The Experiences of Repositioning Products by Toy Collectors: A Descriptive Phenomenological Study

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Abstract: *Companies resort to product repositioning to improve brand image. However, the repositioning of items can result in negative reaction from consumers, particularly among loyal buyers such as collectors. Repositioning is only considered effective when customers have positive attitudes about the alterations made to improve a product. By focusing on repositioned product attributes, this qualitative descriptive phenomenological research explores the lived experiences of toy collectors and how this phenomenon affects the perspectives of collectors. This research utilized semi-structured in-depth interviews to collect data and thematic coding to analyze the narrative transcripts among Hot Wheels collectors. The proposed study was significant because of the possible contribution in addressing the challenges associated with possible loss of revenue because of attrition from toy collectors.*

Statement of Intended Contribution

The current research paper intends to understand how repositioning of items can result in different reactions from consumers, particularly among toy collectors. By utilizing a qualitative research method, the study revealed in-depth insights of the lived experiences of toy collectors themselves regarding changes in the attribute of toys they are collecting. This contributes to the growing knowledge on the challenges and consequences associated with changes in toy marketing especially in a unique profile and experiences of toy collectors. Organizational leaders focusing on toys can benefit from this study as suppliers and marketers for a unique population. They can envision how repositioning of an attribute of a known collectors' item can influence affective emotions of the consumers, and thus can implement practices that may have a positive impact not only on the general marketing of the toys, but also on the consumer's perceptions. This can ensure that both parties benefit mutually from the repositioning of an item. Utilizing and mastering repositioning strategies are critical in improving not only the total sales of an item, but ensuring that the consumers gain positive experiences in buying collectible items.

I. Introduction

Collecting is a widespread phenomenon among consumers worldwide (Lafferty, Matulich, & Liu, 2014). The practice of collecting items can be affected when avid collectors experience unexpected changes in a product (Yarrow, 2014). Research on repositioning primarily focused on brand image, and not specifically on attributes of a product (Mishra & Choudhury, 2013; Zhang, Lin, & Newman, 2015). Repositioning is only considered effective and successful when customers have positive attitudes about the alterations made to improve a product (Zhang, Lin, & Newman, 2015).

The buying behaviors of consumers are becoming more accumulative and more attached to patronizing specific products (Boujena, Ulrich, Damay, &Chicheportiche, 2016). Collectors are different from hoarders in that collecting is considered more normative, tends to be characterized by the acquisition of a narrower set of products or items, and collectors are more selective with purchases (Grace, 2018). However, studies on the effects of repositioning of products, particularly in terms of how and why product repositioning elicits strong emotions from consumers, remains limited (Oleksiyenko, 2014).

In the proposed study, the researcher will focus on the lived experiences of toy collectors who have bought repositioned collector's items, and how the collectors received this experience emotionally and how it affected their subsequent buying practices. The researcher discusses an overview of the research study. The contents of the proposed study include the following main sections: (a) background to the research problem, (b) problem statement, (c) purpose of the study, (d) population and sample, (e) significance of the study, (f) methodology, and (g) research questions.

The purpose of the descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experience of toy collectors regarding their feelings when presented with a product in which an attribute has been repositioned. The following were the research questions that guided the study in addressing the objective:

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of toy collectors when confronted with repositioned products?

RQ2: What are the lived experiences of toy collectors when buying a repositioned product?

Background

Collecting is a common consumer practice that is characterized by obsession and intense attachment for a particular set of items or products (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, &Eynan, 2016). According to Lafferty et al. (2014), collecting is worldwide phenomenon that is important in the lives of many people. Given the intense emotions often attached with the practice of collecting, collectors often have strong feelings about the attributes and quality of products (Ridgway et al., 2016). In this sense, repositioning is often utilized by companies to improve brand image (Mishra & Choudhury, 2013). According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2004), "repositioning may entail abandoning certain products and withdrawing completely from some market segments" (p. 74). The reaction of customers to a product's alteration is often considered an important component of the repositioning (Zhang et al., 2015).

Consumer aggression or anger is the concept that is used to describe consumer dissatisfaction when experiencing uncontrollable factors such as timed sales, product limits, and bad customer service. Collectors tend to be obsessive and selective when buying products (Lo & Harvey, 2014). Even with non-collectors, consumer aggression or anger is expected when there is an unanticipated change in a product (Yarrow, 2014). For many consumers who experience product changes or enhancements as marketing gimmicks or otherwise, some see them as a nuisance. Consumers experience stress, anxiety, and anger because of technology, change, high expectations, and too many choices (Yarrow, 2014). The repositioning of a product is one example that can result in strong reaction from consumers (Yarrow, 2014).

II.   Review of the Literature

Research on repositioning primarily focused on brand image, and not specifically on attributes of a product (Mishra & Choudhury, 2013). Studies on the effects of repositioning of products remains limited, particularly in terms of how and why product repositioning elicits strong emotions from consumers (Oleksiyenko, 2014). But in general terms with regard to the effects of repositioning, Zhang et al. (2015) found that repositioning is only considered effective and successful when customers have positive attitudes about the alterations made to improve a product.

The buying behaviors of consumers are becoming more accumulative and more attached to patronizing specific products (Boujena, Ulrich, Damay, &Chicheportiche, 2016). Collectors tend to be obsessive and selective when buying products (Lo & Harvey, 2014). Even with non-collectors, consumer aggression or anger is expected when there is an unanticipated change in a product (Yarrow, 2014). However, there are no studies for measuring the lived experiences of collectors when buying a product. Lack of knowledge on this subject may be preventing development of appropriate repositioning strategy of a product. This has affected product performance and business profits. Continued patronage of collectors often provides revenue for many companies (Lafferty et al., 2014; Ridgway et al., 2016).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study will be informed by positioning theory and attribution theory of motivation. The researcher utilized positioning theory as a framework to understand why companies choose to reposition products (Ogilvy, 2013). Weiner's (1986) attribution theory of motivation provided insights into the reaction of consumers about the repositioning of products. The theory of positioning holds that a consumer perceives a clear, unique, and advantageous position of a brand or product via influence that it is better than other competing brands or products (Ogilvy, 2013). The theory of positioning changes the status, or marketing mix, of the brand or product in response to changes in the marketplace. Brand orientation caters to companies offering a visionary approach to their specific market (Urde, Baumgarth, &Merrilees, 2013). For the purpose of this research, the researcher focuses on the collecting habits of toy collectors when buying a product; specifically, the lived experiences of toy collectors that have shown an expressed interest in collecting Hot Wheels products.

Although positioning is concerned with gaining awareness or an advantageous position of a product in the consumer's mind, repositioning changes a product's status in response to changes in market conditions (Ogilvy, 2013). Visionary approaches often drive the market rather than being driven by it (Urde et al., 2013). Implication of this thought may be resulting in the voice of the customer being ignored and inadvertent encouragement of loss of business revenue.

While it has been shown a relationship between strategy with new product introduction (Camison&Villar-Lopez, 2014), it was also emphasized the impact of market orientation strategy during new product introduction (Stark, 2015). Strong consumer emotions such as anger can result in the activation of behaviors and choices that have implications in their buying habits and decisions (O'Shaughnessy, 2013). Weiner's (1986) attribution theory of motivation contends that consumer anger can be explained as a result of

perceived mistreatment from internal actors who have control of an entity. Consumers form their buying or consumption values based on their preferred products' benefits (Candan& Yildirim, 2013), products that may be under control of a sole company. Consumer anger may be the result of disappointment over poor quality of a product or even failure in having an option to purchase other brand names that equate to the same product at a lesser price or of higher quality.

Consumer behaviors and preferences depend largely upon the consumers' personal and consumption values, as well as expectations of product performance (Candan& Yildirim, 2013; Kim, 2014). In a study focusing on consumers' cognitive and psychological responses for determining the processes by which consumer dissatisfaction is formed, findings showed a relationship between external and internal consumer attributions (Kim, 2014). Specifically, the results indicated that internal attributions were more likely to result in regret, whereas external attributions were more likely to result in anger (Kim, 2014). The researcher concluded that consumer dissatisfaction and behaviors were more likely to be influenced by anger than by regret (Kim, 2014).

Researchers have widely used the attribution theory as a theoretical framework to explore consumers' inferences from word-of-mouth activity (Browning et al., 2013). Attribution theory posits that consumers conceptualize a product's usefulness based on reviews and the causal inferences of such reviews (Weiner, 1986). It was suggested that the recipient makes causal inferences of reporting bias, which influence the persuasiveness of a message (Kareklas, Muehling, & Weber, 2015). It was also suggested that consumer evaluation relies upon the process by which consumers read a review of a brand (Wei & Lu, 2013). Through the basis of attribution theory, investigators have examined how consumers react to negative word-of-mouth communication. In fact, it was brand evaluations are higher if receivers consider that the source of the negativity is the communicator or reviewer (Kareklas et al., 2015).

Little is known, however, about how and why product repositioning elicits more emotion among consumers. Using both the positioning theory and the theory of attribution, the researcher will provide a framework for understanding how business decisions for maintaining competeveness in markets are driven by marketplace demands. Furthermore, framework chosen may also help to explain how market orientation business strategy, may be resulting in increasing a negativity affecting consumer buying habits and consequently affecting firm performance and revenue growth.

Marketing and Brand Orientation

Market orientation may help in improve business performance (Navarro- García, Arenas- Gaitán, &Rondan-Cataluna, 2014). Firms that adapt business operations to the needs of a highly competitive market result in better performance (Navarro-García et al., 2014). Market orientations main role is to support strategic decision-making in companies (Navarro-García et al., 2014). Moreover, market orientation moderates the relationship between marketing mix adaptation and business performance (Navarro-García et al., 2014). However, market orientation is not the only factor that increases organizational performance (Loe& Ferrell, 2015). Instead, organizations can face low profitability if evaluation and attempts to positively affect the ethical environment of their organization are not addressed (Loe& Ferrell, 2015; Löhndorf& Diamantopoulos, 2014). Business environments, overshadowed by corporate scandals and unethical business practices, have resulted in consumer consciousness on misconduct in business (Loe& Ferrell, 2015).

Additionally, consumer concerns over ethical practices in businesses and its relationship to performance factors are scrutinized closely by current consumers (Loe& Ferrell, 2015; Sierra, Iglesias, Markovic, & Singh, 2015). Consumer's perception of ethical climate of an organization positively related to the level of trust a consumer has for an organization and was determined to affect business performance (Loe& Ferrell, 2015; Sierra et al., 2015). Developing consumer trust in a company's brand is essential for increasing, and or, for maintaining business performance (Park, Lee, & Kim, 2014).

Thus, brands have an important part in consumer identity and allow for an expression of themselves (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, &Farrelly, 2014). Consumers face overflowing fake stimuli, increased commercialization, and omnipresent and meaningless products (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2014). Overcoming this meaningless has resulted in consumers looking for brands that are original, relevant, and genuine (Morhart et al., 2015). In sum, consumers are increasingly searching for authenticity in brands.

Brand authenticity is gaining increasing interest amongst researchers for understanding consumer buying behaviors (Morhart et al., 2015; Newman & Dhar, 2014). This has resulted in business rationale for tailoring business practices focused on brand orientation. Brand orientation involves a continuous three-way interaction between customer and non-customer stakeholders, the brand, and the organization (Urde& Koch, 2014). The organization must first translate its organizational values into its core promises and values, which guides organizational efforts (Urde& Koch, 2014). Second, the organization must convert those core values into extended customer values, which describes customers' perceptions of what the brand offers (Urde& Koch,

2014). Brand orientation is considered an inside-out perspective, in which the focal point is on the brand's core promises and values. The brand's core promise and values affect every level of an organization (Lohndorf& Diamantopoulos, 2014), which may lead to competitive advantage (West, Ford, & Ibrahim, 2015).

Discussion on marketing and brand orientation have resulted in a common theme, which points to meeting consumer needs and expectations as a key factor for determining product success in markets. In addition to improving brand authenticity, firms must be able to analyze both unsuccessful and successful strategies (Kindstrom&Kowalkowski, 2014). Acquiring knowledge for making improvements on products requires a close awareness on what drives customers' needs (Ooi, 2014). Firms that have appropriate information about their markets are likely to be more willing to make variations to their marketing mix (Navarro-Garcia et al., 2014). Acquiring information for making improvements on products requires a close awareness on what drives customers' needs (Ooi, 2014), which can assist in developing marketing strategy.

Moreover, firms must also be conscious of ethical business practices in markets or risk to credibility to brand name may result (Loe& Ferrell, 2015; Sierra et al., 2015). Conscious business behavior to this degree requires understanding consumers' perceptions on acceptable business practices. Therefore, business practices oriented on meeting market needs must also consider the method for achieving competitive advantage in order to avoid damaging a firm's brand name. Integrating an understanding on consumer needs may provide businesses a platform for deriving business appropriate business strategy.

Consumer Patronage

Consumer patronage and a willingness to buy a product are two important criteria for affecting business performance (Dutta et al., 2014). Researchers have determined that brands help differentiate and ease the path of product communication between retailer and consumer, with an ultimate goal for achieving competitive advantage (Morhart et al., 2015; Newman & Dhar, 2014). Branding differentiates a retailer from its competition in order to promote its image as identifiable, prestigious, and easily accessible (Berg, 2014). Retailers strive to create a specific brand image to gain consumer perception on a brand in a specific manner and for achieving consumer brand loyalty (Berg, 2014; Kindström&Kowalkowski, 2014).

Repositioning a product for introduction into the market may be driven by this concept associated with innovation (Camisón&Villar-López, 2014). According to Zhang et al. (2015), "only customers can determine whether repositioning strategies are effective and successful" (p. 4). However, repositioning is a risky and significant choice due to customers' pre-existing perceptions and attitudes (Cross; 2016; Zhang et al., 2015). Researchers have determined that discrepancy failures can result from inefficient customer communication, poor positioning strategy implementation, and failure to deliver promised services (Zhang et al., 2015). For example, in a study examining three Middle Eastern airline carriers, researchers found that although the airline's strategy emphasized service offerings and reliability, the passengers only perceived reliability (Zhang et al., 2015). Other repositioning strategies focused on innovativeness and customization, yet passengers (consumers) did not perceive either of them in the airlines' brand (Zhang et al., 2015).

Organizing and managing new product development can be a challenging issue for companies (Gmelin&Seuring, 2014); however, acquired knowledge resulting in an awareness for addressing consumer needs, is an intangible asset that may allow for a competitive edge for achieving success in markets. Product design is a highly involved and complex process, which is often ill-defined due to poor knowledge for understanding what consumers want in a product (Gmelin&Seuring, 2014). Mass customization allows organizations to maintain low manufacturing costs while catering to a myriad of customer needs (Gmelin&Seuring, 2014).

Ooi (2014) conducted a quantitative study to examine the role of total quality management (TQM) in enhancing knowledge management. The sample consisted of companies in service and manufacturing sectors. Data were collected using questionnaires, which were analyzed using structural analysis. The results of the data analysis revealed that both strategic planning and the management of human resource have a positive relationship knowledge management. Process management had a significant influence on both knowledge acquisition and distribution. These findings suggest that acquiring knowledge for making improvements on products requires a close awareness on what drives customers' needs. Organizations have conceptualized knowledge as a construct which may determine organizational success or failure (Ooi, 2014).

Providing added value to products and services establishes long-term relationships with customers (Mazo&Borsato, 2014). This requires companies to sell products that matter to specifically addressing customer needs. While there is understanding amongst companies that allow for this provision in supporting strategy for marketing new products, there are few processes that allow for incorporating the voice of the customer into the development of a product (Mazo&Borsato, 2014). Researchers have argued that product-service systems must be designed to allow for competitiveness of organizations in markets, while at the same time results in satisfying customer needs (Mazo&Borsato, 2014). Researchers have also emphasized that in some organizational designs of product-service systems, focus is misunderstood and instead focus is directed at the sale of a product without

addressing customer concerns (Mazo&Borsato, 2014). The benefit gained from this type of structured process lends to promoting products that provide a service (such as perishable products), but does little for promoting products in which the customer may own over time (Mazo&Borsato, 2014). Product-service systems focused on promoting short-term services to customers over that of long-term ownership of a product do not address consumer needs related to collecting products. It is possible to assume that product collectors, as a consumer group, are not having their needs met when organizations adopt business strategy related to only providing short-term product services.

Product Collectors

Memory plays an important role in being a collector/fan of childhood toys (Geraghty, 2014). Collecting helps to reconstruct memories of youth, and allows adult collectors to develop a fan identity and to reconnect with their past (Geraghty, 2014). Repositioning products later in life with a nostalgic collecting focus has become a big business (Cross, 2016); however, a smaller-than-expected group of consumers with common consumer memories have emerged from this repositioning effort (Cross, 2016), indicating that toy repositioning strategy has not delivered the type of product performance expected. Product collection of items that may or may not increase in value over time is a hobby for some consumers because of the potential for generating a profit (Chen, Yeh, & Huan, 2014).

Collecting is not exclusive to older groups of consumers and in recent research, younger groups of consumers have admitted to collecting toys and dolls (Cross, 2015). No matter the age group, consumers may possess a need directed on past products. Nostalgia is about more than possession, instead it is also about acknowledgement of consumer senses (Cross, 2015) and confirming personal identity (Geraghty, 2014; Muensterberger, 2014). Sounds, sights, tastes, and smells evoke memories and the emotions associated with these memories (Cross, 2015).

Zonneveld and Biggeman (2014) determined that it is manufacture characteristics that serve as a primary importance and ultimate value a product offers for attracting consumer collecting. Indicating that passion and enthusiasm that collectors feel for a brand may serve as a factor for invoking a need to begin product collection (Zonneveld &Biggeman, 2014). Studies have shown that consumer collecting is initiated as a result of both internal and external factors for influencing buying behavior (Cross, 2016; Gao et al., 2014; Geraghty, 2014; Toups et al., 2016; Zonneveld &Biggeman, 2014). Thus, there is a lack of conclusive understanding for determining a specific factor that explains why consumers engage in collecting specific products.

Product Repositioning

Repositioning products later in life with a nostalgic collecting focus has become a big business (Cross, 2016). A smaller-than-expected group of consumers with common consumer memories have emerged from this repositioning effort (Cross, 2016). This indicates that toy repositioning strategy has not delivered the type of product performance expected. Collecting is not exclusive to older groups of consumers and in recent research, younger groups of consumers (30 and 20-year-olds) have admitted to collecting toys and dolls (Cross, 2015); no matter the age group, consumers may possess a need directed on past products. Nostalgia is about more than possession; it is also about acknowledgement of consumer senses (Cross, 2015) and confirming personal identity (Geraghty, 2014; Muensterberger, 2014). Examples of this can be shown with consumer fixation on certain types of music (oldies) and a renewed interest in vinyl record collecting (Cross, 2015). Sensory input such as taste, smell, sound, and sight evoke memories and their associated emotions and makes consumers desire to recreate these emotions (Cross, 2015).

Repositioning strategy focused on collection-based marketing programs have become common tools that companies use to stimulate product performance and retain customers (Cross, 2015; Gao, Huang, & Simonson, 2014). Researchers have shown that the pursuit of collections can be justified on the basis of the collectible items' aesthetic, emotional, or monetary value appeal (Gao et al., 2014). Although collection programs are growing in popularity, researchers have not empirically examined the factors that drive consumers to begin a collection (Gao et al., 2014). Researchers such as Zonnevald and Biggeman (2014) and Gao et al. (2014) posited that the collectibles themselves have characteristics that determine whether or not they will become a collectible craze. Once the consumer has begun the collection, however, he or she experiences a strong desire to complete the set, which translates into future purchases (Toups, Crenshaw, Wehbe, Tondello, &Nacke, 2016).

In contrast, researchers have suggested that contrary to these assumptions, consumers often do not make pre-purchase decisions to start a collection, nor does the possession of a single item from a collectible series trigger a commitment to collect (Gao et al., 2014). Researchers have posited that the time to build a collection varies amongst consumers based on a variety of factors. In many cases, consumers "stumble" into a collection by

incidentally owning one or more items in a collectible series (Gao et al., 2014). Kim (2014) determined that a relationship between external and internal psychological factors affect consumer emotions.

III.   Research Method

Research Methodology and Design

The researcher employed a qualitative research methodology to explore the lived experience of toy collectors regarding the repositioning of an attribute of a product. Qualitative methods involve the in-depth exploration of a phenomenon using a paradigm rooted on constructivism, where the subjective experiences and perspectives of everyone are analyzed as a group in order to extract meaning (Silverman, 2016). The researcher utilized a phenomenological research design to explore the lived experience of toy collectors regarding the repositioning of an attribute of a product. The specific type of phenomenological research design that was used in the study was hermeneutic. Hermeneutic phenomenology is interpretive in nature, focusing on understanding how an individual interprets a phenomenon (Babich, 2014). In hermeneutic phenomenology, the interpretation of meaning is usually conducted by analyzing the words of individuals based on textual data such as interview transcripts. Through a phenomenological research design, the use of semi-structured interviews to explore the lived experience of the participants was sufficient to address the research questions (Oun& Bach, 2014). Phenomenological research was instrumental in generating data that were consistent with the study's purpose of uncovering the lived experiences of the participants.

Population and Sample

Drawn from that population, the sample of the study consisted of 10 Hot Wheels toy collectors between the ages of 18 and 62. In qualitative research studies, 10 participants are usually adequate in generating the core themes needed to explain a phenomenon based on data saturation (Fowler, 2014). Data saturation describes the point during a research study where no new themes can be generated because every relevant meaning has already been uncovered from the participants in the sample (Fowler, 2014).

The researcher used the purposeful sampling technique to select the participants needed to complete the target sample size of 10 Hot Wheels toy collectors. Purposeful sampling method is a non-probability technique wherein participants are selected to be part of the sample based on the presence of key characteristics that will best answer the research problem (Palinkas et al., 2015). The source of potential participants was the Internet, which included social media sites and message boards for toy collectors. The sample was not generated through a specific organization. Potential participants were contacted through social media advertising or by reaching out to individuals who are posting in message boards for toy collectors.

The inclusion criteria to be eligible in the study were the following: (a) self-identifies as a toy collector, (b) is a Hot Wheels toy collector between the ages of 18 and 62, (c) has bought at least five different Hot Wheels toys in the last 2 years, and (d) is willing to participate in in-depth face-to-face interviews. The exclusion criteria were the following: (a) collectors below 18 years of age, (b) personal and professional contacts of the researcher, and (c) individuals currently living outside the United States. In order to be eligible to the study, potential participants should satisfy all the inclusion criteria and not possess any of the terms of the exclusion criteria.

The terms of the study's confidentiality were discussed during the distribution of the informed consent forms at the beginning of the interview. The participants in the study were guaranteed confidentiality to protect their identities and other personal information from being misused. The researcher stored all electronic data such as transcripts, audio recordings, and the NVivo coding files in a password-protected computer. The real names of the participants were not stored in the computer. The informed consent forms were stored in a locked cabinet. After 3 years have elapsed from the date of the approval of the study, the researcher will delete all files. Electronic data will no longer be stored in the computer, and the researcher will shred and destroy the physical forms.

Instrumentation

The instrument that was used in the study was an interview guide (Appendix B) intended to help the researcher to ask the right questions during the interview. The interview guide contained questions intended to elicit rich responses that will enable the researcher to understand the lived experience of toy collectors regarding the repositioning of an attribute of a product. Reviewing the literature and the theoretical framework developed the interview questions. The findings from the literature served as the bases for the set of open-ended questions that were used in this study. The questions were framed in an open-ended format so that participants could provide long answers and give as much details as necessary. The probing questions were not included in the guide because of the expected variability in the responses of the participants. The nature of semi-structured interview allows researchers to become flexible in the flow of the interview depending on the unique context (Oun& Bach, 2014).

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher collected the data using semi-structured interviews, which was conducted individually and face-to-face. The researcher conducted the interviews in a private space such as an office or room, with the specific location determined by each participant based on their preference or convenience. The setting of the interview needed to be private in order to have a more comfortable interaction with the participants and to protect their privacy from other people. The scheduling of the interview occurred as early as the recruitment phase of the study where eligibility was determined. The researcher listed the place, time, and date that were agreed upon with each participant to keep track of the schedule of the data collection.

The actual interviews lasted for approximately 30-45 minutes, but the actual time was dependent on the ability of the participants to provide details with their answers to the questions. The researcher asked several open-ended questions to elicit rich responses that enabled the researcher to understand the lived experience of toy collectors regarding the repositioning of an attribute of a product. The researcher followed the questions in the interview guide for every participant to ensure standardization of procedure. However, the researcher adapted to the individual responses of the participants for the follow-up and probing questions.

Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher, yielding approximately 40 pages of single-spaced transcriptions. The transcription process commenced after all the interviews have been conducted. The researcher was responsible for the actual transcription to limit the exposure of data to third party individuals. The name of the participants was not used in the transcripts. The researcher used the unique identifiers assigned to each participant to record their responses to each question. After all the interview transcripts have been generated, all were transferred to NVivo for storage and management. The NVivo software was also used for the organization of the data by accessing key features such as the creation of nodes to generate labels, the generation of tree nodes to combine interrelated nodes into a group, and the use of figures and tables to illustrate the trends from the analysis.

For the actual coding of the interview transcripts, the researcher analyzed the study data using the phenomenological method as outlined by Kleiman (2004). According to Kleiman, phenomenological analysis involves both systematic analysis and researcher intuition. Systematic analysis is involved because data need to be broken down into smaller units in order to determine themes and patterns. Phenomenological analysis also involves intuition because the researcher needs to interpret the intent and meaning of words of participants (Kleiman, 2004). The data analysis followed the phenomenological procedures outlined by Kleiman (2004).

After the completion of the analysis, Kleiman (2004) noted that a critical analysis of the work within the context of the entire study needs to be conducted. Critical analysis entailed the verification of the data collected from the participants, the process of transforming large ideas into smaller units of meaning, capturing the essence of an experience, and the structure of the presentation is well articulated. These last verification steps can enhance the effectiveness of the researcher to capture the lived experience of the participants as accurately as possible (Kleiman, 2004).

Ethical Assurances

The research is responsible in protecting the participants' rights by applying the standard research ethics in gathering and usage of data. Once the IRB approval was secured, the official procedures for the data collection commenced.No individual was forced to be part of the study without their voluntary consent, even if they gave initial consent. If participants decided to stop their involvement in the study, the researcher honored the request without any further processing. A simple notification through email or phone about the request for withdrawal was sufficient in the official termination of the participation of individuals in the study. The request can be made before or after the data collection; however, withdrawal will not be possible after the study has been approved and published. The researcher kept all data confidential and protected, in that only the researcher had access to it. The data will be destroyed after three years.

IV.   Results

The purpose of this descriptive phenomenological study was to explore the lived experience of toy collectors regarding their feelings when presented with a product in which an attribute has been repositioned. The central phenomenon that the researcher explored was the repositioning of an attribute of a toy called Hot Wheels, and how this phenomenon affected the perspectives of collectors. To achieve this, the researcher conducted one-on-one, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with 10 Hot Wheels toy collectors between the ages of 18 and 62. Two research questions were used to guide the study.

RQ1. What are the lived experiences of toy collectors when confronted with repositioned products?
RQ2. What are the lived experiences of toy collectors with regard to buying repositioned products?

Chapter 4 includes a presentation of the relevant demographic characteristics of the study participants, followed by a description of the implementation of the data collection and data analysis procedures described in

chapter 3. Next, the chapter includes a discussion of the procedures that were used to enhance the study's internal and external validity. The chapter then proceeds with a presentation of the results of the data analysis and concludes with a summary of the results.

Table 1 depicts the categories that emerged during data analysis, the themes associated with each category, and the codes that contributed to each theme.

"Insert Table 1 about here"

This presentation of results is organized by research question. Results associated with the first research question include participants' descriptions of their lived experiences when confronted with repositioned products. In relation to the second research question, results indicate participants' lived experiences with regard to buying repositioned products.

Research Question 1

Two major themes and one minor theme emerged during the analysis of data related to the lived experiences of toy collectors when confronted with repositioned products. The first major theme included participants' descriptions of the positive emotions they experienced when confronted with repositioned products. The second major theme included descriptions of the negative emotions, and the minor theme included descriptions of the changing emotions, that characterized the same lived experience for participants.

Major theme 1: Positive emotions included contentment, accomplishment, anticipation, and "the thrill of the hunt". When confronted with repositioned products, participants reported that their positive emotions included feelings of contentment and accomplishment of "the thrill of the hunt," and of happy anticipation. Participants 2 and 4 reported feeling contentment and a sense of accomplishment when confronted with a repositioned product. For Participant 2, contentment and accomplishment were most closely associated with finding the repositioned product online; added to these feelings were a sense of satisfaction and the experience of a "high" which the participant compared to the effect of a "street drug":

I feel happy and content when I find that sought after piece. When that happens, I feel like I won the grand prize and that I am ahead of the game. However, in contrast to the negative emotions, the intangible experiences of feeling content and happy that I found the hard-to-find super TH [Treasure Hunt] via online would be worth paying for the item at a higher price and would outweigh my frustration or anger had I decided to hunt and search for it at local toy stores. It makes me feel happy that I did not have to spend and waste time and money on gas to drive from store to store. The online purchase made me feel excited at the anticipation of finally receiving the super TH and that I would be able to add it to my collection, which made me feel a sense of satisfaction. I would describe it as feeling "high" as in the effects of taking some kind of street drug. Then the whole vicious cycle would start all over again when the next super TH is introduced. The addictive process continues all because I want to complete my collection. (Participant 2)

Participant 4 also characterized the lived experience of being confronted with a repositioned product as one of contentment, and added that the experience involved excitement, saying of product repositioning. Likewise, Participant 2 also spoke of excitement and associated the feeling of contentment and accomplishment with the experience of completing a collection:

Overall I feel excited because the product is brand new. I also feel a sense of competitiveness as a collector, because I want to make sure that I am able to complete my set of the repositioned product by securing the "hard to find" piece first. (Participant 2)

Participant 10 also expressed a feeling of excitement associated with completing a collection or set: "I think it's great. I'm a completist, so I will try my best to complete my sets." The relevance of *completing a collection* was that a repositioned product represented a further item to be collected.

Closely related to the feeling of excitement in seeking an item and the sense of accomplishment and contentment in obtaining a desired toy was "the thrill of the hunt," mentioned by Participants 1 and 5. For Participant 1, the lived experience of being confronted by a repositioned product was characterized by this thrill because, "I'm a serious collector and I enjoy the thrill of the hunt. It's fun and affordable. You can't buy them all, but you can choose what inspires you. I love being a Hot Wheels collector." The relevance of *the thrill of the hunt* was that a repositioned product was a further item to be "hunted." Notable in this response were the participant's characterizations of the experience as fun and affordable, and the observation that the wide range of purchasing options allowed the collector to exercise a fulfilling discretion (i.e., "you can choose what inspires you"). Participant 5 described an experience that had positive and negative elements while being characterized by an overall sense of thrill: "The up-and-down feelings of excitement and discouragement can be taxing. But that's what is expected in hardcore collectors like me. It's the thrill of the hunt that is addicting."

Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 10 offered responses in which they described the experience of being confronted with a repositioned product as characterized by a positive feeling of anticipation. Participant 1 indicated that having something to look forward to caused a feeling of excitement:

[A repositioned product] gives me something to look forward to. I always feel excited when Hot Wheels/Mattel comes up with something new. I mean, I enjoy going to Wal-Mart, Target, and Toys-R-Us looking for the latest designs. It's exciting to find my fave, Purple Passion, with new tampos every so often. (Participant 1)

For Participant 2, anticipation was closely linked to curiosity about the repositioned product:

I feel a sense of excitement to find out what new idea has been produced to reposition a particular Hot Wheels line. It makes me feel curious to find out which Hot Wheels casting were selected to be part of this change, because I want to know if I would consider buying it and would I continue to buy from the new product line. (Participant 2)

Major theme 2: Negative emotions included anger, frustration, and disappointment. Negative emotions associated with repositioned products included anger, frustration, and disappointment. For Participant 2, frustration was associated with the difficulty of finding desired items, and anger was associated with wasted efforts:

When I am not able to able to find a particular "hard-to-find" item at toy stores I become frustrated because I assume other collectors have already found and bought the sought-after piece. It also leads me to get angry because of the wasted time spent, energy exerted and monetary cost of paying for gas to drive from store to store only to end up with not finding the particular item. In turn, because I am frustrated or angry, I would resort to searching for the item online in hopes that I would locate a website that has the item I want, and I would end up buying the item even if it was at a higher price. For example, from past experience with the introduction of "super" vs. "regular" treasure hunt hot wheels, the chances of finding the super TH in toy stores were very slim as opposed to the regular TH. Because the odds of finding a super TH in stores would be very low or close to none AND to prevent myself from feeling frustrated or angry, it would influence my buying habits to directly search and buy the hard-to-find item via the internet. (Participant 2)

Participant 3 also associated frustration specifically with attempts to obtain "super treasure-hunt" items:

This is where Mattel made it difficult. When they created super Treasure-Hunts, they made me run for my money...it's good if I can find and buy the Super Treasure-Hunt at 99 cents, but not good if I have to spend 50 dollars in the secondary market for it. When I just can't find that elusive car and I need it to complete a set, I will [buy it in the secondary market]. With a frustrated heart, I will. (Participant 3)

For Participant 5, frustration was also associated with disappointment; this participant said the search for repositioned items "gets frustrating when you can't find 'emanywhere I mean I'm happy and all, but I get frustrated after hunting for it day after day. Mattel should produce more on the new variations." Participant 7 likewise expressed frustration with the difficulty of finding rare items: "the 'chase' cars are too difficult to locate, even in the secondary market… [chase cars are] all the good cars, the Treasure Hunts, the speculative cars, cars with high investment potential." Participant 6 associated frustration with disappointment and irritation, saying that being confronted with a repositioned product caused him to feel: "Upset and irritated; because it doesn't make me feel how I felt when I first experienced it. When I first bought my 'Cuda, there was an overwhelming-feeling 'cuteness' to the 1/64 scale car."

Minor theme: Emotions changed over time. Participants 2, 7, and 10 reported that their emotions upon being confronted with a repositioned product had changed over time. Participant 2 described these feelings toward repositioned products as declining from a perceived compulsion to collect them to a less urgent wish to do so:

At first my emotions or feelings towards repositioning were fairly stable the first ten years as a collector because there was always something new to look forward to. In the earlier years, I wanted to expand and build on my Hot Wheels collection. However, over time my feelings have somewhat changed because it has increased my desire to revert back to keeping more of the original line of Hot Wheels because of its nostalgic value. In other words, I find that the original HW line is a "must have" whereas the repositioned HW line is more of a "nice to have". (Participant 2)

Participant 7's excitement about repositioned products had declined over time due to an accumulation of disappointments associated with failure to obtain desired items:

As a toy collector I like the cars but not the hunt. It's too hard to find "chase" cars, but the cars seem to still be attractive...after all these years of going to stores and finding nothing, I don't hype myself up anymore. (Participant 7)

But, if you want to play with them, you need to buy two. (Participant 10)

Research Question 2

Three major themes emerged during the analysis of data associated with the lived experience of buying repositioned products. Data in the first theme indicated that positive emotions associated with buying repositioned products include excitement, satisfaction, nostalgia, and curiosity. In relation to the second theme, results included participants' descriptions of the negative emotion (frustration) most often associated with buying repositioned products. Results contributing to the third theme indicated that changed buying

behaviorsassociated with product repositioning included more spending, less spending, and more assertive shopping.

Major theme 1: Positive emotions associated with buying repositioned products include excitement, satisfaction, nostalgia, and curiosity.Positive emotions associated with buying repositioned products included the satisfaction and excitement of cheaply obtaining an item that had a high resale value. Participants 1, 5, 8, 9, and 10 discussed the pleasure of buying toys that were perceived as a good investment. Participant 1 had made the attempt to find new Hot Wheels to purchase into a daily routine:

Every morning I'm at Target before opening, hoping to be the first to find the latest treasure-hunt. Did you know that treasure hunts are going for $25 and above at trade shows? Collectors find them at stores for 99 cents and re-sell them at $25 to $60 a pop at swap meets and tradeshows. (Participant 1)

Participant 5 said of satisfaction with repositioned products, "Hot Wheels can be an affordable hobby with potential investment." In Participant 8's enthusiastic description, purchasing toys with high resale value was an addictive experience: "If the Hot Wheels car is identified as variation with value, it's a positive. Paying 99 cents for a Hot Wheels car valued at $30 is an addiction." Participant 9 spoke of purchasing repositioned products as a therapeutic exercise that doubled as a means of saving for the future:

First it was therapy for me, and then got caught in its investment potential. Who doesn't love money? I am passionately collecting Hot Wheels Treasure Hunts because maybe one day it will help to pay for my son's college tuition. So I'm doing this for my son and my stress levels.

For Participants 1, 3, 4, and 7 the satisfaction of purchasing repositioned products was associated with the pleasing physical characteristics of the items. Participant 1 described certain features of repositioned products as producing a compulsion to purchase those items, and referred in the same response to the tendency of those features to increase resale value:

Whenever Mattel produces a Hot Wheels car with real-rider tires or introduces a new Hot Wheels tampo, I get excited and I drop everything to get my hands on it. EVERYTHING. The detailing tells me that a Hot Wheels car is a Treasure Hunt. A rare find and valuable in the secondary market. (Participant 1)

Major theme 2: The negative emotion most often associated with buying repositioned products was frustration. For Participants 1, 5, 8, and 10, negative emotions associated with buying repositioned products included the frustration of trying to obtain rare items. For Participant 1, this frustration was triggered by the heated competition with other collectors for hard-to-find toys, and it was significant enough to alter purchasing habits:

I will frequent the swap meets on the weekends. I might pay a little more, but it's better than fending off other collectors at retail. There's a lot of headhunters early in the morning because they know that the stores restock at night. Besides the store manager telling us collectors, "No running in the store", there's almost always a competition among Hot Wheels collectors to be the first kid on the block to find the newest and coolest car. I think Mattel should produce more of what collectors want so everyone can have the coolest cars without scrambling for it. (Participant 1)

Participants 1, 4, and 6 described the frustration of buying repositioned products that had features they considered unattractive or otherwise objectionable. For Participant 1, on at least one occasion, distaste for a design feature had altered the intention to buy:

They either add parts or chop parts off from the original die-cast. An example is the 1967 Camaro. Sometime around 2008, they transformed this muscle car classic to a convertible in the Adult Collectible line, Ultra-Hots. Who would do such a thing? Disappointing. I didn't buy it; it was a waste. (Participant 1)

Participant 4 spoke of intending to buy a repositioned product but being disappointed and frustrated by an alteration to a favorite design: "I don't like it when a part of the Hot Wheels car is tampered with because then I get disappointed." Participant 6, like Participant 1, spoke of deciding against a purchase due to frustration and disappointment with a design alteration:

If they change the color on specific cars that I love, I would be upset. I'm the kind of person who likes consistency. So, when my Hemi-Barracuda goes from silver to lime-green, I get mad. When Mattel changes the shape or color of the product or blister packaging mid-way through the year, I get irritated. There's no consistency in the collection of sets. That's a big negative for me. There are certain cars that should not be tampered with, especially where my feelings are concerned. When that feeling changes from good to bad, it can result in loss of a customer. (Participant 6)

In contrast to the experiences of Participants 1, 4, and 6, Participant 2 described the frustration of finding that a desired item had not been changed significantly from a previous design, despite its new packaging:

What I find negative or disapprove of on a repositioned Hot Wheels is when there is little change to the Hot Wheels product itself and is labeled as a limited edition, but only to realize that much of the change is because of the product's external packaging. (Participant 2)

Major theme 3: Changed buying behaviors associated with product repositioning included more spending, less spending, and more assertive shopping. Participants 2, 4, 5, and 7 described repositioned products as triggering increases or decreases in the frequency and quantity of their toy purchases. For Participant 5, repositioned products were a reason to work harder in order to afford more toys, and also a reason to borrow money:

Need to work harder to bring that paycheck home and set aside whatever buying power I can bring to the stores. About two years back, I remember when some buddies and I went to this local hobby store. There we saw a purple '57 Chevy Treasure Hunt that was introduced in the 1996 Treasure Hunt line-up. It was in a glass showcase selling for $80. Back then, real-rider tires were the in-thing, and still is. But that '57 looked real good with them tires. I had to have it. Only had $25 on me. Right there, I ask my buddies if they could help me pay for it as a loan. For me, it was an off-the-cuff sale. Felt soooo good. (Participant 5)

Participant 2 described an instance when a repositioned product had led to an overall increase in purchases:
The introduction of the "adult collectible" line of Hot Wheels was a significant example. It was appropriately introduced during a time when the "basic" line of Hot Wheels was fast becoming deemed as ordinary for most hot wheels collectors. As an avid Hot Wheels collector during those years, my buying habits were heightened because the repositioning of the high-end Hot Wheels line. The adult collectible line was more appealing in terms of overall quality of the die-cast cars. The packaging was also new and creative which was designed to appeal to collectors who could immediately identify with the product. (Participant 2)

The financial strain resulting from these increased purchases eventually caused Participant 2 to buy fewer toys, however:

I feel that my excitement has been diluted by the introduction of multiple repositioned Hot Wheels line, because it was a distraction from the original Hot Wheels line. In hindsight, I found it to eventually be unappealing because of the increasing effect it had on my finances, which led me to buy less of these products. (Participant 2)

Participants 1, 3, 4, and 8 described the changes that the competition among collectors for repositioned products had caused them to make in their behavior and demeanor while shopping for the toys. For Participant 3, the change in buying behavior associated with repositioned products involved the adoption of a non-threatening demeanor when searching for an item, in order not to provoke other collectors:

Can't go in a store aggressive anymore because collectors are territorial in the aisles. When they see aggressive collectors, they get provoked. You need to go in the store in a casual manner and glance at the Hot Wheels instead of rummaging through it. It's an act, but uhh, at least, I know that there was no restocking. This save me any further trips to this store for the day. Then this whole act repeats itself the next day. (Participant 3)

V.   Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

Repositioning can improve the brand image of companies (Mishra & Choudhury, 2013), but it was not known how toy collectors perceive repositioned products. Sometimes, negative reaction of toy collectors from repositioned products result in lower revenue for toy manufacturing companies. However, howtoy collectors perceive a product in which an attribute has been repositioned was not given enough attention by researchers. Understanding their experiences is important because this specific consumer group makes up as much as a third of adult buyers (Ridgway et al., 2016).

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experience of toy collectors regarding their feelings when presented with a product in which an attribute has been repositioned. The researcher explored the phenomenon of repositioning an attribute of the toy called Hot Wheels and how this affected the perspectives of collectors. Thus, the current chapter aims to present the interpretation and implications made from these results, which includes a discussion of the findings and their implications, recommendations for the actual practice and future research, and the conclusion.

Summary of Findings

The first research question centered on the lived experiences of toy collectors when confronted with repositioned products. Analysis of the data revealed two major themes and one minor theme in relation to this question. The researcher categorized participants' positive emotions when confronted or heard about repositioned products that they want to collect as the first theme and the main negative emotions provided by the participants as the second theme. The minor theme is the changing emotions of the participants with regard to repositioned products. These themes reflect how product repositioning can stimulate positive product performance, perceptions and retain customers (Cross, 2015; Gao, Huang, & Simonson, 2014). Researchers have shown that the pursuit of collections can be justified on the basis of the collectible items' aesthetic, emotional, or monetary value appeal (Gao et al., 2014). Although collection programs are growing in popularity, there is no one factor established to have the ability to drive consumers to begin a collection (Gao et al., 2014). Researchers revealed that items becoming collectibles have attributes and characteristics determining whether or not they will become a collectible craze (Gao et al., 2014; Zonnevald and Biggeman, 2014).

Favorable emotions such as happiness and fulfillment are naturally those that can encourage a person to view a particular product as worthy of the collection while unfavorable ones such as frustration and disappointment will not. Companies looking into reposition products are therefore recommended to take into consideration the emotions that the target market will have. The results showed supported the role that design and aesthetics can play in shaping and influencing emotions (Zonneveld &Biggeman, 2014). How a product is manufactured and designed can particularly attract a consumer to collecting. Passion and enthusiasm for a brand and a product coupled with the attractiveness of a design can invoke a need to begin product collection (Zonneveld &Biggeman, 2014). Based on the theory of positioning, if a consumer perceives that the brand or product is strong and unique, this person is likely to be influenced to start collecting it over other brands or products (Ogilvy, 2013). Past researchers have revealed that attributes of a brand can explain why individuals are passionate to collect it (Candan& Yildirim, 2013; Zonneveld &Biggeman, 2014).

The second research question centered on the lived experiences of toy collectors with regard to buying repositioned products. The analysis of interview data led to the uncovering of three major themes: toy collectors' positive emotions over the purchase, negative emotions over the purchase, and changing buying behaviors. In particular, results showed that toy collectors experience positive emotions when they bought repositioned products such as excitement, satisfaction, nostalgia, and curiosity. More specifically, satisfaction and excitement were reported to be positive emotions felt when obtaining items that are anticipated to yield a significant profit in a secondary market. In other words, they perceived their purchase as investments, regardless if they are mere toys in the eyes of others.

The negative emotion most often associated with buying repositioned products was frustration. This was also triggered by the difficulty of obtaining rare items and by objectionable alterations to favorite designs. For those with negative emotions, buying the repositioned items brought upon them the negative experience of competing with others. Before they can complete a purchase, they have to scramble, hunt, and fight others. While as collectors they get the thrill of the hunt, they also wish Mattel would just produce more so that they do not have to undergo acts of desperation or frustration. They also reported that sometimes, alterations can lead to a drop in its value. Others were simply not pleased with how the company messed with the classics and yet offered no real substantial change. Others claimed that the repositioned designs do not make sense so they do not just buy. They feel that it was a waste of effort on Mattel's part to make them feel excited about a new product and then offer something unappealing.

These perspectives emphasized how repositioning can result in successful business outcomes wherein the voice and emotions of the customer is aligned with the business' development strategy, if done right (Zhang et al., 2015). Existing researchers have already established that repositioning products later in life to induce nostalgic feelings or emotions among consumers can be a big business (Cross, 2016). Toy repositioning, in particular, has shown to be successful because of the nostalgia of a group of like-minded individuals, such as the collectors (Cross, 2016). Emotions have been established to be one of the, if not the main, reason that repositioned products can sell. Nostalgia is more than wanting something from the past; it is also about addressing the needs of consumers to confirm a personal identity they had in the past (Geraghty, 2014; Muensterberger, 2014). This is why people, especially the elderly, can be fixated on certain types of music and be interested in vinyl record collecting (Cross, 2015). Repositioned products have qualities in terms of taste, smell, sound, and sight that could evoke memories and their associated emotions, and makes consumers desire to recreate these emotions by purchasing the products (Cross, 2015).

The study revealed findings of changing emotions and behaviors. Toy collectors' can experience shifts in their emotions when faced with certain attributes of the toy they bought and even change their collecting behavior after they bought the repurchased products. These findings can be analyzed through the wider literature. According to past studies, some factors that enticed a person to feel they should start collecting a brand's products are the same factors that can influence actual consumption behavior. Both internal and external factors can explain the desire to collect and actual purchase of the items to be collected (Cross, 2016; Gao et al., 2014; Geraghty, 2014; Toups et al., 2016; Zonneveld &Biggeman, 2014).
However, the desire to collect does not necessarily translate to actual purchases. Companies who want to see sales should understand what factors could not only entice a customer to desire to collect but actually start doing so. Engaging in a business strategy such as repositioning requires this understanding. The failure of a repositioning strategy can sometimes be explained by the failure of companies to have a functional understanding what it takes to push the target market to buy. Moreover, companies focus on the attributes of their products so much that they fail to take into account the emotions of the consumers, specifically those that will lead to continuous purchases. Repositioning is often used by companies to improve brand image but is found to be not an effective strategy unless consumers will have positive emotions and attitudes toward the alterations made on the products they once loved and would now like to collect (Mishra & Choudhury, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015).

Limitations

As this is a phenomenological research study, the researcher faced the common and usual limitations of a study of this nature. However, the researcher strived to address these limitations. First, the subjectivity of the data gathered through this phenomenon is acknowledged to create difficulties in establishing reliability and validity of the information. In addition, researcher-induced bias exists. Phenomenology also does not produce generalizable data. Since the study only focused on Hot Wheels, the findings may not be easily generalized to all toys or products. Even though these findings are assumed applicable to Barbie and Polly Pocket toys and other Mattel items, it is impossible to be definite about this unless future studies are specifically designed to find out. Not all toys can be repositioned like Hot Wheels, even if they have similar attributes. Lastly, as the sample is considerably small, one question that this can lead to is whether the findings are really typical. The researcher addressed reliability, validity, and bias issues by performing member checking, completing an audit trail, and proving thick descriptions of the methods used so that future researchers can try to duplicate the study and check if the same findings can be arrived at.

Recommendations

Even though the findings of the study made substantial contributions regarding their consumers' feelings when presented with a product in which an attribute has been repositioned, particularly that of toy collectors' emotions, future researchers can do so much more to contribute to the body of evidence in relation to the topic. They can do so by addressing the limitations of this study. As pointed out, the problem with generalizability affects this study, although it is expected of most qualitative studies.

The study is not very concerned with generalizability, but it cannot be denied that the same phenomenon can be addressed through other contexts, where the setting, population, and research phenomenon may be reasonably similar. For example, other types of collectors can be examined or more varied toy collectors can be examined, based on different demographic variables, different socioeconomic statuses, or on different brands of toys. Income levels or cultural beliefs may affect emotion, so these may also be taken into account.

Another possible limitation of the study is researcher bias. Given that the researcher is not a toy collector, potential bias regarding the research topic had been minimized. However, not being a toy collector still means the researcher might have preconceived notions of collectors – such as dismay and wonder, which was also neutralized. Future researchers who are toy collectors themselves can use an interpretative design to assess the emotions of toy collectors, embracing that they themselves have views over this phenomenon and using their subjective notions to interpret the findings.

The researchers had excluded non-collectors of Hot Wheels to ensure some level of uniformity when exploring the lived experience of the repositioning of an attribute of a product. Future researchers can evaluate if the same emotions can be invoked and if the same effects from these emotions on purchase behavior can be observed from non-Hot Wheels collectors. Toy collectors' perspective can also be useful in understanding product repositioning. The researcher had also excluded former toy collectors who were no longer collecting to ensure that the sample only consisted of current toy collectors but similarly, past collectors might have invaluable insights on product repositioning. In particular, future researchers can gather their insights as to whether they stopped collecting because of the repositioning or why they have not started collecting once more when the product has already been repositioned.

Implications

The research gap addressed by the current study is the lack of scholarly information about the experiences of toy collectors when buying a product wherein an attribute has been repositioned or changed. The findings of the study not only closed this gap but also contributed further to the existing body of evidence with regard to feelings on product repositioning and how these feelings can influence consumption behavior. By understanding the experiences of toy collectors themselves when faced with changes in the attribute of toys they are collecting, the toy companies can be more aware of how decisions with regard to changes in attributes could lead to some risks, such as possible loss of loyal customers or loss of revenue.

Company leaders, particularly those who wish their products can inspire the decision to collect can benefit from the current findings. With these findings, company leaders will be able to understand the perspectives of consumers to have a successful repositioning of a product. Through the findings of this study, which focused on the experiences and perspectives of toy collectors and showed that repositioning can not only illicit excitement and anticipation but also frustration and disappointment, company leaders can determine the appropriate strategy to encourage collection while preventing consumer attrition among avid toy collectors. Company leaders can utilize the findings generated to retain current collectors but encourage new collectors to patronize their products.

VI. Conclusion

Companies often resort to product repositioning to improve the brand image or incite excitement to the brand once more. However, the repositioning of items can result in a negative reaction from consumers, particularly among loyal buyers such as collectors. The current study was designed to determine what changes in emotions can be triggered by repositioning. The study was deemed significant because repositioning can only be considered effective when customers have positive attitudes about the alterations made to improve a product. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to explore the lived experience of toy collectors regarding the repositioning of an attribute of a product. Findings were very specific. Toy collectors can feel both positive and negative emotions. It can be concluded that as long as the products are designed well and respect the thrill of the hunt of the collectors without making them feel overly frustrated and hopeless, a repositioning strategy can be successful. Future researchers are encouraged to determine if the findings will hold over other collectors' items or other products that are not really collectibles.

Reflections

Overall, I, as the researcher, believed that the study was successful in doing what it was designed to do. The findings of the current study are perceived as having added to the current research exploring the value of emotions in selling repositioned products and inspiring consumers to start collecting. Also, unlike past studies which stated only that emotions can be a factor behind consumption, that the current findings contribute to the body of evidence are the particular emotions that toy collectors could have over the idea of repositioned products and the specific emotions that will encourage them to actually buy. I believe that the results of the study are significant. On my perspective, these findings may certainly assist companies in developing appropriate repositioning strategy for increasing product performance. I believed that by having explored the lived experiences of collectors, my study has produced findings valuable for use of companies when developing appropriate repositioning strategies for their products.

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Tables
Table 1.
Categories, Themes and Codes Contributing to Themes

Category/research question	Theme	Codes contributing to theme
What are the lived experiences of toy collectors when confronted with repositioned products?	Major theme 1: Positive emotions included contentment, accomplishment, anticipation, and "the thrill of the hunt"	Content/accomplishment; something to look forward to; thrill of the hunt
	Major theme 2: Negative emotions included anger, frustration, and disappointment	Anger and frustration; anxiety; blinded by excitement; disappointed expectations; nothing I can do; the chase; investment
	Minor theme: Emotions changed over time	Changed over time
What are the lived experiences of toy collectors with regard to buying repositioned products?	Major theme 1: Positive emotions associated with buying repositioned products include excitement, satisfaction, nostalgia, and curiosity	Packaging; resale value; specific features; buy if done right; regular treasure hunt
	Major theme 2: The negative emotion most often associated with buying repositioned products was frustration	Drop in value; hard to find; messing with classics; no real change; playing
	Major theme 3: Changed buying behaviors associated with product repositioning included more spending, less spending, and more assertive shopping	Adult collectibles; avoidance; big spender; buying elsewhere; emotion-specific action; recruiting others; keeps it fresh; refusal to buy; value-specific action