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# **The Role of Love Languages Characteristics on Responses to Marketing Stimuli**

by

**Kaley BreAnn Doster**

**An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Honors Diploma**

to

**The Honors College**

of

**The University of Alabama in Huntsville**

**April 22, 2019**

**Honors Capstone Director: Dr. Liwu Hsu, Associate Professor of Marketing**

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## Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Introduction	3
Hypotheses	6
Research Methods	13
Measures	14
Results	17
General Discussion	21
Reference List	24
Figures	26
Tables	27
Appendix	30

## **Abstract**

Chapman's Five Love Languages (i.e., Words of Affirmation, Physical Touch, Quality Time, Receiving Gifts, and Acts of Service) describe how people best form and strengthen relationships based on their Love Language order. However, these Love Languages can be applied to relationships other than simply romantic ones, such as business relationships, friendships, and familial relationships. Because marketing is essentially a method of forming relationships with consumers, it can be hypothesized that different marketing strategies appeal to consumers with different Love Languages. In this study, the relationship between each Love Language and consumer preference for various marketing stimuli will be analyzed through an online survey. The sample for this study was 143 participants ranging from age 18 to 65 and above. The findings highlight four of the five Love Languages have relationships with consumer shopping behavior. Knowledge of any relationships that exist between Chapman's Five Love Languages and various marketing stimuli will provide useful information for marketers and provide insight into methods for marketing strategy.

## Introduction

Gary Chapman's (1995) Five Love Languages evaluation is used to provide insight into a person's relationships and how they best give and receive love/appreciation. The Five Love Languages are Words of Affirmation, which is based on kind words and reassurance; Physical Touch, which is based on touching and physical interactions; Acts of Service, which is based on actions and gestures; Receiving Gifts, which is based on thoughtfulness and gift-giving, and Quality Time, which is based on time spent together or dedicated to the relationship. For this evaluation, Chapman (1995) discusses various common occurrences in relationships and based on the ones a person chooses, that would determine their Love Language. For example, the evaluation may ask if a person would feel more loved if: A. their significant other did the laundry without them asking B. their significant other sent a long, heartfelt text expressing their appreciation for them, or C. their significant other surprised them with jewelry. Another example of an evaluation question would be asking if the participant would feel more loved if A. their significant other spent the entire day with them, B. their significant held their hand in the car, or C. their significant other told them that they are proud of them. Each answer to each question is linked to a particular Love Language, and after 50 varying questions like this, the weights of each preference are collected and used to determine the order of preference for each of the Five Love Languages (Chapman 1995).

Millions of people seek out Chapman's advice on successful communication in their relationship each year. A #1 best seller on Amazon.com and with over 2.9 million results in a single Google search, his theories and advice are highly sought-after. However, these Love Languages can be applied to many other aspects of their lives without them even realizing it. A person's Love Language determines which methods of communication appeal most to them, as

well as how they best feel and receive appreciation. Because of this, their Love Language also affects how they receive specific messaging and ultimately make decisions. Although the Five Love Languages are becoming more widely accepted as scientific fact, there has been very little research on them in fields other than relationships. Every consumer is different, and responds to various marketing stimuli and offers differently. Therefore, one marketing strategy or promotion/offer will not appeal to every consumer. Because of this, various forms of marketing strategies and promotions should be utilized in order to reach and appeal to the greatest number of consumers. For example, a study conducted by Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) measuring the correlation between the satisfaction levels of consumers and different marketing and promotional strategies found that while some strategies, such as high buyer-seller interaction, lead to high satisfaction in many consumers, none lead to satisfaction in all cases. This further proves that while trends exist, there is no universal way to increase satisfaction in all consumers (Sheth and Parvatiyar 1995). However, discovering existing trends can assist marketers in developing a marketing strategy.

Despite Love Languages falling into a seemingly different category than the previously mentioned literature, Kramer (1991) suggests that relationship satisfaction is related to consumer satisfaction, and it can be measured in extremely similar ways. Consumers who feel the most understood by brands/stores are more likely to have higher satisfaction (Kramer 1991). Although the closeness may vary, both buyer-seller relationships and personal relationships are ultimately made up of the same things: communication, loyalty, and trust (Chapman 1995; Kramer 1991). Due to the lack of research done on this topic, I also researched related topics such as consumer satisfaction (e.g., Kramer 1991; Anderson 1998; Westbrook and Oliver 1981), pricing-levels (e.g.,

Shurmer 1971; Schneider 1981), buyer-seller relationships (e.g., Wilson and Ghingold 1981; Wilson 1995), and gift giving (e.g., Bagozzi 1975; Schneider 1981) to address this gap.

Furthermore, I was inspired to conduct this research when I was shopping one day with my family. My mother and I make our purchase decisions based on reviews we have read, ratings, purchases we have made in the past, and through recommendations from our friends. My father and my brother, however, make their purchase decisions solely on how a product feels. With clothing, they have to touch it before purchasing, and with other items, they will not buy them until they can physically test out the product. For example, a fishing rod - they had to physically cast it and reel it in in the store before considering a purchase. This realization made me wonder why we make our decisions so differently, but then I realized that both my mother and I's Love Language is Words of Affirmation. Intrigued, I looked deeper and discovered that my brother and my father's Love Language is Physical Touch. After making these two connections, I wondered: How much does a person's Love Language affect their consumption patterns? Marketing strategies are intended to build relationships with customers, and I believe that the best way to do so is through the language of their heart. Therefore, marketers should be considering these Five Love Languages when creating a marketing strategy and forming buyer-seller relationships. Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge, very few have been conducted. The main contribution of this paper is to find patterns and propose marketing strategies that will best meet the desires of consumers.

Building on these perspectives, I integrate emerging insights from the literature on Chapman's Five Love Languages (1995) into a process framework that helps enumerate and explain proposed hypotheses. Figure 1 provides the conceptual framework for investigating the effects of the Five Love Languages on purchasing behavior and provides a road map for the organization of the hypotheses in this study.

--- Insert Figure 1 about here ---

I first consider the Five Love Languages and how each one affects people's relationships. As previously mentioned, each one has a unique impact on a person's preferred form of communication and level of interaction (Chapman 1995). Next, I discuss store preference and promotion preference and consider the factors associated with certain stores. Essentially, by asking respondents to provide their Love Languages in order, I will be able to compare it to the order of importance of various promotion strategies and decision factors, as well as levels of product/store interaction. Finally, I discuss my analysis of the data collected in this study and my findings. From those results, I reach and discuss conclusions on what these discoveries mean for marketing strategy.

### **Hypotheses**

According to Chapman (1995, p. 21), for people with the Words of Affirmation Love Language, "kind, encouraging, and positive words are truly life-giving. Hearing reasons behind [these words] is even better". People with the Words of Affirmation Love Language love and build relationships/trust best through reassurance, and they love details (Chapman 1995). Words are extremely important to people with this Love Language. They need to be reminded repeatedly of people's feelings for them, and that they are making the correct decisions (Chapman 1995). Goff and Goddard (2007) also suggest that people with his Love Language value encouragement, appreciation, and compliments, as well as forgiveness. Besides, of all of the Love Languages, Words of Affirmation requires the most communication.

Consumers that read reviews are often heavily influenced by reviews, thus shape their purchasing decisions around the details written in reviews. Liu and Park's study measuring the relationship between reviews and purchasing decisions suggests that more positive details written

in reviews, especially regarding the functionality of a product or the overall experience, lead to higher levels of decisions to purchase, whereas more negative details written in reviews lead to a decrease in consumers' decision to purchase (Liu and Park 2015). In addition, Dimensional Research (2013) suggests that reviews are so influential that when asked if they were influenced by reviews, 90% of participants said their purchasing decisions are influenced by positive reviews, and 80% said their purchasing decisions are influenced by negative reviews. Of the participants in the study, only 10% said their purchasing decisions were not influenced by reviews at all. These results prove that the majority of the consumer population (with access to reviews) is influenced in some way by reviews (Dimensional Research 2013). Although most consumers are likely to read reviews, consumers with the Words of Affirmation Love Language are the most likely to read and use reviews to influence their purchasing decisions. Reviews are used to provide detailed feedback on products and stores/restaurants, informing potential customers whether or not a product or visit to the store/restaurant in question is a wise decision or a wise purchase. Therefore, reviews provide reassurance and details to readers - both things that people with the Words of Affirmation Love Language seek out. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

**H1: People with the Words of Affirmation Love Language prefer to read reviews before making purchases.**

According to Chapman (1995, p. 32), "A person whose primary language is Physical Touch is, not surprisingly, very touchy... Physical presence and accessibility are crucial". People with the Physical Touch Love Language develop relationships best through touch and experience. The higher the level of physical interaction a person has, the stronger the satisfaction they will have in the relationships they build (Chapman 1995). The Physical Touch Love Language can often be incorrectly associated with intimacy alone, but actually includes quite more than that. Goff and

Goddard (2007) suggest that physical expression is just as important as actual touch. This expression does not have to directly touch the person, but instead must be a tangible representation of appreciation for the person, such as going on a trip (Goff and Goddard 2007). Ultimately, the overall experience is everything.

A study conducted by Westbrook and Oliver (1981) measuring the level of customer satisfaction given various levels of physical and non-physical interaction suggests that more interactive experiences with products and product alternatives provide the highest satisfaction levels in consumers. This is especially true in the comparison of various alternatives. When deciding between alternative products, Westbrook and Oliver (1981) estimated that customers are able to more easily make decisions and have higher satisfaction when they can physically compare their alternatives. Conversely, being unable to physically compare alternatives resulted in higher stress, more difficult decision-making and lower satisfaction levels in customers (Westbrook and Oliver 1981). In addition, physical interaction with products allows customers to make decisions that are more definite. When deciding between two products that they know little about and cannot hold or experience before purchasing, customers become stressed and overwhelmed in deciding which product they prefer (Turner 1982). Comparing two items in person allows customers to make decisions based on physical comparisons, such as preferred texture, weight, etc. and to make decisions that are more confident because there is less uncertainty in actual experience. When they are able to experience a product before purchasing, customers do not fear that they have made the wrong decision, further suggesting the role of physical interaction in decision-making (Turner 1982). Further, consumers are able to better relate their social identity to, or feel more related to, a product or brand when they are physically able to interact with it. Kramer (1991) estimated that social identity relatedness is enhanced by factors involving personal interaction, while it is

decreased in situations where there is little physical interaction. As previously mentioned, for people with the Physical Touch Love Language, the ability to be in person with, physically hold, and observe objects best helps them to understand things. Because of their need for experience and physical interaction, consumers with the Physical Touch Love Language respond best to high-quality products. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

**H2: People with the Physical Touch Love Language prefer high-quality products.**

According to Chapman (1995, p. 40), for people with the Receiving Gifts Love Language, “the perfect gift or gesture shows that you are known, you are cared for, and you are prized above whatever was sacrificed to bring the gift to you... Gifts are representations of love and are treasured greatly.” People with this Love Language value thoughtfulness and gifts. The higher the sacrifice, in the case of consumers the sacrifice would be the price paid to obtain a gift, the higher the level of satisfaction that is felt (Chapman 1995). Further, Goff and Goddard (2007) found that people with the Receiving Gifts Love Language enjoy receiving money or gift cards/certificates as gifts. This suggests that money is seen as an acceptable gift, and has somewhat high importance to the satisfaction of people with this Love Language. The higher quality the gift, often meaning the higher the price of the gift, the better (Chapman 1995).

A study conducted by Bagozzi (1975) measuring the relationship between gift-giving and consumer satisfaction suggests that gift giving has a positive correlation with consumer satisfaction, thus building stronger buyer-seller relationships. Further building on this idea, Schneider (1981) conducted a study measuring the relationship between price levels of gifts and the strength and satisfaction felt in the relationships involved. Schneider (1981) found that consumers have higher satisfaction in buyer-seller relationships when they receive gifts. Furthermore, the more expensive the gift, the higher the satisfaction. Additionally, as the price

levels of the gifts increased, the strength of the relationships increased as well (Schneider 1981). By measuring the relationship between the value of the gift and the strength of the relationship, Shurmer (1971) also found that higher value gifts lead to stronger relationships, thus higher satisfaction. According to Chapman's theories (1995), some people place a higher value on gift giving within relationships because of their Love Language and that consumers with the Receiving Gifts Love Language respond best to “gift-like” offers/products. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

**H3: People with the Receiving Gifts Love Language prefer more expensive products/stores.**

On people with the Quality Time Love Language, Chapman (1995, p. 49) writes, “Being there for this type of person is critical, but really being there makes [them] feel truly special and loved”. People with this Love Language value attention, involvement, and the dedication of time. People with the Quality Time Love Language value time commitments more than anything. To feel appreciated, they must know and truly believe that time is being spent with them or is being set aside for them. This quality time does not always have to be one-on-one or even in person, but instead must be understood to be occurring and there if needed (Chapman 1995).

A huge factor in the strength of buyer-seller relationships can be attributed to the amount of time and attention devoted to them (Mummalaneni and Wilson 1991). When companies provide offers that last a certain, often extended, amount of time, it proves to consumers that the company/store/seller truly cares about its relationship with the consumer. When it comes to relationship management by measuring customer satisfaction depending on the time spent with them, Wilson and Ghingold (1981) suggest that companies that put more time and effort into their consumer relationships are more likely to perform better in selling and relational selling and have

better relationships with their customers. Their study goes on to suggest that while this idea is true for most consumers, consumers have the highest satisfaction when they have, or believe that they have, similar values to the company/store/seller. By providing free warranties, stores are able to prove that they are willing to dedicate extra time to ensure the consumer's satisfaction in order to maintain a strong relationship. Fisk (1970) found that offering free warranties can increase consumer satisfaction by as much as 20% in only one year by measuring the relationship between companies that offer free warranties and consumer satisfactions. Additionally, the more effort is taken to meet warranty policies, the higher the consumer satisfaction (Fisk 1970). Conversely, companies that fail to follow through on the warranties they promised have low levels of consumer satisfaction; and that when little effort is put forth by the company to meet warranty guidelines/assist with consumer needs, the buyer-seller relationships are negatively impacted (Fisk 1970). Consumers that value close buyer-seller relationships most likely value high levels of quality time. Quality time for people with this Love Language does not have to be spent in person, but instead, must simply make them truly believe that time is being dedicated to them or is available to them if needed. Consumers with the Quality Time Love Language respond best to marketing stimuli that provide extended time dedications. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

**H4: People with the Quality Time Love Language prefer the free warranty promotion.**

On people with the Acts of Service Love Language, Chapman (1995, p. 60) writes: "Can vacuuming the floors really be an expression of love? Absolutely! Anything you do to ease the burden of responsibilities weighing on an "Acts of Service" person will speak volumes. The words he or she most want to hear: "Let me do that for you." Laziness, broken commitments, and making

more work for them tell speakers of this Love Language their feelings do not matter. Finding ways to serve speaks volumes to the recipient of these acts.” People with this Love Language need to feel served. They appreciate when others go out of their way to do things that they themselves may not enjoy, or assist in things that they could potentially find stressful. Goff and Goddard (2007) showed that for people with the Acts of Service Love Language, the more inconvenient the task that is done for them, the higher the satisfaction when someone completes it for them. Ultimately, people with this Love Language appreciate when others go out of their way to help them or attempt to make their experiences more enjoyable (Goff and Goddard 2007).

As previously mentioned, for many consumers, making new purchases is difficult and stressful, especially when there are multiple options to choose from (Turner 1982). By measuring the relationship between consumer satisfaction and word of mouth, Anderson (1998) found that consumers are twice as likely to write about negative experiences as positive experiences in reviews. Additionally, Dichter (1966) suggests that most consumers write reviews in order to assist others in their purchasing decisions. Besides, most people write reviews with the intent of preventing future consumers from making "bad" purchasing decisions and having negative experiences (Dichter 1966). Although writing detailed reviews takes time, reviews are written with the intent to remove a burden from future consumers (Dichter 1966). Reviews assist in the purchase decision-making process because other consumers take the time to write detailed accounts of their experiences with various products or stores, thus assisting in the decision process for future potential consumers. Review writers sacrifice their time in order to perform this service for future potential consumers, thus providing an act of service. Because people with the Acts of Service Love Language enjoy for people to do things for them, especially things that make their everyday

lives easier, people with the Acts of Service Love Language tend to read reviews. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

**H5: People with the Acts of Service Love Language prefer to read reviews before making purchases.**

### **Research Methods**

I chose an online survey as my method of research. This survey was created on SurveyMonkey.com and contained ranking, multiple choice, and open-ended questions. The survey took around ten minutes to complete. For distribution, I posted the link to the survey on Facebook and Twitter. Data collection ranged for one month from September 10, 2018 to October 10, 2018. The participants could potentially be biased because they know the creator of the survey. In addition, the data could be skewed because of similar demographics and location. The complete survey is provided at the end of the study (see Appendix). The first section of the survey asked participants to rank their Love Languages from highest to lowest. A link to Chapman's official evaluation was also provided in the case that participants did not know their Love Language. I then asked them to list their three favorite home goods or clothing store. Next, I listed out a series of sales promotions and asked the participant to rank these in order of importance to them when shopping at home goods and clothing stores. After this portion was complete, I moved to the grocery store section. Once again, I asked participants to list their three favorite grocery stores with an open question and then listed out a series of sales promotions, asking them to rank them from the order of importance. Next, I moved to sales promotions chosen when dining out and asked participants to rank them in order of importance. I then asked if the participant read reviews or consulted the opinions of friends or family members before making purchases of products. In this instance, "products" refers to any kind of product that they purchase, whether it be home

goods, clothing, or groceries. Finally, I asked the participant to provide their gender and age for classification purposes. More details are provided and explained in the following Measures section.

## **Measures**

### **Love Language**

A person's Love Language is measured and determined through an online survey directly from Chapman's official evaluation<sup>1</sup>. In the survey, there are thirty paired statements, each with two answer choices. Each option falls under each Love Language's category. There are six answer options relating to each Love Language in the survey. Once the survey has been completed, it tallies up the results based on each participant's individual preferences. Then, each Love Language is listed for them in an order of importance.

The fifth result is that participant's strongest, or main, Love Language. This is the one that most appeals to them; therefore, best defines how this person forms relationships. This is the most effective Love Language to appeal to for this participant. The fourth is their second highest Love Language, and appeals to them as well, but not as much as their fifth one. Appealing to this Love Language is almost as effective as the fifth, as it is important to them and influences their decisions as well. Appealing to this Love Language can still result in a stronger relationship. The third is neutral. It is neither their highest nor lowest. Appealing to this Love Language is still effective, but not the most effective. The last two Love Languages are the least effective. Appealing to these two Love Languages will not improve a relationship with the consumer.

### **Favorite Store for clothing/home goods**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/couples/>

The survey asks about the subject's favorite stores, both for home goods/clothing and for groceries in an open question format. This specification between home goods/clothing and groceries is made to avoid confusion in participants. For example, a participant could purchase all of their clothing or home goods at Target, but purchase all of their groceries at Whole Foods. These stores are very different and likely appeal to the participant for differing reasons. Therefore, clarification of the products they are considering must be made to avoid confusion and allow for a more accurate idea of how participants view promotions based on the type of product for which they are shopping. Additionally, asking for the participant's favorite stores is to measure their product/store price level preferences, as well as their preferences for product quality. Their responses are related to the quality and price level that participants prefer. This answer will be coded based on the price level and product quality. For example, Dollar General would be a low price, medium quality store, while Target would be a medium price, medium quality store, and Home Goods would be a high price, high-quality store. Providing this ranking will allow coding according to what is most important to customers based on their preferred price levels and product quality. Price and quality will be coded as follows: low as a 1, medium as a 2, and high as a 3. Price and quality will each belong to separate columns and be analyzed separately, as they are different factors. Providing this ranking will allow the data to be coded and analyzed in relation to the participants' Love Languages. Both the home goods/clothing store price factor and the home goods/clothing store quality factor will be analyzed against each Love Language in an attempt to test the hypotheses (i.e., H2 and H3).

### **Favorite Store for groceries**

As previously mentioned, this specification is made to avoid biases that could be introduced by the type of product for which a participant is shopping. Following the same

procedure, I measure the participant's favorite types of promotions through the price level and product quality preferences by their favorite stores. This is also important in measuring the quality and price level that participants prefer. This answer will be coded based on the price level and product quality. For example, Walmart would be a low price, medium quality store, while Target would be a medium price, medium quality store, and Whole Foods would be a high price, high-quality store. Providing this ranking will allow coding according to what is most important to customers based on their preferred price levels and product quality. Price and quality will be coded as follows: low as a 1, medium as a 2, and high as a 3. Price and quality will each belong to separate columns and be analyzed separately, as they are different factors. Providing this ranking will allow the data to be coded and analyzed in relation to the participants' Love Languages. Again, both the grocery store price factor and the grocery store quality factor will be analyzed against each Love Language in an attempt to test the hypotheses.

### **Preference for Sales/Promotions Types**

Consumers' preferences for various promotions could provide insight into any correlation or relationship that could potentially exist with the consumers' Love Language. The following types of promotions (see Appendix) will be listed in a ranking question: free trial, free samples, buy one get one, percentage off, price reduction, free shipping, free warranty, and free returns. First, I asked the participant's preference for sales promotions when shopping for home goods. Next, I asked participants to list their three favorite grocery stores with an open question and then listed out a series of sales promotions, asking them to rank them from the order of importance. Last, I moved to sales promotions chosen when dining out and asked participants to rank them in order of importance. The reason I decided to break shopping locations and promotions into three distinct categories of 1. Home goods 2. Grocery stores, and 3. Dining out was to eliminate confusion that

could potentially skew results. For example, when asked their favorite place to shop, some people may think of where they shop for groceries, while others may think of where they shop for clothing. In some cases, these stores may be the same, but for most people, it is not. Furthermore, some consumers may be more attracted to one sales promotion when shopping for groceries, and a completely separate one when shopping for clothing. By breaking the different types of stores into clear and separate categories, participants will know what types of stores to consider for each question, eliminating confusion or bias and providing clearer, more accurate results.

This question was posed as a ranking question that participants will be asked to rank their favorites from either 1 to 4 (4 being the highest) or 1 to 5 (5 being the highest). Their responses will then be coded according to the number they were assigned by the participant. Each promotion will belong to its own column and be analyzed individually against each Love Language in an attempt to test the hypothesis (i.e., H4). The type of sale or promotion that participants prefer to give insight into how their Love Language can affect their consumption patterns.

### **Preference for Reviews**

Reading reviews are ways for consumers gaining insight on the quality or usage of a product before making a purchase. By reading reviews, consumers can be assured beforehand, that the product they are purchasing will measure up to the consumer's expectations. This will be coded as a 1 for yes and a 2 for no. This factor will be analyzed against each Love Language in an attempt to examine the hypotheses (i.e., H1 and H5).

## **Results**

There were 157 participants, but only 143 provided complete and useable data. 14 participants' surveys were removed from the data list because they submitted incomplete forms. Removing incomplete survey responses allows for more accurate data analyses. Table 1 provides

the profiles of the sample. Of the 143, 12 were male, 130 were female, and 1 preferred not to say. The age distributions vary as follows: 29 were 10-20 years of age, 48 were 21-30 years of age, 11 were 31-40 years of age, 27 were 41-50 years of age, 13 were 51-60 years of age, and 15 were 60+ years of age.

For Love Language sample data (see Table 2), it is to be expected that the majority of participants with each Love Language were female due to a large number of female participants, as opposed to male participants. Words of Affirmation had the most participants belonging to it (32.87%), followed by Quality Time (25.88%), Acts of Service (19.57%), Physical Touch (13.99%), and then Receiving Gifts (7.69%). All Love Languages had both male and female participants except Receiving Gifts, which had only female participants belonging to it. This suggests that the most common top Love Language in the study is Words of Affirmation, while the least common is Receiving Gifts. Though the distribution of participants with each type is not even across the Languages, there is still enough data in each to run analyses.

--- Insert Table 1 and 2 about here ---

For each of the following analyses, the data were entered into SPSS for analysis. A non-parametric test (Spearman's rho) was used to determine whether the relationship was significant. Because of the sample size under 200 participants, this test was the most ideal for finding relationships between the variables in the survey. The Spearman's rho test was run on each of the five hypotheses that were developed. Additionally, I also performed the Spearman's rho test on each Love Language paired with every factor involved in the survey to provide insight into potential additional correlations that were not predicted. Nevertheless, no other correlation coefficients were significant at the 0.05 level, thus deeming all other potential correlations

inconclusive. Results for the correlations between Love Languages and marketing stimuli are provided in Table 3.

--- Insert Table 3 about here ---

### **Words of Affirmation**

The first relationship that was tested was the relationship between people with the Words of Affirmation Love Language and their preference to read reviews (hypothesis 1). The test resulted in a correlation coefficient of  $-.137$ , which is not significant at the 0.05 level. This coefficient suggests neither a positive nor a negative correlation, thus deeming the hypothesis (H1) inconclusive. Contrary to my predictions, there was no distinct correlation found between this factor and consumers ranking high in the Words of Affirmation Love Language. This result could be due to the sample size, but is most likely due to characteristics of the Love Language. The positive affirmations listed by Chapman tended to apply directly to the person, rather than their decisions or external factors. For example, the ideal affirmation would be something like, "You are an incredible person, and I can't imagine life without you. Keep up the good work!" rather than "This is a great product! I would highly suggest purchasing". The impersonal aspect could contribute greatly to the result.

### **Physical Touch**

The second relationship that was tested was the relationship between people with the Physical Touch Love Language and their preference for stores/products that are high quality (hypothesis 2). The test resulted in a correlation of  $.217$ , which is significant at the 0.01 level. The Physical Touch Love Language has a strong positive correlation with the grocery store product quality factor. This suggests that consumers ranking high in the Physical Touch Love Language care a lot about grocery store product quality. Additionally, this suggests that the availability of

high-quality grocery store products is vital to the buyer-seller relationship. Without these items, the consumer is likely to have low satisfaction. The higher the quality of the grocery store products, the higher these consumers' satisfaction will be. Given our prior knowledge and research, this outcome was expected, and the hypothesis (H2) is supported.

### **Receiving Gifts**

The third relationship that was tested was the relationship between people with the Receiving Gifts Love Language and their preference for prices of products (hypothesis 3). The test resulted in a correlation coefficient of .253, which is significant at the 0.01 level. The Receiving Gifts Love Language has a strong positive correlation with the home goods store price factor. This suggests that consumers ranking high in the Receiving Gifts Love Language care a lot about home goods store prices. It also suggests that the higher the prices of the products provided, the higher the satisfaction will be for consumers with the Receiving Gifts Love Language. Offering high priced items is vital to the consumer relationship with consumers with the Receiving Gifts Love Language as well. As predicted, the hypothesis (H3) is supported.

### **Quality Time**

The fourth relationship that was tested was the relationship between people with the Quality Time Love Language and their preference for the free warranty promotion (hypothesis 4). The test resulted in a correlation coefficient of -.188, which is significant at the 0.05 level. The Quality Time Love Language has a negative correlation with the free warranty offers. As the ranking of the Quality Time Love Language increases, interest in the free warranty offers decreases, suggesting that consumers ranking high in the Quality Time Love Language care less about free warranties. Contrary to my prediction, my hypothesis (H4) is not supported. Once again, this could be a result of impersonal factors. Chapman's descriptions of this Love Language's

characteristics all tend to be more personal, in person, and one-on-one. People with this Love Language prefer time spent in person, and since free warranties are not in person, they dislike them. The lack of physical presence could be a vital factor contributing to this result. Another potential explanation for this result could be because they are offered to all customers, thus removing the element of a “one-on-one” feel or like they are receiving special attention. Although the exact reasoning is unclear, the results estimate that people with the Quality Time Love Language dislike free warranties.

### **Acts of Service**

The fifth relationship that was tested was the relationship between people with the Acts of Service Love Language and their preference to read reviews (hypothesis 5). The test resulted in a correlation coefficient of .166, which is significant at the 0.05 level. The Acts of Service Love Language has a positive correlation with the review factor. This suggests that consumers ranking high in the Acts of Service Love Language care a significant amount about reviews. Consumers with the Acts of Service Love Language love to read reviews before purchasing, and these reviews are vital to their purchasing behavior. Offering consumers an opportunity to read reviews before purchase will greatly increase their consumer satisfaction. These results support the hypothesis (H5).

### **General Discussion**

Because very little research has been done regarding the Five Love Languages and their role outside of personal relationships, this study was done in an attempt to fill that void. Relationships are present in all aspects; therefore, studies on them can be beneficial to not only the relationship field, but the field of business, buyer-seller relationships, and consumer satisfaction as well. Many of these areas are related in some way, thus, it makes sense to perform studies that

close the gap between them, ultimately creating a more comprehensive understanding of the areas and their relationships.

Each participant had differing preferences regarding the marketing stimuli presented in the survey. Although not every hypothesis was supported by the results, the data proves that every consumer responds differently to different marketing stimuli, thus further proving the discovery made in the previously mentioned study conducted by Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995). Based on the findings in this study, marketers can consider these factors when planning their marketing strategy and adjust their strategies as needed. For example, when developing a marketing persona or brand personality, the brand could assign a Love Language to their "ideal customer persona." Using this method, marketers could then use promotions that would best appeal to the marketing persona. Conversely, if a brand typically only uses one or two types of promotions, but is looking to gain new customers, they could implement the Love Languages and attempt to appeal to all of them rather than maybe one or two. Another idea would be to have various level of brand/store-consumer communications. For example, if some customers liked a lot of communication, such as Words of Affirmation customers, there could be an option for weekly newsletters, or for those that prefer less communication, there could be a monthly newsletter. Allowing consumers to personalize their communication levels with the store would allow them to better appeal to each customer's Love Language.

In conclusion, it is clear from this study that there is no promotion strategy or offer that appeals to every consumer. While not every hypothesis resulted in a conclusive answer as to whether or not a certain offer or promotion was preferred by consumers with a certain Love Language, some correlations were found. These findings suggest that stores and brands can use this insight to implement the preferred promotions. When creating marketing strategies,

brands/stores can list out the Love Languages that they believe will best fit their brand persona(s) or target markets, or that best fit the areas of consumers that they intend to target in the future. By doing so, they can plan their promotions and offers accordingly, ensuring that they are appealing to the consumers they hope to reach.

As Love Languages become more popular and widely accepted in science, more studies will be conducted on them and their impact in society, and eventually in the world of business. Until then, it is important to attempt to better relate to consumers through marketing strategy, ultimately building stronger, more impactful buyer-seller relationships.

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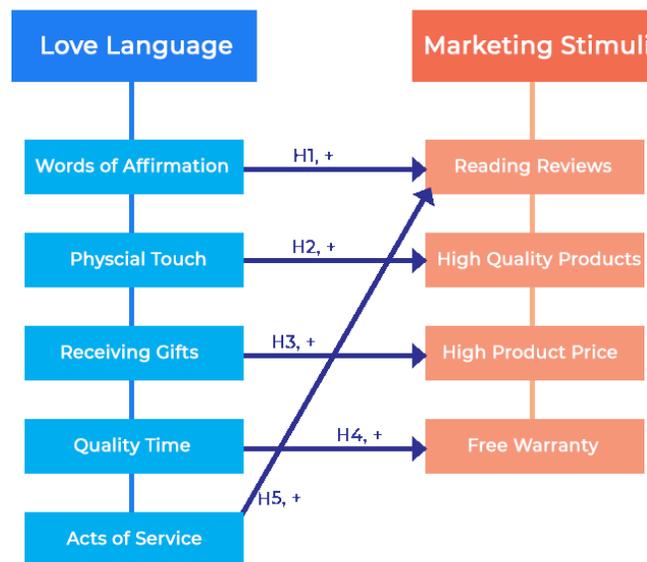
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**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample**

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	12	8.4
	Female	130	90.9
	Not Specified	1	0.7
Age	10-20	29	20.3
	21-30	48	33.6
	31-40	11	7.7
	41-50	27	18.9
	51-60	15	10.5
	60+	13	9.1

**Table 2: Cross-Tabulation Table for Love Languages and Gender**

Love Language	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Words of Affirmation	Male	4	2.80%
	Female	42	29.37%
	Prefer Not To Say	1	0.70%
Physical Touch	Male	2	1.40%
	Female	18	12.59%
Quality Time	Male	4	2.80%
	Female	33	23.08%
Receiving Gifts	Male	0	0.00%
	Female	11	7.69%
Acts of Service	Male	2	1.39%
	Female	26	18.18%

**Table 3: Spearman Rank Correlations between Love Languages and Marketing Stimuli**

Hypothesis	Expected Relationship	Estimated Correlation	Estimated Relationship	Result
People with the Words of Affirmation Love Language prefer to read reviews before making purchases.	Positive	-0.137	Inconclusive	<b>Inconclusive</b>
People with the Physical Touch Love Language prefer high-quality products.	Positive	0.217**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
People with the Receiving Gifts Love Language prefer more expensive products/stores.	Positive	0.253**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
People with the Quality Time Love Language prefer the free warranty promotion.	Positive	-0.188*	Negative	<b>Not Supported</b>
People with the Acts of Service Love Language prefer to read reviews before making purchases.	Positive	0.166*	Positive	<b>Supported</b>

\*p > 0.05

\*\*p > 0.01

## Appendix: Questionnaire

The survey consists of nine questions, and appears as follows:

### Honors Thesis Survey

Thank you so much for participating in this survey! This survey will be used to conduct research for my Honors Thesis (and also help me to graduate with Honors-so really THANK YOU)

This survey will ask you questions about your love language and your purchasing behavior. They won't be very personal questions, so don't worry, but please do be honest. Your identity will also be anonymous!!

Lastly, if you don't know your love language, take the free evaluation here: <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/>

 OK

 0 of 9 answered

1. Please rank your Love Languages in order! (The evaluation ranks them from highest to lowest in your results-- so the highest would be 1)

⋮	<input type="text"/>	Words of Affirmation
⋮	<input type="text"/>	Physical Touch
⋮	<input type="text"/>	Receiving Gifts
⋮	<input type="text"/>	Quality Time
⋮	<input type="text"/>	Acts of Service

2. Please name your 5 favorite stores to buy home goods or clothing.

1st Favorite

2nd Favorite

3rd Favorite

4th Favorite

5th Favorite

3. When shopping for home goods and clothing, which SALES appeal to you the most? (rank-most important being 1)

⋮	Buy One Get One Free
⋮	% off / Price Reduction
⋮	Free Shipping
⋮	Free Warranty
⋮	Free Returns
⋮	Trial / Try It Out

4. Please list your 4 favorite places to buy groceries

1st Favorite

2nd Favorite

3rd Favorite

4th Favorite

5. When shopping for groceries, which SALES/PROMOTIONS appeal to you the most? (rank-most important being 1)

⋮	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Buy One Get One Free
⋮	<input type="text" value="2"/>	% off / Price Reduction
⋮	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Free samples before purchase

6. When DINING OUT, which SALES/PROMOTIONS appeal to you the most? (rank-most important being 1)

⋮	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Buy One Get One Free
⋮	<input type="text" value="2"/>	% off / Price Reduction
⋮	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Free samples before purchase
⋮	<input type="text" value="4"/>	Combo deal

7. Before you buy products you have never bought before, do you look at reviews online/ask your friends about them??

- Yes
- No

8. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

9. What is your age?

10-20

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

60+

DONE