441 to .815. Cronbach’s Alpha was .824, considered very good.

I then conducted a second factor analysis using only the original three scale items from Randall et al. and a fourth from those I had added to test sacrifice for others (i.e. “Willingness to spend time helping others”), since part of my theory relates to peer satisfaction and its role in WTS. The latter item also loaded particularly highly on Factor 1. The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .792. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity was $\chi^2=718.936$, df=6. $p=.000$. Factor loadings were .786 to .876. These four items produced a Cronbach’s Alpha value of .832. Since the four-item factor produced higher loadings, and Cronbach’s Alpha was similar, I kept the more parsimonious version of the construct.

To measure Satisfaction with Peer Relationships, I used seven questions in Asher et al.’s original scale to measure feelings of social adequacy and peer status. All items loaded on one factor, although the loading for SPR5 (Reverse score for “I feel left out of the loop around here”) was very low (just over .5). The modification indices suggested that removing this item would improve reliability, so I removed it. The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .875. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity was $\chi^2=1229.153$, df=28. $Sign=.000$. Factor item loadings ranged from .508-.776. Cronbach’s alpha was .829.

In this study, I measure two dimensions of identification to develop a two-item factor: Identification with Community and Identification with Members. The KMO Measure of Sampling

\[^6\] I did not use the 8th item in this set of survey questions “I feel like I’m a part of something enjoyable here” as this was meant to measure a different construct that is not part of this particular study.
Adequacy was .643. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity was $\chi^2=380.277$, df=3, p=.000. Factor item loadings were both .905. Cronbach’s Alpha for this factor is .777.

All five items for Norms of Reciprocity loaded on one factor. The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .787. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity was $\chi^2=788.542$, df=10, p=.000. Factor loadings ranged from .664 to .798. Cronbach’s alpha .798.

The ten items for Perceived Motives of Leaders loaded on two factors. However, given the sample size is greater than 250 and the communalities of the items were all below .6, SPSS’ default factor extraction method (Eigen value >1) may not be appropriate (Field 2005). I ran the analysis again, forcing the extraction of one factor. On the basis of their low loadings (below .4) and recommendations from the modification indices, I dropped two items (numbers f and g). Table 8 summarizes the key factor indices for each variable in the model.

Table 8: Key Factor Analysis Indices for Model Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy</th>
<th>Bartlett’s test of Sphericity</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WTS</td>
<td>.792</td>
<td>$\chi^2=718.936$, df=6, p=.000</td>
<td>.786-.876</td>
<td>.832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPR</td>
<td>.875</td>
<td>$\chi^2=1229.153$, df=28, p=.000</td>
<td>.500-.776</td>
<td>.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>$\chi^2=788.542$, df=10, p=.000</td>
<td>.664-.798</td>
<td>.798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDN</td>
<td>.787</td>
<td>$\chi^2=380.277$, df=3, p=.000</td>
<td>.905</td>
<td>.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PML</td>
<td>.857</td>
<td>$\chi^2=1055.921$, df=28, p=.000</td>
<td>.486-.740</td>
<td>.820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7.3.3 Developing the Preliminary Measurement Model in Amos

Using Amos structural equation modeling software (Arbuckle 2006), I specified the preliminary measurement model, drawing latent and unobserved variables, error terms and covariances (Figure 3). Given that in my theorized model Perceived Motives of Leadership had a moderation role, I did not include this in the model specification.

---

7 Examine significance of the $\chi^2$(p > .10), CFI (> .95), RMSEA (< .06), and SRMR (< .08). For models including 2+ reflective indicators, conduct a simultaneous test of the vanishing tetrads implied by the model (Bollen and Ting 2000)
All relationships were significant at the p<.001 level. The model fit was .072, beyond the cutoff of .06 recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999) and just past the .07 figure suggested by Steiger (2007); the PCLOSE value, which should be non-significant, was .000. Furthermore, there were validity concerns with SPR and WTS (Table 9).

**Figure 3: Theorized Measurement Model**
In terms of convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct should be greater than 0.5; the AVE values for SPR, WTS and Norms were 0.387, 0.438 and 0.408 respectively. Furthermore, to establish discriminant validity, the Maximum Shared Squared Variance (MSV) should be less than the AVE. To address these concerns, I removed low-loading items on SPR, Norms and WTS, as described below.

The Willingness to Sacrifice factor retains the original three factors from the Randall et al scale, plus one additional item “I am willing to volunteer for tasks that might assist another individual in the community”. These items had the highest loadings and produced a Cronbach’s alpha of .823, the same as that produced in the original Randall et al study.

4.7.3.4 Refinement of Satisfaction with Peer Relationships (SPR) Construct

The most appropriate scale I found to measure the Satisfaction with Peer Relationships construct was from a study by Asher et al (1984) called Loneliness in Children that studied both social dissatisfaction and loneliness. I adapted seven questions in the original scale (Alpha .90), as they were originally oriented towards children in classroom setting. I added an additional item on the basis of face validity. The factor loadings of Asher et al.’s scale items ranged from .43 to .71, with the average in the .55 range. The scale items that load on the SPR factor are:

- I find it easy to make friends here
- I am good at working with other people here
- I am well liked by others here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>MSV</th>
<th>ASV</th>
<th>Ident</th>
<th>SPR</th>
<th>WTS</th>
<th>Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ident</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.847</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPR</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>0.261</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTS</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>0.438</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>0.344</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>0.642</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>0.766</td>
<td>0.408</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.351</td>
<td>0.637</td>
<td>0.610</td>
<td>0.524</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• I find it hard to get to know others here (RS)

The four items I removed from this questions set were:

• I have a hard time talking to people.
• I feel left out of the loop.
• I have no one to talk to when I need help.
• When I’m part of the community I feel like I’m doing something enjoyable.

I suggest that the first three of the four items I removed may actually tap into a different dimension of peer relations, such as self-esteem. The fourth item is one that I added and that doesn’t seem to tap into either of those dimensions.

I adapted items from the Wu et al scale (2006:383) to measure Norms of Reciprocity. Their Generalized Reciprocity scale (alpha >.7) included four items:

• My organization would help me develop myself, even if I can’t make more contributions now.
• My organization seems willing to invest in my professional development even when it does not directly impact my current performance.
• My organization would do something for me with no strings attached.
• My organization takes care of me in ways that exceed my contribution to it.

The revised scale I used in the study included these items:

• Community members would help me even if I can’t make more contributions right now.
• They do things that might not directly benefit them but make the community experience better.
• They would do something for me with no strings attached.
• They provide benefits to me in ways that exceed my contribution to it.
• They seem interested in enhancing each others’ experience in the community.

In the model, I kept three of the original items from Wu (2006): 1, 2 and 3. Item 4 is more suggestive of negative reciprocity or free riding, and does not load well on the Norms factor. The fifth item, which I added on the basis of face validity, appears not to tap into the reciprocity dimension at all, but actually may have been more appropriate in the scale on “Perceived Motives of Leaders”.

83
I removed extreme multivariate outliers in the data by examining the Mahalanobis d-squared value. Any cases for which the p-value is less than .05 are considered influential outliers, since the correlations between the variables for these particular responses are significantly different from the others in the data set. The AMOS output indicated that covarying the error terms on two WTS items would improve model fit further.

These refinements generated a revised set of validity indices that suggest the constructs have both convergent and discriminant validity (Table 11).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>MSV</th>
<th>ASV</th>
<th>Ident</th>
<th>SPR</th>
<th>WTS</th>
<th>Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ident</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>0.336</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.838</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPR</td>
<td>0.770</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>0.506</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTS</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>0.506</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>0.599</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>0.776</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>0.296</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.538</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 illustrates the revised measurement model. Descriptions of each fit index follow.

**Goodness of Fit:** The goodness of fit index (GFI) measures the fit between the hypothesized model and the observed covariance matrix. The adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) is a corrected version of GFI that considers the number of indicators for each latent variable. GFI and AGFI values of .9 or greater suggest that the model fit is acceptable (Baumgartner and Hombur 1996).

**Normed Fit:** The normed fit index (NFI) analyzes the discrepancy between the chi-squares of the hypothesized and null models. A cutoff of .95 or greater suggests a good model fit (Hu and Bentler 1999).

**Comparative Fit:** Comparative fit index (CFI) measures the difference between the data and the hypothesized model, while adjusting for sample size issues that may affect the chi-squared and normed fit indices. A CFI value greater than or equal to .90 indicates acceptable model fit (Hu and Bentler 1999).
Figure 4: Revised Measurement Model

\[
\chi^2 = 108.90^8, \text{DF}=47, \text{CMIN/DF}=2.317, \text{GFI}=.962, \text{NFI}=9.49, \text{CFI}=.970, \text{RMSEA} = .054, \text{PCLOSE} = .276.
\]

**RMSEA:** The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) examines the difference between optimal parameter estimates in the hypothesized model and the population covariance matrix, and is thus less sensitive to sample size issues. An RMSEA value of .06 or less is indicative of acceptable model fit. (Hu and Bentler 1999). The PCLOSE value should be non-significant (i.e. >.05).

---

8 The \(\chi^2\) statistic is very sensitive to sample size. In samples of between 75-200 data points, \(\chi^2\) should be non-significant if the model is a good fit. In datasets such as this one, with less than 400 responses, the \(\chi^2\) is nearly always significant, and it is more appropriate to rely on other fit indices to determine the appropriateness of the model. (http://davidakenny.net/cm/fit.htm).
4.7.3.5 Developing the Structural Model

I then converted the measurement model to a structural model (Figure 5). Contrary to my initial theoretical development, Norms does not mediate the relationship between SPR and WTS and IDN and WTS. Instead, it is SPR that fully mediates the relationship between Norms and WTS (the direct effect of Norms on WTS was insignificant). SPR also partially mediates the relationship between identification and WTS. This makes theoretical sense; a community’s norms would be considered part of the structure on which the community is founded; it makes sense that this is actually an exogenous variable when compared to one’s individual satisfaction with peers.

Figure 5: Structural Model

χ²=112.164, DF=49, CMIN/DF=2.289. GFI=.961, AGFI=.938, NFI=.948, CFI=.970, RMSEA=.054, PCLOSE=.297.

The model suggests that 54% of the variance in WTS is explained by SPR and IDN. IDN has a direct effect of .215 on WTS, and is also partly mediated by SPR with an indirect effect of .332 on WTS. The model output also indicates that 51% of the variance in SPR is explained by Norms and IDN. Furthermore, SPR fully mediates the relationship between Norms and WTS, given that the path between Norms and WTS is insignificant (p>.05).
4.7.3.6. Moderation by PML

My hypothesized model suggested that community members’ perceptions of community leadership motives (i.e. commercial versus social) would affect the relationship between Norms and WTS and Identification and WTS. I theorized that when members felt community leaders’ goals were commercial, willingness to sacrifice would be lower. Contrary to expectations, when I added PML to the model, I was unable to establish convergent validity (AVE<0.5).

4.7.3.7 Types of Sacrifice Demonstrated in the Bronies Community

Table 4.8 displays the types of sacrifice demonstrated in the Bronies community. This data represents the qualitative responses to the survey question “Have you ever sacrificed something for this community? If so, what did you sacrifice?” Again, participants were given the definition of sacrifice as a prelude to the question. Two trained coders assessed the global content of each response, determined the nature of the sacrifice and categorized it under one of the five categories of sacrifice types in the framework developed in Study 1. Coders initially agreed on 233 of the 243 instances of sacrifice, and ultimately agreed on the remaining ten examples after some discussion.

As illustrated in Table 10, just under 52% of respondents reported they had never made a meaningful sacrifice for a community of which they were a member. Of the remaining 48%, the majority had sacrificed Personal Time. This was followed by Money, which included such statements as “Recently one of our members needed to raise 15k or lose their house to foreclosure. They asked for commissions and donation, I gave them money that I’d needed for clothes and food. I did the dollar store for food and barely scraped by that week. It sucked, but I'm proud to have given that money up as a donation to this member. I didn't know them, I still don't, we're essentially strangers.” Another wrote “Shipped out certain items to other members who I never met in real life at no cost to them. In one case, value exceeded $340 Canadian.” The fourth category of sacrifice was Opportunities, such as “I have lost one friend because they hated the community,” and “Coming home from Easter break early to attend a meetup”. This was
followed by Beliefs and Habits, which includes reports such as “My perceived notion of male/female stereotypes,” and “Since I have accepted being a brony and "came out of the stable", I sacrificed my implied manliness (although I strongly believe that its definition will be changed).” The last category is Mental and Physical Comfort, which included such items as “My dignity,” and “Having to keep a big part of my personality from my friends outside the community”.

Table 11: Types of Sacrifice in the Bronies Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Sacrifice</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
<th>Percent of all Sacrifices</th>
<th>Alignment with Kanter’s 3 Categories of Community Commitment Mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Sacrifice</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>Continuance (Investment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>Continuance (Investment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs/Habits</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Cohesion (Renunciation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>Continuance (Sacrifice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental &amp; Physical Comfort</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Control (Mortification)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7.3.8 Generalizing the Model

One hundred and eighty-six members of the Leonard Cohen Forum (LCF) responded to my survey, making it suitable for validating the structural equation model from Study 3.

Key output parameters suggest that the model has good fit (Figure 6). In this case, the model indicates that 50% of the variance in WTS is explained by SPR and IDN. IDN has a direct effect of .07 on WTS, and is also partly mediated by SPR with an indirect effect of .34 on WTS. The model output also indicates that 59% of the variance in SPR is explained by Norms and IDN. Furthermore, SPR fully mediates the relationship between Norms and WTS, given that the path between Norms and WTS is insignificant (p>.05).
Figure 6: Cross Validation of Structural Model with LCF

\[ \chi^2 = 67.903, \text{DF}=48, \text{CMIN/DF}=1.415. \text{GFI}=.939, \text{AGFI}=.901, \text{NFI}=.94, \text{CFI}=.981, \text{RMSEA}=.048, \text{PCLOSE}=.522. \]

4.7.3.9 Types of Sacrifice Demonstrated in the Leonard Cohen Community

Table 11 displays the types of sacrifice demonstrated in the Leonard Cohen community. This information summarizes the qualitative data collected in the survey in response to the question “Have you ever sacrificed something for this community? If so, what did you sacrifice?”

Two trained coders assessed the global content of each response, determined the nature of the sacrifice and categorized it under one of the five categories of sacrifice types in the framework developed in Study 1. Coders initially agreed on 53 of the 56 instances of sacrifice, and ultimately agreed on the remaining three items after some discussion.

Table 12: Types of Sacrifice in the Leonard Cohen Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
<th>Percent of all Sacrifices</th>
<th>Alignment with Kanter’s 3 Categories of Community Commitment Mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Sacrifice</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>Continuance (Investment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>Continuance (Investment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs/Habits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Cohesion (Renunciation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Continuance (Sacrifice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental &amp; Physical Comfort</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Control (Mortification)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.7.4 Discussion

Of the six hypotheses presented in Chapter 3, four are fully supported in both communities tested, including:

H1: Greater levels of Satisfaction with Peer Relationships lead to increasing Willingness to Sacrifice.

H2: The relationship between Satisfaction with Peer Relationships and Willingness to Sacrifice is moderated by Perceived Norms of Reciprocity.

H3: As Perceptions of Social Distance move from high to low, and Perceived Norms of Reciprocity move from self-oriented to communal, Willingness to Sacrifice increases.

H5: Greater levels of Identification lead to greater Willingness to Sacrifice.

H4, which posited Perceived Norms of Reciprocity as a mediator between Social Distance and Willingness to Sacrifice, was partially supported, as there is a direct positive relationship between Norms and Willingness to Sacrifice. I suggest that, contrary to my initial hypothesis, Social Distance does not form a part of this model, for reasons discussed earlier in this document. H6, which proposed that “The relationship between Identification and Willingness to Sacrifice is moderated by Perceived Motives of Leadership” was also unsupported.
Chapter 5

Contributions, Future Research and Limitations

This section concludes the document by first describing how this dissertation contributes to marketing theory, particularly in the areas of relationship marketing and brand community. I then suggest its implications for marketing practitioners, especially those charged with building brand community engagement and continuity. This is followed by a review of some of the limitations of the methods I used to explore and confirm the model. Finally, I suggest further research that might improve our understanding of Willingness to Sacrifice and its relationship with other constructs in brand community contexts.

5.1 Contribution to Marketing Theory

This dissertation makes several significant contributions to marketing. First it develops and defines the construct Willingness to Sacrifice for use in marketing contexts such as brand communities and relationship marketing. Second, it presents a conceptual model of how willingness to sacrifice might fit in the nomological net of relationship marketing. Third, it tests the significance of willingness to sacrifice within that network of constructs. Importantly, this dissertation also suggests that incorporating WTS into existing relationship marketing models may enhance the accuracy and reliability of their outcomes. Additionally, from a practical standpoint, this dissertation identifies willingness to sacrifice as a useful construct for practitioners seeking ways of facilitating brand communities’ success and perseverance.

Scholars studying brand communities have called for research that brings additional insight to the constructs that motivate individuals to contribute towards such communities’ goals (Bagozzi and Dholakia 2006; Stokburger 2010). As noted by Stokburger, “little quantitative empirical research exists on how brand communities can be facilitated,” (348). My dissertation begins to address this research gap by identifying and quantifying a mediated process that drives a member’s willingness to sacrifice for the good of the brand community. It shows that identification, norms of reciprocity and satisfaction with
peers positively impact willingness to sacrifice, and finds a positive relationship between sacrifice and beneficial marketing outcomes such as word of mouth, purchase probability, and brand community longevity.

The studies herein also extend the notion of marketing exchange—as recommended by Belk (2010)—by exploring the role of generalized reciprocity, or sacrifice for the community-at-large, in marketing relationships. Not only was WTS empirically measured relative to other established brand community constructs such as identification and satisfaction with peers, but also a majority of community members surveyed in Study 3 recounted specific examples of sacrifices they had made on behalf of their respective communities. This suggests that individuals often make sacrifices that benefit the community-at-large of their own volition. Unearthing the significant role for WTS in such relationships also complements the body of literature that suggests brand communities comprise a space in which exchanges between parties transcend conventional market activities (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; McAlexander et al 2005; Kozinets 2005).

The findings also suggest that Kanter’s theory of community commitment and sacrifice has applications not only in physical communities of interest, but also in virtual brand communities. The sacrifices that respondents reported they had made for the community-at-large aligned neatly with Kanter’s framework. This is especially significant as it demonstrates that relationships can flourish and be strong even in virtual environments.

This research also identifies a typology of sacrifices that brand community members make in the context of the community-at-large. Other typologies from the psychology and anthropology literatures (see for example Impett et al 2005; Hubert and Mauss 1964) are less applicable to marketing relationships. For example, Impett et al.’s classification includes intimacy, other-sex interactions and appearance, in addition to general categories such as recreation and family. Categories of sacrifice more specific to brand community contexts may help managers identify and track both positive and negative sacrificial behaviours within the community. Recall that some respondents reported giving large sums of money to other community members, or risking their health on behalf of the community-at-large. While
the members themselves may be satisfied with making such sacrifices, there may be negative implications associated with such behaviours. To this end, exploring the dark side of sacrifice might also be an interesting avenue for research.

Studying willingness to sacrifice in a marketing context also adds to our understanding of relationship marketing theory. It introduces another potential mediating variable between established relationship constructs and positive marketing outcomes. For example, in Morgan and Hunt’s Key Mediating Variable of Relationship Marketing Model (KMV Model) willingness to sacrifice could be a third mediating variable, complementing trust and commitment (1994:330). In the KMV Model, trust and commitment act as key mediators between a range of antecedents—including identification—and positive marketing outcomes, including propensity to stay, positive word of mouth and purchase intentions. It would be interesting to test the KMV Model with willingness to sacrifice to determine whether it addresses any unexplained variance.

This dissertation also demonstrates the value of exploring a marketing paradigm based not on the rational economic exchange paradigm, but on non-reciprocal exchange motivators such as willingness to share or make sacrifices. Both of these behaviours are considered fundamental processes in the development and maintenance of human relationships (Sahlins 1972) but few have investigated their potential in marketing contexts (Belk 2008, 2010). By demonstrating that there is a significant link between willingness to sacrifice for a community and outcomes such as word of mouth and purchase intention, this research supports the conceptual work of those seeking to integrate exchange and relationship theories of marketing, such as Bagozzi (1975) and Houston and Gassenheimer (1987).

5.2 Contribution to Management Practice

This research has important practical implications for marketing practitioners who currently manage or wish to establish brand communities.
First, the results add further support to established findings in the brand community literature: specifically, that the existence of such communities can add significant value to the brand. This is demonstrated by linking the dependent variable, WTS for the brand community, to measurable marketing objectives such as greater purchase intention and positive word of mouth. That being said, many brand communities fail to thrive, or worse, collapse altogether, and there is little empirical research identifying factors that drive community success. The model in this dissertation suggests one process through which community members might enhance not only their own brand experience, but also that of the membership at large, thus facilitating community continuity. A community manager who can cultivate an environment in which members are encouraged to make small sacrifices for the good of the membership as a whole may reduce the chances of brand community failure.

Second, my model demonstrates—somewhat unintuitively—that willingness to make sacrifices cannot be tied directly to the community’s norms, but is instead mediated through satisfaction with fellow community members. Establishing community Norms of Reciprocity plays a significant role in building Satisfaction with Peer Relations (SPR); indeed, online communities can avoid many of the issues associated with detrimental interactions if managers articulate unambiguous policies and guidelines for continuing membership, and enforce the consequences for violating these terms (Korenman and Wyatt, 1996). However, merely establishing rules for member behavior is not on its own sufficient to encourage willingness to sacrifice that benefits the community at large. Community managers seeking to promote willingness to sacrifice would be wiser to concentrate their efforts on interpersonal accord, cooperation and teambuilding, than on directly encouraging individuals to make sacrifices.

To this end, it is important to recognize the role of SPR as an important mediator in the model, one that ultimately has a greater direct impact on Willingness to Sacrifice (WTS) than Identification. Managers who focus on building and encouraging harmonious relationships within their communities are more likely to see greater levels of SPR among members, which in turn impacts WTS. One method of improving SPR is to monitor and address inflammatory or otherwise discordant comments from so-called “trolls”, individuals who intentionally disrupt and damage the emotional equilibrium of online
communities (Shachaf and Hara 2010). There are several possible interventions that can reduce the negative impact of such individuals. For example, moderators can educate members about trolling to highlight awareness, facilitate identification and encourage appropriate responses. Technology solutions such as filters can reject posts with profanity and certain key words; some systems allow members to instantly flag possible trolls; if the poster reaches a critical mass of flags, the individual can be automatically expelled from the group (Herring, Job-Sluder, Scheckler and Barab 2002). There is some evidence that discourse in communities is more supportive when there is firm central moderation (Herring 2000). That being said, community managers must maintain an appropriate balance between filtering disruptive comments and encouraging freedom of opinion and expression. If this balance is thrown off, members may begin to view the community as inauthentic, a shill for the corporate brand.

Finally, the typology of sacrifice categories developed in Studies 2 and 3 may ultimately be helpful to practitioners seeking to nurture—or in some cases prevent—the conditions that encourage such behaviours. For example, some respondents in Study 2 reported that they had played sports to the point of injury—indicating a sacrifice of Physical or Emotional Health—to help their team win. Others indicated that they had lost sleep, dignity, pride or other forms of physical and emotional wellbeing as sacrifices for the goals of the community. Managers of brand communities in which there are vulnerable populations might wish to monitor such behaviours especially closely to ensure that there are no negative consequences to the individual, the community or the brand.

5.3 Limitations

As with all research, there are some limitations with the three studies presented in this dissertation. In this section, I describe five limitations of this work, and suggest means of addressing them in future research.

First, there are some disadvantages to using complex scenarios to test concepts (Charness, Gneezy and Kuhn 2012). Respondents may not read all of the pertinent information, they may skip sections, and there is an inherent level of noise in the results. The between-subjects design used in Studies
1 and 2 is thought to be more conservative in this respect than a within-subjects approach, in which each respondent sees more than one scenario. The random assignment of scenarios to respondents also reduces concerns in this area. To reduce the likelihood of respondents’ missing important information as they read the scenario, I included regular manipulation checks throughout the text. These were meant not only to gauge their ability to accurately recall details of what they had read, but also to serve as a reminder that respondents had to read the information carefully to proceed.

The second limitation is that two of the instruments used to measure perceptions of Social Distance across the studies were clearly problematic, as they were not interpreted correctly by respondents. The single item global measure of Social Distance added to Study 3 also failed to deliver significant results. It may be that the selected scales are not capturing this concept accurately, as other researchers have also experienced difficulties measuring this construct (Eveland et al 1999). Alternately, Social Distance may not actually be part of this model at all. Although my findings suggest linear relationships between Social Distance and Norms of Reciprocity (as per H3), Norms of Reciprocity is not a significant predictor of Willingness to Sacrifice; its impact is fully mediated by Satisfaction with Peer Relationships. This outcome lends support to the notion that—somewhat surprisingly, from an intuitive perspective—Social Distance has no place in this model. If however the problem lies in the measures selected to gauge Social Distance, there is an opportunity for additional research in which different instruments are used to measure this variable. It would be interesting to explore whether perceived Social Distance does indeed have a role to play in facilitating Willingness to Sacrifice, and if it doesn’t, why that might be.

Third, there is potential for social desirability bias when assessing the value of constructs using self-reported measures, as in studies 2 and 3. For example, members were asked to report whether they had sacrificed anything to the community, some individuals may have inflated their response simply because they felt it was appropriate in the context of the survey. This might be addressed in future research by asking members to also report whether they have been the recipient of another’s sacrifice. It may also be possible to get confirmatory data on individual sacrifices if the study is conducted in smaller,
more intimate brand community contexts where most members know and interact with one another on a regular basis. Self-reported measures are also subject to common-method bias; such concerns can be reduced by establishing concurrent validity through longitudinal studies of the same group.

The fourth limitation is a function of the quasi-experiments conducted in Study 3, in the Bronies and Leonard Cohen communities. The study was intended to demonstrate the causal relationships, external validity and generalizability of the model tested in Study 2, but in an actual brand community setting. However, such field studies generate their own validity concerns. For example, given the study’s real-life setting and firm reliance on volunteer respondents, it is not possible to determine any differences between those who did and did not participate in the survey. Respondents in the Bronies and Leonard Cohen communities were self-selected, and by virtue of donating their time to fill out a survey, may already have been favorably disposed towards the concept of sacrifice for community. That being said, responses for Identification with Community, Satisfaction with Peers and Willingness to Sacrifice showed acceptable variance across the sample. Quasi-experiments are also subject to confounding variables that cannot easily be controlled; in this case, community members’ responses might have been impacted by the member’s current frame of mind, most recent interaction with other members, and overall experience in the community. Repeating the experiment with the same respondents after suitable time interval (a within-subjects design) might reduce this concern.

Finally, my research focused on a limited number of antecedents for Willingness to Sacrifice. As this is the first series of studies attempting to measure WTS among brand community members, the primary purpose was to verify the relationships between constructs and establish a basic model that others could extend with future research. For example, it may be useful to re-examine Morgan & Hunt’s classic study on trust and commitment in marketing relationships (1994) to see whether WTS reduces some of the unexplained variance in their model. Given that both brand communities I studied might be considered off the beaten track in terms of popular culture, it would be interesting to compare instances of WTS in communities with mainstream appeal and those perceived as “underdogs”. As Muniz and Schau
(2005) note, fans of marginalized brands may be more likely to strongly identify with and evangelize the products; my research suggests that both of these constructs relate to willingness to sacrifice.

5.4 Areas for Future Research

The lack of a role for Social Distance in the model remains puzzling; scholars such as Sahlins (1972) and Houston and Gassenheimer (1987) contend that it has a significant role as a driver for willingness to sacrifice in communities. It may be that in virtual communities, and in a globalized world that has cast aside many traditional notions of class and social status, the concept of social distance is no longer relevant. It would be interesting to conduct additional research on brand communities, using different approaches or proxies for measuring social distance, to confirm whether this is the case.

I applied this model to only two brand communities, neither of which was managed by corporate bodies. If Perceptions of Leadership Motives do indeed play a part in determining members’ willingness to sacrifice, we might expect the outcomes to be different from those in the consumer-managed communities featured in this dissertation. Moreover, the communities I studied were built around cultural brands, both of which can be said to be somewhat outside the mainstream. Testing the model in communities of interest for brands that are widely accepted, and for a wider range of products, services and interests, will add more insights to what drives willingness to sacrifice.

As noted in the Limitations section, my studies relied on self-reported measures. To help address the common method bias this introduces, it would be wise to conduct future studies either using a longitudinal research design, or by using techniques that establish concurrent validity.

5.5 Conclusion

This dissertation makes several contributions to relationship marketing theory by developing, defining, distinguishing and testing the willingness to sacrifice construct – specifically within the interactions and relationships in brand communities. Findings from three studies suggest that willingness to sacrifice – a non-rational form of exchange rarely considered in marketing – may be an overlooked node in the nomological network of relationship marketing. Using regression, moderation and mediation
analysis and structural equation modeling, I find there are significant relationships between WTS and key constructs in brand community and relationship marketing research, such as identification and satisfaction with peer relationships. WTS is positively associated with beneficial marketing outcomes such as Word of Mouth, Purchase Intentions and Brand Community Longevity. This implies that brand community managers should explore how they might cultivate an environment in which members are willing to make small sacrifices for the community. While establishing appropriate norms for behavior –something within the control of community moderators– has no direct impact on WTS, there is a linear relationship between such norms and Satisfaction with Peer Relationships, which in turn has a moderate but direct effect on WTS. Facilitating opportunities for individuals to engage in WTS is not only likely to contribute towards brand community success, but also lead to measurable increases in marketing outcomes.

This research also identifies a typology of sacrifices that brand community members make in the context of their enjoyment of the brand experiences such communities provide. Other typologies of sacrifice from the psychology and anthropology literatures (see for example Impett et al 2005; Hubert and Mauss 1964) are less relevant to marketing relationships. This framework of brand community-specific sacrifices may be helpful to community managers and moderators seeking to create the conditions that encourage such behaviours.

Finally, by integrating literature from personal psychology, anthropology and sociology –all of which discuss sacrifice in terms of how it can benefit and strengthen relationships– this research challenges the conventional marketing assumption that sacrifice is merely “the price one pays.” Taken together, these studies enrich our understanding of willingness to sacrifice in a marketing context, and more specifically, identify a process through which it contributes to brand community success and related marketing outcomes.
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Appendix 1: Study 1 Scenarios

Scenarios
Perceived Social Distance A1-Low, A2-High
Perceived Norms of Reciprocity B1-Communal; B2-Self-interested
Perceived Motives of Leadership C1-Social C2-Commercial

Common Preamble
For the purposes of this study, please imagine yourself as Pat in the following scenario. It will take about 5 minutes to go through the scenario. You will be asked some questions on the content of each page as we move through the study.

Pat graduated in 2001 with a degree in Geography and now works for an international consulting agency. She is an active member of the Queen’s University Society in Kingston. The mandate of the QUS is “To promote Queen’s University both around the world and at home, and to build a lifelong positive relationship between stakeholders and the University.”

In effect, Pat is part of a community of thousands of Queen’s University fans who had—and are still having—a great experience and positive relationship with Queen’s University. QUS holds events all over the world where Queen’s graduates can get together, network and share experiences about their time at Queen’s. These events also bring people together to catch up on the latest university news and achievements. The QUS also works with retailers across Canada to sell Queen’s merchandise in mini-boutiques within clothing stores. Products include clothing, sports equipment and giftware, and the proceeds go towards the QUS for reinvesting in Queen’s projects.

Distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully
  a) List two types of merchandise sold in the mini-boutiques.
  b) How many regular volunteers are there in the QUS?

Scenario A1 X B1/B2
(Low Social distance versus Norms of Reciprocity (Communal versus Self-interested)
Communal Reciprocity Condition
When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 120 regular volunteers who help out in the merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

Soon after Pat joined QUS, she noticed that when one community member helps out another, e.g. by proofreading someone else’s newsletter article or taking a volunteer shift if someone is sick, it’s understood that this is done for the benefit of the QUS as a whole. It’s assumed that there is no immediate obligation to do something helpful for this member in return. QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and everyone benefits eventually. In fact, yesterday a volunteer that Pat just met –Lee– noticed that Pat was in a rush setting up for a First Aid gig. Lee volunteered to help and spent a few hours getting the supplies moved and ready to go.

Self-interested Reciprocity Condition
When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 120 regular volunteers who help out in the merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

Soon after Pat joined QUS, she noticed that when one community member helps out another, e.g. by proofreading someone else’s newsletter article or taking a volunteer shift if someone is sick, it’s understood that this is a favour to the individual involved. The expectation at the QUS is that to be fair, the beneficiary should return the favour in the near future. Members tend to believe that if people always return favours, the group will be more successful in the long run. In fact, yesterday, Lee –a volunteer Pat just met– offered to spend a few hours helping Pat set up for a First Aid gig in exchange for help with an event funding application that Lee is having a tough time writing. Pat plans to work with Lee later this week to help write the application.

Low Social Distance Condition
At the last QUS volunteer committee meeting, Mike –a guy Pat has worked with before– asks her to help him with a newsletter article he’s having a tough time writing. Mike joined the QUS at the same she did, and they have worked on a bunch of the same committees. They have even gone out for coffee together a
few times to talk about QUS stuff.

Pat considers the request as she looks at what is on her “to-do” list. She is actually quite busy revamping the Social Event Calendar right now.

Post-condition distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully

a) Who helped Pat set up the First Aid supplies?
   b) T or F: QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and “it all comes out in the wash”.

Common question to both scenarios

Put yourself in Pat’s position for a moment. How likely is that Pat would respond in each of the following ways? Choose the number that best corresponds with your answer, with 1 meaning “Extremely unlikely” and 7 meaning “Extremely likely”.

a) Pat would try to help Mike whether or not he can offer something in return, since these things ”all come out in the wash”.
   b) Pat would try to help Mike if he can help her revamp the Social Event Calendar.
   c) Pat would apologize and say she’s just too busy right now.

Scenario A2 X B1/B2

High Social distance versus Norms of Reciprocity (Communal versus Self-interested)

Communal Reciprocity Condition

When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 600 regular volunteers in Kingston who help out in the local merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

Soon after Pat joined QUS, she noticed that when one community member helps out another, e.g. by proofreading someone else’s newsletter article or taking a volunteer shift if someone is sick, it’s understood that this is done for the benefit of the QUS as a whole. It’s assumed that there is no immediate obligation to do something helpful for this member in return. QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and “it all comes out in the wash”. In fact, yesterday a volunteer that Pat just met –Lee– noticed that Pat was in a rush setting up for a First Aid gig. Lee volunteered to help and spent a few hours getting the supplies moved and ready to go.
Self-interested Reciprocity Condition

When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 600 regular volunteers in Kingston who help out in the local merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

Soon after Pat joined QUS, she noticed that when one community member helps out another, e.g. by proofreading someone else’s newsletter article or taking a volunteer shift if someone is sick, it’s understood that this is a favour to the individual involved. The expectation at the QUS is that to be fair, the beneficiary should return the favour in the near future. Members tend to believe that if people always return favours, members will get along better and the QUS will be more successful in the long run. In fact, yesterday, Lee – a volunteer Pat just met – offered to spend a few hours helping Pat set up for a First Aid gig in exchange for help with an event funding application that Lee is having a tough time writing. Pat plans to work with Lee later this week to help write the application.

Post-condition distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully

a) Who helped Pat set up the First Aid supplies?
b) T or F: QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and “it all comes out in the wash”.

High Social Distance Condition

At the last QUS Ten-Year Reunion Committee meeting, the Committee chair introduced two new members, Mike and Ahmed. They just graduated from Queen’s and both have computer science and engineering backgrounds. After the meeting, Mike approaches Pat and they chat briefly about the planning for the Reunion. Mike has been tasked with developing a website specifically for the Reunion. Since he’s new, he needs someone with knowledge of the QUS and good writing skills to help him with the website content. Pat is actually quite busy revamping the Social Event Calendar right now.

Post-condition distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully

a) What were the names of the two new members of QUS?

Put yourself in Pat’s position for a moment. How likely is that Pat would respond in each the following ways? Choose the number that best corresponds with your answer, with 1 meaning “Extremely unlikely” and 7 meaning “Extremely likely”.

a) Pat would try to help Mike whether or not he can offer something in return, since these things ”all come out in the wash”.
b) Pat would try to help Mike if he can do some of her work on the Social Event Calendar.
c) Pat would apologize and say she’s just too busy right now.
Scenario B1 X C1/C2
(Communal Norms of Reciprocity versus Perceived motives of Leadership (Social versus Commercial))

Social Leadership Condition
When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 120 regular volunteers who help out in the merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

The QUS is a for-profit foundation at Queen’s University. It is run mostly by volunteer members, with one paid administration person. The University pays the salary and donates an office space in the JDUC for the QUS Administrator. Its only other involvement to date has been to allow QUS to license the Queen’s name and logo for its merchandise. Queen’s has always supported the QUS as long as it has followed University Policy and been a positive influence in the community at large.

QUS makes a modest profit from its sale of event tickets and clothing, which it re-invests in promoting the university abroad and at home, and in a scholarship fund for low-income students. Even in tough economic times, the QUS has been able to earn at least $200,000 per year after expenses to reinvest in promotional and networking events that enhance the image of Queen’s. With the exception of the Administrator, who does the bookkeeping, files reports and coordinates all the volunteers, no one is paid. The other senior members who take project leadership roles aren’t in it for money, they do it because they like being involved and maintaining a positive image for the Queen’s community.

Commercial Leadership Condition
When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 120 regular volunteers who help out in the merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

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Queen’s name and logo for its merchandise. Queen’s has always supported the QUS as long as it has followed University Policy and been a positive influence in the community at large.

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Last month, Queen’s announced that it could no longer support the various societies and clubs with funding. Indeed, these organizations – including QUS – would be expected to contribute towards Queens’ debt reduction strategy. As a result, QUS will now have to pay the University for its office space and an administrative person–approximately $80,000. The University also decided to charge more to license its name and logo. As a result, the QUS expects to be able to contribute $100,000 per year towards its mandate.

Post-condition distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully

  a) Where is the QUS office?
  a) T or F: Queen’s University pays the QUS administrative person.

Communal Reciprocity Condition

Soon after Pat joined QUS, she noticed that when one community member helps out another, e.g. by proofreading someone else’s newsletter article or taking a volunteer shift if someone is sick, it’s understood that this is done for the benefit of the QUS as a whole. It’s assumed that there is no immediate obligation to do something helpful for this member in return. QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and “it all comes out in the wash”. In fact, yesterday a volunteer that Pat just met – Lee – noticed that Pat was in a rush setting up for a First Aid gig. Lee volunteered to help and spent a few hours getting the supplies moved and ready to go.

Post-condition distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully

  a) Who helped Pat set up the First Aid supplies?
  b) T or F: QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and “it all comes out in the wash”.

**Common question to both scenarios**

At the last QUS Ten-Year Reunion Committee meeting, the Committee chair introduced two new members, Mike and Ahmed. They recently graduated from Queen’s and both have computer science and engineering backgrounds. After the meeting, Mike approaches Pat and they chat briefly about the planning for the Reunion. Mike has been tasked with developing a website specifically for the Reunion. Since he’s new, he needs someone with knowledge of the QUS and good writing skills to help him with the content. Pat is actually quite busy revamping the Social Event Calendar right now.

Put yourself in Pat’s position for a moment. How likely is that Pat would respond in each the following ways? Choose the number that best corresponds with your answer, with 1 meaning “Extremely unlikely” and 7 meaning “Extremely likely”.

a) Pat would try to help Mike whether or not he can offer something in return, since these things “all come out in the wash”.

b) Pat would try to help Mike if he can do some of her work on the Social Event Calendar

c) Pat would apologize and say she’s just too busy right now.

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**Scenario B2 X C1/C2**

**(Self-interested Norms of Reciprocity versus Perceived motives of Leadership (Social versus Commercial))**

**Social Leadership Condition**

When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 120 regular volunteers who help out in the merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

The QUS is a for-profit foundation at Queen’s University. It is run mostly by volunteer members, with one paid administration person. The University pays the salary and donates an office space in the JDUC for the QUS Administrator. Its only other involvement to date has been to allow QUS to license the Queen’s name and logo for its merchandise. Queen’s has always supported the QUS as long as it has followed University Policy and been a positive influence in the community at large.
QUS makes a modest profit from its sale of event tickets and clothing, which it re-invests in promoting the university abroad and at home, and in a scholarship fund for low-income students. Even in tough economic times, the QUS has been able to earn at least $200,000 per year after expenses to reinvest in promotional and networking events that enhance the image of Queen’s. With the exception of the Administrator, who does the bookkeeping, files reports and coordinates all the volunteers, no one is paid. The other senior members who take project leadership roles aren’t in it for money, they do it because they like being involved and maintaining a positive image for the Queen’s community.

**Commercial Leadership Condition**

When Pat is not travelling for her job, she is one of about 120 regular volunteers who help out in the merchandise boutiques, or on various committees for the Society. For example, she is a volunteer First Aid provider during Frosh Week events every year. She also helps with the on-line Social Event Calendar, and because she writes well, she regularly submits articles for the QUS newsletter.

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**Self-interested Reciprocity Condition**

Soon after Pat joined QUS, she noticed that when one community member helps out another, e.g. by proofreading someone else’s newsletter article or taking a volunteer shift if someone is sick, it’s understood that this is a favour to the individual involved. The expectation at the QUS is that to be fair, the beneficiary should return the favour in the near future. Members tend to believe that if people always return favours, members will get along better and the QUS will be more successful in the long run. In fact, yesterday, Lee—a volunteer Pat just met—offered to spend a few hours helping Pat set up for a First Aid gig in exchange for help with an event funding application that Lee is having a tough time writing. Pat plans to work with Lee later this week to help write the application.

Post-condition distraction Questions meant to motivate students to read scenarios carefully

a) Who helped Pat set up the First Aid supplies?

b) T or F: QUS members tend to believe that what helps one person helps the Association as a whole, and “it all comes out in the wash”.

**Common question to both scenarios**

At the last QUS Ten-Year Reunion Committee meeting, the Committee chair introduced two new members, Mike and Ahmed. They recently graduated from Queen’s and both have computer science and engineering backgrounds. After the meeting, Mike approaches Pat and they chat briefly about the planning for the Reunion. Mike has been tasked with developing a website specifically for the Reunion. Since he’s new, he needs someone with knowledge of the QUS and good writing skills to help him with the content. Pat is actually quite busy revamping the Social Event Calendar right now.

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b) Pat would try to help Mike if he can do some of her work on the Social Event Calendar.

c) Pat would apologize and say she’s just too busy right now.
Appendix 2: Survey Scale Items

The purpose of this survey is to understand your thoughts and feelings about being a member of your community. Before we get started, please answer the following questions so that I can understand more about your background. Remember that these answers cannot be linked back to you, as your identifying information is not attached to these questions.

a) What is your age range?
   a) 15-24
   b) 25-44
   c) 45-54
   d) 45-54
   e) 55-64
   f) 65+

b) What is your highest level of education?
   a) Less than high school
   b) Completed high school
   c) Completed some post-secondary (college or university)
   d) Completed college degree
   e) Completed university degree
   f) Post-graduate degree

c) Are you….?
   a) male
   b) female

Questions d-i are only for those participants in actual communities, not for those taking part in the experiment.

d) What is the name of your community?
   Open-ended

e) How long have you been a member of this community?
   a) Less than one year
   b) 1-2 years
   c) 3-5 years
   d) More than 5 years
f) Generally speaking, how active are you with the community? (i.e., how much time do you tend to spend interacting with community members or working on community-related projects?)
   a) less than 1 hour per month
   b) 1-3 hours per month
   c) 4-6 hours per month
   d) 7-12 hours per month
   e) 13+ hours per month

g) Who do you think manages this brand community and keeps it operating?
   a) One member or a small group of members
   b) All of the members
   c) The company (the brand itself)
   d) A disinterested party
   e) Don’t know

h) When you joined this community, were you given (check all that apply):
   a) A personal welcome from the moderator?
   b) A personal welcome from any of the members?
   c) An introduction to any of the members?
   d) An orientation package outlining the rules of the community?
   e) A link to community guidelines and frequently asked questions?
   f) Encouragement to begin participating in community discussions and events?

i) What are some of the things this community does to maintain good relationships among its members?
   (Open-ended)

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**Note: In the Experimental condition, participants are asked to imagine themselves in Pat’s position to answer these questions.**

1. All relationships have a certain amount of “give and take” involved. Please think about the level of interaction that is typical or expected of your community members, and answer the following questions. <<Perceived Norms of Reciprocity, Shore et al 2006>>

Answer the following questions using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)
   a. People in this community would help me, even if I can’t make more contributions at present.
b. Community members seem interested in increasing the quality of my experience here.
c. People in my community would do something for me without any strings attached.
d. Community members provide benefits to me that exceed my contributions to them.
e. It seems important to community members that what I get from the community is no more than what I give.
f. People in my community take care of their own interests as much as my interest.
g. As long as I show my concern for the welfare of the community, the community will be concerned for my welfare in return.
h. Community members wouldn’t necessarily help me out unless it was in their own interest.
i. What I get from my community is only a small part of what I actually contribute.
j. Everyone seems to have his or her own reason for being part of this community.
k. If community members were to help me, I would have to return the favour soon after or I might be criticized or ostracized.
l. In this community, members will do things that might not really benefit them but that help make the community better.

1a) On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1=Very Self-oriented and 10=Highly Community-oriented, where would you place most members in this community?

2. As a community member, how much do you agree with the following statements?
<<Willingness to Sacrifice, Based on Randall et al, 1990>>

Answer the following questions using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

a. I am willing to volunteer for tasks that will benefit the community at large.
b. I am willing to take on more responsibility in the community than the average person.
c. I can think of examples where I’ve done something for the community at large instead of doing something I’d rather do.
d. I am willing to give up some of my personal time in order to benefit the community as a whole.
e. I am willing to spend money on things that the community at large values.
f. I have changed some of my beliefs and/or values as a result of becoming part of this community.
g. I am willing to volunteer for tasks that would help a specific friend or acquaintance in the community.
h. I am willing to give up some of my personal time in order to help a friend or acquaintance.
i. I am willing to spend money on things that a friend in this community suggests are important.
j. I can think of examples where I’ve done something for another individual in this community even though I would rather have been doing something else.

3. Think about the people who lead and manage your community. What are your thoughts about their leadership?
<<A dimension of the Sense of Psychological Community Scale (Glynn 1981), based on relationship authenticity scales from (Schaefer and Pettijohn 2006) and Henderson and Hoy 1982. (Alpha .82 and .95)>>

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a. The people who manage this community are here to help us get the most of out of our experience with the product.
b. The people who manage this community are more interested in business goals than in what the community wants to do.
c. The people who manage this community really care about the individuals in this community.
d. I feel that leaders of this community are participating mostly because they want to sell more products.
e. Leaders of this community are always shaping it to meet the needs of the members.
f. I feel that community leaders pay attention to me because they ultimately want my money.
g. Community leaders see me as just a wallet, not as a member.
h. I feel that community leaders sometimes manipulate the members into buying things.
i. I trust that when leaders of this community give me advice, it’s truly in my best interest.
jj. My community leaders are transparent and open about how things that are happening in the community affect us all.

4. How do you get along with other members in your community?
<<Social Satisfaction, Asher, Hymel and Renshaw 1984>>

Answer the following questions using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree)

a. It's easy for me to make friends in this community.
b. I have a hard time talking to other people in this community.
c. I'm good at working with other people in this community.
d. It's hard to get to know other people in the community.
e. I feel left out of the loop on a lot of things that go on here.
f. There's not really anyone I can go to when I need help with something in this community.
g. When I’m doing something in this community I feel like I’m a part of something enjoyable.
h. I think I am pretty well-liked by others in this community.

5. Perceived Social Distance
<< Social Distance, modified Bogardus Scale, e.g. Dietrich et al 2004; Jerebek and DeMan 1994, alpha (Dietrich) =.90>>

I would be comfortable having a member of this community… (check all that apply)

a. Live in my town.
b. Rent an apartment from me.
c. Become one of my co-workers.
d. Become my next-door neighbor.
e. Become a close personal friend.
6. Imagine that one of the circles at the left in each row represents your own self-definition or identity, and the other circle at the right represents your community’s identity. <<Identification, Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000>>

Please indicate which case (A,B,C,D,E, F, G or H) best represents the level of overlap between your own identity and the community’s identity.

7. In your opinion, how likely is it that this community will still exist in its current state of wellbeing in five years? (Seven point Likert scale anchored by Not Very Likely and Very Likely)

8. How likely are you to <<buy something related to this community>> in the next 3 months? (Juster Purchase Probability Scale, 1966)
9. What do you think this study is trying to find out?
Open-ended.

10. To what extent is each of the following statements true about your membership in the community? (Seven point Likert scale anchored by Strongly Agree and Strongly Disagree)

a) I’ve spent money that I would otherwise have spent on something else
b) I’ve given personal time that I would otherwise have spent in some other way
c) I’ve given up certain beliefs I once held important to me since joining this community
d) I’ve stopped seeing certain friends and family as a result of joining this community

11. Please write a sentence or two explaining why you engaged in this behavior.

12. Sacrifice can be defined as “giving up something that will result in a meaningful loss to you.” Under this definition, have you sacrificed anything for the community you belong to?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Unsure

13. Can you think of an example where you made an actual sacrifice for a community you were a part of? Please explain:
Open-ended
### Appendix 3: Correlation Matrix for Study 3: All Items

|                          | Pearson | CO  | IDC  | IDM  | Sim  | SPR1 | SPR2 | SPR3 | SPR4 | SPR5 | SPR6 | SPR7 | N1  | N2  | N3  | N4  | N5  | w1  | w2  | w3  | w4  | w5  | w6  | w7  | w8  | w9  | w10 | PSD |
|--------------------------|---------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| **comm oriento.**        | Pearson R | -   | .261** | .115** | .192** | .157** | .189** | .166** | .193** | .176** | .245** | .113** | .198** | .247** | .220** | .175** | .320** | .177** | .115** | .085** | .171** | .140** | .160** | .095** | .085** | .139** | .044** | -.022 |
| **IDcommunity.**         | Pearson R | -   | .192** | .414** | .368** | .278** | .102** | .293** | .208** | .138** | .266** | .303** | .277** | .339** | .189** | .258** | .208** | .216** | .331** | .288** | .193** | .386** | .289** | .292** | .249** | .301** | .316** | .182** | .609 |
| **IDmembers.**           | Pearson R | -   | -    | .261** | 1    | .543** | .431** | .341** | .422** | .363** | .286** | .345** | .451** | .390** | .426** | .389** | .409** | .267** | .337** | .409** | .322** | .337** | .455** | .330** | .209** | .298** | .343** | .334** | .199** | .038 |
| **Similar Group**        | Pearson R | -   | .135** | .543** | 1    | .320** | .283** | .393** | .275** | .202** | .288** | .342** | .347** | .288** | .193** | .249** | .183** | .257** | .345** | .284** | .372** | .348** | .273** | .178** | .245** | .251** | .308** | .183** | .041 |
| **SPR1_friend**          | Pearson R | -   | .192** | .431** | .320** | 1    | .478** | .538** | .495** | .225** | .397** | .417** | .447** | .379** | .324** | .296** | .169** | .280** | .379** | .418** | .337** | .347** | .174** | .237** | .330** | .319** | .192** | .255** | .081** |
| **SPR2_easytalk**        | Pearson R | -   | .157** | .341** | .233** | .478** | 1    | .426** | .510** | .266** | .345** | .269** | .340** | .245** | .229** | .247** | .214** | .179** | .263** | .304** | .282** | .193** | .082** | .146** | .140** | .159** | .074** | .251** | .086** |
| **SPR3_workwell**        | Pearson R | -   | .189** | .422** | .393** | .538** | .261** | 1    | .449** | .245** | .370** | .376** | .577** | .355** | .341** | .230** | .109** | .286** | .451** | .466** | .332** | .376** | .222** | .200** | .373** | .339** | .229** | .249** | .092** |
| **SPR4_friendlu**        | Pearson R | -   | .168** | .363** | .275** | .499** | .510** | .449** | 1    | .392** | .458** | .318** | .394** | .308** | .244** | .251** | .200** | .251** | .261** | .242** | .234** | .355** | .124** | .138** | .195** | .235** | .227** | .195** | .196** | .068 |
| **SPR5_included**        | Pearson R | -   | .193** | .286** | .222** | .225** | .266** | .245** | .392** | 1    | .340** | .210** | .267** | .209** | .208** | .215** | .178** | .182** | .107** | .139** | .603** | .101** | .168** | .033** | .101** | .069** | .112** | .097** | .048** |
| **SPR6_help**            | Pearson R | -   | .176** | .345** | .268** | .367** | .345** | .370** | .458** | .340** | 1    | .272** | .368** | .118** | .190** | .303** | .061** | .231** | .283** | .276** | .222** | .291** | .284** | .187** | .294** | .307** | .291** | .261** | .076 |
| **SPR7_enjoy**           | Pearson R | -   | .245** | .451** | .342** | .417** | .269** | .376** | .318** | .210** | .272** | 1    | .346** | .373** | .304** | .320** | .281** | .316** | .339** | .284** | .373** | .364** | .215** | .231** | .304** | .343** | .211** | .160** | .052 |
| **SPR8_liked**           | Pearson R | -   | .113** | .390** | .347** | .447** | .540** | .577** | .394** | .267** | .388** | .346** | 1    | .112** | .211** | .264** | .069** | .238** | .393** | .428** | .156** | .331** | .242** | .099** | .330** | .307** | .284** | .252** | .059 |
| **N1_helpme**            | Pearson R | -   | .198** | .426** | .266** | .379** | .245** | .335** | .308** | .209** | .318** | .373** | .312** | 1    | .436** | .672** | .344** | .348** | .368** | .255** | .173** | .324** | .277** | .221** | .316** | .331** | .235** | .198** | .014** |
| **N2_helpothers**        | Pearson R | -   | .247** | .369** | .193** | .324** | .229** | .231** | .244** | .206** | .190** | .304** | .211** | .306** | 1    | .440** | .265** | .350** | .287** | .164** | .089** | .242** | .187** | .160** | .255** | .213** | .156** | .080** | -.052 |
| **N3_nostrings**         | Pearson R | -   | .220** | .409** | .249** | .296** | .147** | .309** | .251** | .215** | .303** | .320** | .264** | .672** | .440** | 1    | .291** | .344** | .324** | .170** | .177** | .242** | .242** | .170** | .273** | .238** | .214** | .163** | .017 |

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|         | CO  | IDC | IDM | Sim | SPR1 | SPR2 | SPR3 | SPR4 | SPR5 | SPR6 | SPR7 | SPR8 | N1  | N2  | N3  | N4  | N5  | w1  | w2  | w3  | w4  | w5  | w6  | w7  | w8  | w9  | w10 | PSD |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| N5_goodfallow | **| .209 | .289 | .307 | .257 | .280 | .179 | .286 | .201 | .182 | .211 | .316 | .238 | .348 | .358 | .344 | .363 | 1   | .330 | .228 | .225 | .276 | .169 | .148 | .262 | .243 | .201 | .126 | .004 |
| w1_volcomm | **| .216 | .288 | .331 | .222 | .298 | .418 | .304 | .466 | .261 | .139 | .276 | .284 | .428 | .255 | .184 | .179 | .096 | .228 | .666 | 1   | .524 | .559 | .217 | .224 | .455 | .421 | .231 | .339 | .010 |
| w2_responsi | **| .339 | .407 | .337 | .272 | .337 | .282 | .332 | .224 | .063 | .222 | .237 | .316 | .273 | .089 | .177 | .071 | .225 | .413 | .524 | 1   | .553 | .221 | .255 | .296 | .337 | .266 | .343 | .272 | .032 |
| w3_givecomm | **| .288 | .407 | .337 | .272 | .337 | .282 | .332 | .224 | .063 | .222 | .237 | .316 | .273 | .089 | .177 | .071 | .225 | .413 | .524 | 1   | .553 | .221 | .255 | .296 | .337 | .266 | .343 | .272 | .032 |
| w5_givemoney | **| .337 | .307 | .337 | .272 | .337 | .282 | .332 | .224 | .063 | .222 | .237 | .316 | .273 | .089 | .177 | .071 | .225 | .413 | .524 | 1   | .553 | .221 | .255 | .296 | .337 | .266 | .343 | .272 | .032 |
| w7_volfriend | **| .301 | .302 | .300 | .290 | .237 | .146 | .200 | .124 | .033 | .167 | .231 | .099 | .221 | .166 | .170 | .204 | .148 | .209 | .22 | .255 | .162 | 1   | .227 | .309 | .250 | .198 | .045 | .292 | .094 |
| w8_timefriend | **| .249 | .302 | .300 | .290 | .237 | .146 | .200 | .124 | .033 | .167 | .231 | .099 | .221 | .166 | .170 | .204 | .148 | .209 | .22 | .255 | .162 | 1   | .227 | .309 | .250 | .198 | .045 | .292 | .094 |
| w9_spendWOM | **| .316 | .337 | .307 | .306 | .192 | .074 | .229 | .195 | .112 | .211 | .211 | .284 | .235 | .156 | .214 | .140 | .201 | .343 | .231 | .266 | .361 | .631 | .250 | .423 | .453 | 1   | .288 | .027 |
| w10_giveindiv | **| .301 | .316 | .337 | .307 | .306 | .192 | .074 | .229 | .195 | .112 | .211 | .211 | .284 | .235 | .156 | .214 | .140 | .201 | .343 | .231 | .266 | .361 | .631 | .250 | .423 | .453 | 1   | .288 | .027 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).  * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).