UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Dyadic Gift-Giving Behaviour: Dimensions, Relationships and Motivations from an Attachment Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Dyadic gift giving is often described as a mechanism to manage important but insecure relationships (Caplow, 1982). Considering that most gift giving behaviour happens within interpersonal relationships (Ruth, 1996), and that the economic significance of the gift market in the UK represents £40 billion in 2012 (Mintel, 2013), it is important to understand how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving behaviour.

In this thesis, we aim to provide a broad understanding of dyadic gift-giving behaviour from the perspective of the giver, specifically bringing clarity to the complexity of dyadic gift giving dimensions, elucidating the giver's list of gift receivers and understanding how givers operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations. To enhance this understanding, we use insights from the normative dimension of Attachment Theory, following the idea of attachment as a human tendency to be close to significant others to obtain protection and emotional security (Bowlby, 1969).

By centring their analysis on the giver-receiver dyad, researchers are ignoring some basic components defining dyadic gift giving, such as the focus of the givers' attention and individuals who connect the relationship between the giver and the receiver. Furthermore, the inherent assumption that, givers give solely to maintain their relationship with the receiver and the traditional research focus on the nature of relationships has restricted the study of gift giving to the consideration of a static giver-receiver dyad. This approach neglects the links between each of the members of the dyad and their respective networks. This limitation is extended to the study

of gift giving motivations, where the main research interest is on uncovering alternative motivations to give and proposing new classifications for giving motives, thus neglecting how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations and overlooking why multiple motivations occur within the same gift experience.

To address the abovementioned limitations, the present study adopts an interpretivist approach as an appropriate perspective to look at gift giving and obtain an in-depth understanding of givers' gift experiences. This is in line with most empirical research in gift giving, which has adopted an interpretivist standpoint and qualitative research methods (Davies, 2010). The research design involves a qualitative methodology that encompasses 28 online diaries and 27 follow-up interviews, producing over 700 pages of text in total. Data collection was conducted sequentially in two rounds at two different times of the year in order to capture a variety of gift giving occasions, relationships and behaviours. These methods were used in a complementary way to provide a broader picture of dyadic gift-giving behaviour. The content analysis adopted an interpretivist approach consistent with Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy (1988).

At a theoretical level, Attachment Theory illuminates dyadic gift giving by answering the questions of the main dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving, how givers relate to gift receivers and how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations. The findings indicate the existence of different dyadic gift giving dimensions including *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* dyadic gift giving forms. These forms involve gift-giving intermediaries and the relationship goals underpinned by Attachment Theory. The differentiation of these three forms of giving shows that

dyadic gift giving is more complex than the traditional view, which only considered the giver-receiver dyad (e.g., Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012).

The data also revealed that givers *differentiated* the ways in which they relate to gift receivers in attachment terms. As a result, givers distinguished *direct* receivers who were providers or seekers of support in the eyes of the giver, *mediated* receivers who were extension*s* of important individuals for the giver to access the support of a significant person, and *surrogate* receivers who replaced unavailable but important others. This approach also indicates different levels of *permanence* of the receiver within the givers' gift list, which endows the givers' gift list with dynamism by identifying permanent, transient and sporadic gift receivers.

Finally, the data revealed that givers' pursuit of distinct *relationship goals* with different gift receivers attends to attachment as an ultimate motivation to give. At the same time, *motivational triggers, drivers* and *roles* are proximate motives that serve specific purposes and complement each other in order to help givers to achieve their relationship goals. The *integration* of ultimate and proximate connects Social Exchange Theory and Evolutionary Psychology, and it explains the occurrence of multiple gift giving motivations within the same gift-giving event. Therefore, this thesis advances marketing knowledge by the *differentiation* of novel insights (i.e., new dyadic gift giving dimensions; different types of gift receivers) and by the *integration* of previously differentiated phenomena (i.e., gift motivations) (MacInnis, 2011).

From a practitioner's perspective, the understanding of givers' characterisation of gift receivers facilitates the implementation of marketing strategies that portray the

benefits that individuals look for in a relationship. While the unravelling of multiple motivations allows the design of marketing appeals using gift motivations singularly or in combination to each other within the same event, the consideration of gift-giving intermediaries further develops the customer-decision-making process of selecting a gift.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Branco-Illodo, I. Pereira Heath, T., Tynan, C. (2016) "Who are the Gift Receivers?: A Dynamic Gift Giving Network". *Proceedings of the 19th Academy of Marketing Science World Marketing Congress*, Paris 19-23 July 2016.

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To my grandmother, América.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH

1.1. INTRODUCTION

In this first chapter, we introduce the theme of the present thesis, which is the understanding of dyadic gift giving consumer behaviour from the perspective of Attachment Theory. The choice of this research topic reflects its relevance for contemporary society and is a response to research limitations that call for further attention. In the following, we provide an overview of the research background, we indicate the main objectives that will guide our research, including a brief account of methodology and, at the end of this chapter, we outline the structure by which this thesis is organised.

1.2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Gift giving is one of the most important rituals of consumption in terms of economic, social and psychological significance (Wooten and Wood, 2004). It is important to understand gift giving behaviour because there are a number of opportunities in the UK gift market, worth £40 billion in 2012, including gifts of cash and gift cards (Mintel 2013). Further to the economic significance of gifts, producing goods as gifts forces manufacturers to behave in a different manner from when producing ordinary consumer goods, which affects marketing actions, such as the type of advertising (Davis, 1972). Extant research has emphasised that the more that is known about the determinants of gift giving behaviour, such as giving relationships, the easier it is for marketers to apply strategy decisions to the marketing of gifts (Beatty et al., 1996). In fact, most gift giving behaviour happens in

the context of interpersonal relationships (Ruth, 1996). The understanding of how relationships operate as antecedents of gift motivations is one of the areas with most important implications for practitioners (Lutz, 1979). However, much uncertainty still exists around this research realm, which faces a series of obstacles calling for further research. In reviewing the gift literature, we identified three main areas of concern, which are around the dimensions defining dyadic gift giving, how givers relate to receivers in the givers' gift list and how these receivers operate as antecedents of motivations in dyadic gift giving.

Prototypically, the main locus of dyadic gift giving is the giver-receiver dyad, where one individual gives a gift to another in order to stabilise the relationship between them (Belk, 2010; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). The premise that the giver and receiver are core elements of dyadic gift giving (Clarke, 2006; Sherry, 1983), and the assumption that gift exchange is a way to maintain social relationships, are two of the main factors that make dyadic gift giving different from other forms of giving (e.g., potlach).

Despite the fact that the giver, the receiver and the relationship goals that they pursue are constituent elements defining dyadic gift giving, they have received little attention in the literature in terms of the role that they play in the dyadic form of gift giving at a structural level. In fact, dyadic gift giving is more than an aggregate of dyadic interactions, as the classic dyadic gift-giving model assumes by describing dyadic gift giving as a set of exchanges and social relationships between dyads of consumers with individual motivations (Giesler, 2006). Therefore, the need for a holistic perspective to understand the structural components of dyadic gift giving

claimed by Sherry (1983) is an issue that remains unanswered after over thirty years of research in this field. A greater understanding of dyadic gift giving as a differentiated form of giving requires a better knowledge of its structural components. This involves the identification of how the structural components of dyadic gift giving interact with each other and the relationship goals that givers pursue when giving a gift.

In addition, an over reliance on the giver-receiver dyad to study gift giving relationships (e.g., Sherry, 1983; Joy, 2001) leads to the neglect of the networks associated with those receivers (Park, 1998). In fact, the classification of givers' relationships with receivers has been limited to the nature of the relationship between the giver and receiver (e.g., Caplow, 1982; Joy, 2001; Otnes, Lowrey and Kim, 1993) which is as a static indicator of closeness; their relationship quality, as subjective assessment of closeness (Camerer, 1988; Roster, 2006); genetic relatedness (Saad and Gill, 2003) which restricts the study to blood related members; and emotional significance (e.g., Joy, 2001; Caplow, 1982) which does not specify what emotional closeness entails. Considering that the individuals who receive gifts are different from those who do not (Sherry, 1983), and that not all members of a giver's gift list are equally important, it is vital to find the criteria that givers use to include and remove individuals from their gift giving list and to compare these across gift receivers. Whilst some research has been carried out beyond the giver-receiver dyad by analysing the social influences of third parties in gift giving (Lowrey et al., 2004), there remains little understanding of the individuals that givers include in their gift-giving list. One of the main reasons why relationships

are important in gift giving is because they affect gift-giving motives (e.g., Larsen and Watson, 2001; Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993; Caplow, 1984).

Finally, a vast majority of research states that gifts are a way for the giver to maintain relationships with gift receivers (e.g., Baskin et al., 2014; Sherry, 1983; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). Most of these studies assume the social exchange paradigm (Sherry et al., 1993) and focus on listing a variety of motivations which are not mutually exclusive. Among these gift giving motivations are obligation (e.g., Goodwin et al., 1990), altruism (e.g., Banks, 1979; Sherry, 1983), social norms, self-interest (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1991), agapic love (Belk and Coon, 1993) and impression management (Segev et al., 2012). Although the literature acknowledges that givers often have multiple gift giving motives (e.g., Sherry, 1983; Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993), the occurrence of these motives within the same gift event, and how they relate to each other, remains a major issue in dyadic gift giving.

In order to address these neglected issues, gift-giving research might benefit from insights drawn from Attachment Theory. Normative attachment describes the tendency of human beings to create strong emotional bonds with significant others (Bowlby, 1969), and it is one of the most popular frameworks to study close relationships (Cicirelli, 2010; Feeney and Noller, 1996). This is important as most gift giving happens within the context of important interpersonal relationships (Ruth, 1996). At the same time, attachment is a motivational model associated with the maintenance of relationships, reproductive and survival benefits (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Bowlby, 1969). This suggests a new approach to the understanding of

motivations related to relationship maintenance through gift giving. Recent research suggests that Attachment Theory can enhance the understanding of gift giving behaviour (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013; Nguyen and Munch, 2011). However, the use of Attachment Theory is still a novel approach to consumer research, especially in gift giving.

To conclude, considering the significance of gift giving for marketers and the neglected issues that have been identified in the following review of the literature, this introduction has presented powerful reasons to study gift-giving behaviour from the perspective of Attachment Theory.

1.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The overall aim of this research is to understand dyadic gift giving behaviour by observing gift givers lived experiences and using insights from Attachment Theory. Although we anticipate that Attachment Theory can shed light on dimensions, relationships and motivations from a giver's perspective, we do not start the research with a preconceived idea of how the theory will illuminate gift-giving behaviour. Specifically, the objective of this thesis is to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the main dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving?

RQ2: How do givers relate to gift recipients?

RQ3: How do relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations?

In order to answer these research questions, we will adopt an interpretative and inductive approach to study dyadic gift giving from the perspective of the giver. This is because most gift giving studies have adopted an interpretivist perspective and qualitative methods (Davies et al., 2010), as these methods are appropriate to access the complexities involved in gift giving (Baskin et al., 2014).

At the same time, we consider that the giver places the centre of interest on the receiver, who is the focus of the givers' relationship goals (Baskin et al., 2014). We will collect data in two different rounds following a sequential process. This process starts with a screening questionnaire to recruit participants and to obtain background information. This follows with the completion of 28 online diaries and 27 follow-up interviews conducted using an interview protocol to fill gaps from the diaries. We will use several data collection methods with the intention of having access to participants' gift-giving experiences. The major reason for the choice of multiple data collection approaches is that when researching close relationships, the complexity of the relationship elements requires the use of different methods (Clark and Reis, 1988). These three different methods will be used in a complementary way, comparing givers' reports about the same gift event and givers' relationships with receivers across questionnaires, diaries and interviews. This procedure will allow the researchers to make connections about participants' unconscious motives to give and other views, using normative attachment as a research guide while allowing other insights to emerge from the data.

In sum, by contrast with the apparent vast research on dyadic gift giving, key research areas remain underexplored despite their theoretical relevance for

consumer research and the potential implications for practitioners. Among the obstacles to a better understanding of dyadic gift giving, we identified the scant attention paid to the constituent elements of dyadic gift giving, the lack of a criterion for the giver to classify gift receivers, and the need for an explanation for relationships as antecedents of different gift giving motives occurring within the same gift event. The present study intends to fill this void and to clarify some of the existing work in dyadic gift giving.

1.4. THESIS STRUCTURE

After the introduction, in Chapter I, this thesis is divided into five main chapters comprising literature review, methodology, findings, discussion and conclusion. To begin, in Chapter II, the literature review critically analyses the current research on gift giving and identifies areas that deserve further attention. This continues with an introduction of Attachment Theory and follows with a section suggesting how Attachment Theory might overcome the limitations we observed in the gift giving literature earlier. In Chapter III, we examine current philosophical paradigms and methods and the reasons for selecting the approach used in this investigation. This is followed by the chosen research design, process, data analysis and research ethics. Chapter IV, reports the findings in three sections that focus on each of the newly identified dyadic gift giving forms (i.e., direct, inter-linked and indirect dyadic gift giving) in relation to the giver's relationship with gift receivers, giver's relationship goals and gift motivations. These findings are, subsequently, discussed in Chapter V, in light of the attachment, evolutionary psychology and gift giving literatures. We organise our discussion around the answers to the questions of

what the dimensions of dyadic gift giving are, the ways in which givers relate to gift receivers, and how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations. This thesis concludes with Chapter VI, comprising reflections from the research experience, a summary of the key findings of this study, managerial implications, limitations and avenues for future research (Chapter VI).

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The current literature review chapter is divided into three main sections. The first part provides a summary of the gift giving research to date and identifies areas that need further explanation in this context. The second section introduces the theory of attachment as an appropriate approach to address the limitations signalled in the introduction section. Finally, the third section suggests how insights from Attachment Theory could address the limitations identified in gift giving research. The chapter concludes by presenting the research questions that this thesis will strive to address.

2.2. GIFT GIVING

2.2.1. Introduction

Gift giving has been a subject of research for almost forty years. Although the research on gift giving has been extensive in the areas of gift giving relationships and motivations, there are still many aspects calling for further investigation. This is because most of the research has added more detail to what we know rather than aiming to bring clarity and integrate existing content. In this literature review, we cover a broad range of the classic and more recent research in dyadic gift giving and we will identify some of the main areas in need of further attention.

After this brief introduction, the first subchapter begins with an overview of gift giving behaviour, followed by a contextualisation of *dyadic gift giving* and its basic components. Next, we analyse gift-giving relationships and provide a review of gift

giving motivations, occasions and gift selection. This will follow with the symbolic meanings attributed to the gift and gift giving emotions, which are present throughout the gift giving process (Taute and Sierra, 2015). Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of the limitations that we identified in dyadic gift giving research and that require further research.

2.2.2. Gift giving behaviour: an overview

In the literature, we can find multiple definitions of gift giving, from a way to acquire resources (Arnould, Price and Zinkham, 2004) to tangible expressions of relationships (Sherry, 1983). Whereas gift giving is a universal phenomenon by which people forge alliances and friendships in all cultures irrespective of the culture-specific rituals (Saad, 2007), its specific norms and rituals are culturally defined (Arnould et al., 2004; Saad and Gill, 2003). Therefore, the concept of gift is not a construct capable of a precise definition that embraces everything described as a gift because its meaning varies from context to context (Davies et al., 2010). In this study, we will consider dyadic gifts as "gifts that are specifically targeted from one person to another to maintain or deepen their existing relationship" (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012:74).

As a subject suitable for multidisciplinary investigation (Minowa et al., 2011), gift giving has been widely studied within many disciplines, including economics (e.g., Camerer, 1988; Currie, Ling and Meng, 2013; Prendergast, 2001; Ruffle, 1999; Waldfogel, 2002), anthropology (e.g., Cligget, 2003; Malinowski, 1922; Mauss, 1954), sociology (e.g., Adloff, 2006; Caplow, 1984; 1982; Elder-Vass, 2015; Schwartz, 1999), psychology (e.g., Howard, 1992; Klein, Lowrey and Otnes, 2015;

Huang and Yu, 2000), ethics (e.g., Dolfsma et al, 2009) and marketing (e.g., Antón, Camarero and Gil, 2014; Belk and Coon, 1993; Lowrey, et al, 2004; Nguyen and Munch, 2011; Roster, 2006; Sherry, 1983; Taute and Sierra, 2015; Wooten and Wood, 2004).

Different disciplines approach the study of gift giving in different ways. While anthropologists consider gift giving as a way of exchange, social psychologists consider that gifts are a natural form of self-expression (Ruffle, 1999). In marketing, the main focus of gift giving research has been on givers, receivers, the interactions between them through the gift-giving process (e.g., Sherry, 1983; Banks, 1979), reformulation of their relationship (e.g., Ruth, Otnes and Brunel., 1999), the influence of third parties (e.g., Lowrey, et al., 2004), the giver's personal characteristics in gift selection (e.g., Beatty et al., 1996; 1991; Belk, 1979), types of gifts (e.g., Clarke, 2006; 2008), social meanings in gift occasions such as Christmas (e.g., McKechnie and Tynan, 2006) and different gift giving motivations (e.g., Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993; Goodwin et al., 1990; Wolfinbarger, 1990). Therefore, researchers in marketing have concentrated on the relationship and motivational aspects of gift giving.

Gift-giving research has grown in consumer research, especially in the last five years. In May 2016, we conducted a Google Scholar search to determine the number of hits per year before and after 2010 and by using "gift giving" and "consumer research" as search strings. We identified that the total number of publications before this year was 2090, representing almost the same as after, when we obtained 2280 hits. Furthermore, the number of gift giving papers

published per year as consumer research increased by 94% between 2010 and 2015 (from 255 to 495 articles). Additionally, consumer behaviour textbooks integrate notions of gift giving as part of their content (e.g., Solomon et al., 2013; Wells and Foxall, 2012), which indicates that gift giving is increasingly being recognised as an important part of consumption.

Gift giving is an exemplary case of a consumption phenomenon whose research accords with the aims of a Consumption Culture Theory (CCT) approach, addressing the sociocultural, experiential, symbolic and ideological aspects in a consumption context (Arnould and Thomson, 2005). Although CCT as an approach to research is relatively recent, for over three decades many researchers have focused on gift giving within particular cultures, specific occasions and comparisons among different cultures. China is one of the most typical cultural contexts to study gift giving (e.g., Leung et al., 2008; Qian et al., 2007; Joy, 2001). This is because in this culture, gift giving is one of the most important modes of social exchange and involves various cultural rules which differ from those in Western countries (Yang, 1994). In the same way, gift giving has been the subject of study within other cultural contexts such as Japan, addressing the nuances of gift wrapping (Hendry, 1995); Vietnam, considering the construction of meanings in weddings (Nguyen and Belk, 2013); Turkey, exploring the importance of gold gifts (Ertimur and Sandikci, 2014); Romania, as an example of a transition country (Mitrut et al., 2010); and even among prisoners in Nazi concentration camps to explain gift giving and identity (Klein and Lowrey, 2006; Klein et al., 2015). Alternatively, we observed research interest in the study of gift giving linked with particular cultural occasions,

such as Christmas (e.g., Caplow, 1982; 1984; Fischer and Arnold, 1990; McKechnie and Tynan, 2006) and St. Valentine's day (e.g., Minowa et al., 2011), which are culture-specific. However, sometimes these Western social occasions become incorporated into societies where these celebrations are not part of the tradition, showing the power of Western countries prescribing giving occasions to other cultures (e.g., Rugimbana et al., 2002). Another typical approach is the comparison in gift-giving behaviour between different cultures. For example, Park (1998) compared Korea and America in terms of collectivist/individualist orientations or low/high culture environments and Beatty et al., (1996) analysed how values influence gift giving in four different cultures, the United States, France, West Germany and Denmark.

In Western countries, the increase of research on gift giving and marketers' desire to reinforce the suitability of goods in the market as gifts respond to the economic significance of interpersonal gifts (Clarke, 2008), which represent an expenditure of £40 billion in the UK (Mintel, 2013). From an economic perspective gifts are treated as commodities, exchanged by individuals paying a price for the object without a substantial seller-buyer relationship (Belk, 2010; Carrier, 1991) and a gift is presented with expectation of return (Miczo, 2002).

Apart from the economic approach, gift giving has been researched under the assumption that gifts are a social exchange between consumers, who will reciprocate the gift at some point in response to the "relational" nature of gifts affecting interpersonal relationships (Davies et al., 2010). In fact, offerings given on certain occasions according to convention represent connections to other people

and affect social relationships in a way that other acquisitions do not (Arnould et al., 2004) as, being gifts, they are tangible expressions of relationships (Sherry, 1983). This creates a system of dyadic gifts where one individual (giver) gives an object (gift) to another individual (receiver) to stabilise their relationship and gain inclusion to a network of intimate dyads where the giver and receiver know each other (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). However, conceptualising gift giving as an aggregate of dyadic gift giving transactions adopts an oversimplified view, which limits the understanding of gift giving (Giesler, 2006).

2.2.3. Dyadic gift giving as different from other forms of giving

In the last decade, gift researchers have realised that "gift giving" is a very broad term that comprises a variety of giving behaviours that need to be differentiated properly. These giving behaviours refer to different aspects of giving and they involve distinct elements. Research to date has adopted many different directions in the study of gift giving by considering behaviours such as tipping (Davies et al., 2010); charitable gifting (Kemp, Richardson and Burt, 2011); self-gift giving, reflecting gifts to one-self (Heath, Tynan and Ennew, 2015) and; re-gifting, when giving an unwanted gift to another person (Ertimur et al., 2015; Guido, Pino and Peluso, 2016; Swilley et al., 2014). In this vein, researchers have also identified intracommunity gifts, including those given by a higher status member of the society to a lower status member (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012); potlach, involving gifts from the chief of the community to another chief (Mauss, 1958); and rizhomatic networks including an exchange of gifts within a virtual network of dyads (Giesler, 2006). We observed that in the literature, even behaviours such as passing

tickets in public places (e.g., on underground, in car parks) have been considered to be a form of moral gift giving (Fuschillo and Cova, 2015). These intracommunity forms of gifting approach gift giving as a social system rather than a dyadic process (Arnould and Rose, 2016; Harvey et al., 2014; Elder-Vass, 2015). This is because the individuals involved in the gift exchange do not know each other (Debenedetti, Oppewal and Arsel, 2014).

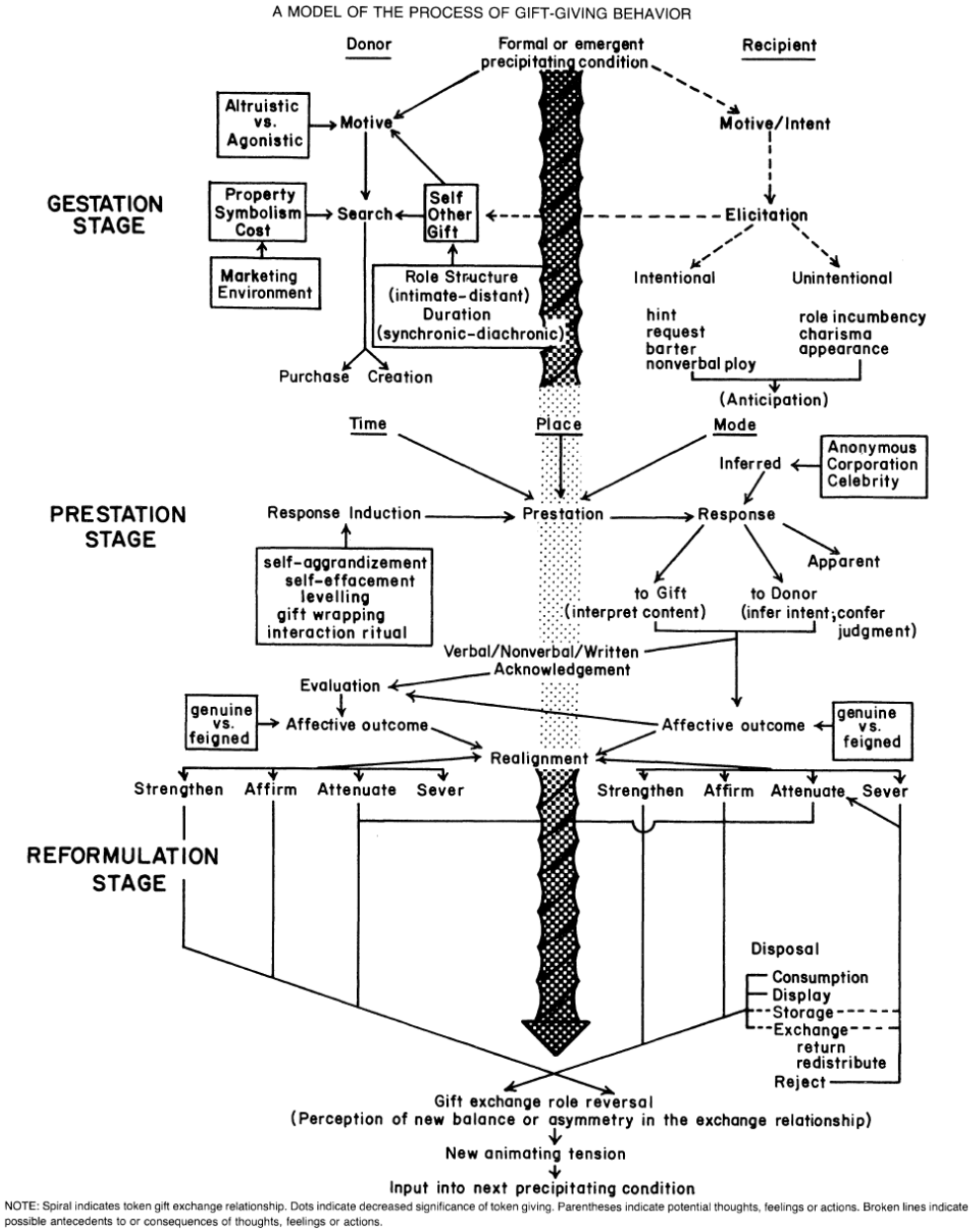
While these types of giving are "transactional", bringing benefits for the giver, there is another type of gifting research, which concentrates on the "relational" aspect of gift giving influencing relationships (Davies et al., 2010). The literature has referred to this last type of gifting *dyadic gift giving* (e.g., Sherry, 1983), which is the giving form that has received most attention to date (e.g., Belk, 2010; Debenedetti, et al., 2014; Harvey et al., 2014).

Dyadic gift giving is defined as an expressive and symbolic form of communication to indicate the nature of a relationship between two people who know each other and are in an established relationship (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). *Dyadic gift giving* has been often mistaken for *sharing*, as both are expressions of a giver's desire for connection (Belk, 2010). However, in *sharing*, the ownership of the goods exchanged is not transferred to the receiver and generates no debts as in the case of *dyadic gift giving* (Belk, 2010). This makes *sharing* a different type of behaviour.

The first interactive model depicting the *dyadic gift giving* process was proposed by Banks (1979). She explained the interactions between the giver and receiver by assuming the social exchange paradigm, which is based on gift reciprocity. The process described in her model consists of four stages: purchase,

interaction/exchange, consumption and communication feedback stages. A few years after this formulation, Sherry (1983) adapted this model arguing that communication occurs only during the transaction of gift giving and the existing stages in Banks' model did not consider the later interpretation after consumption and reciprocation. As a result, Sherry (1983) defined three different stages: *Gestation*, including all the antecedents to gift delivery; *prestation*, referring to the giver-receiver interaction ritual of gift giving; and *reformulation*, involving the consumption and post-consumption stages where the gift reformulates the giver-receiver relationship (see figure 2.1). Although Sherry's model hardly discusses the role of gift giver motivations within the dyadic model, which is strongly based in the exchange paradigm (Giesler, 2006), this model is still one of the most comprehensive explanations of the dyadic gift giving process (Clarke, 2008) and is widely used across different disciplines.

Figure 2.1: A model of the process of gift giving behaviour



Source: Sherry (1983: 163)

Further to the dyadic gift giving process model (Sherry, 1983), the few studies that have examined the structural components of dyadic gift giving consider that its key elements are the donor, the receiver, the gift, the occasion (e.g., Clarke, 2006), expectations of reciprocity and the locus of the giver on the giver-receiver dyad

(Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). By restricting the study of dyadic gift giving to the considerations of purely dyadic relationships (Giesler, 2006), only a part of the gift giving process is captured, thus missing the synergies that link individuals within a giver's social network (Fellerman and Debevec, 1993).

The early call for research to take on a holistic perspective that allows the understanding of the structural components of dyadic gift giving (Sherry, 1983) remains unanswered. In fact, there is little work published on the elements that constitute dyadic gift giving and how they interact with each other. At the same time, the study of these structural components has been restricted to a unique form of giving relying exclusively on the giver-receiver dyad. This neglects the role played by third parties in dyadic gift giving who, according to Lowrey et al. (2004), can be even more crucial elements in gift giving exchange than the receiver.

As an extension of this limitation, extant research assumes that the giver's purpose in the dyadic form of gift giving is to please the receiver and stabilise the giver-receiver relationship (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). This assumption overlooks the giver's relationship goals, which could be associated with other relationships different from that with the gift receiver. This idea might affect the way in which the structure of dyadic gift giving is defined. Throughout this study, and unless stated otherwise, references about "gift giving" will refer to dyadic gift giving.

The upcoming sections will follow the logic underlying the sequential process described by Sherry's (1983) model. First, the elements involved in the gestation gift giving stage, which happens before the gift delivery will be examined (i.e. gift

giving relationships, motivations, occasions and gift selection). This will be followed by the discussion of symbolic meanings and emotions, which are present throughout the gift giving process. This approach will allow the identification of several obstacles in the understanding of gift giving behaviour that will be summarised at the end of this chapter.

2.2.4. Dyadic gift giving relationships: giver and receiver

Givers and receivers are core components in gift giving (Clarke, 2006). According to Sherry's (1983) model, during the *gestation* stage the giver conducts an internal search involving perceptions of the self and the recipient. We realised that when studying gift-giving relationships, researchers have normally examined givers and receivers together considering different types of relationships in terms of the nature of the relationship and relationship closeness. However, givers' evaluations of the self are obviously different from their perceptions of gift receivers. This is because the giver's characteristics, such as givers' gender, values, personality or identity affect gift giving and they differ from the external traits observed on gift receivers. In fact, when observing external traits of gift receivers, givers focus mostly on the nature of the relationship and relationship closeness. In the following, we analyse separately the factors that characterise the giver and those that describe the distinctive features of the receiver, as they reflect two different aspects influencing gift-giving behaviour.

2.2.4.1. Characteristics of the giver: gender, values, identity and personality

We found in the literature several givers' internal characteristics that have an impact on gift giving. The literature suggests that the givers' demographic and psychographic characteristics (Otnes et al., 1993), values (Beatty et al., 1991) and identity can influence gift-giving exchange (Segev et al., 2012).

In terms of *demographic differences*, gift-giving research has placed a great focus on gender differences, indicating that females are more active gift givers than men (Caplow, 1982; Park, 1998). An exception to this is the context of romantic relationships, where men tend to spend more on their romantic partners (Huang and Yu, 2000; Saad and Gill, 2003) and where the gifts for women are part of a courtship strategy to signal males' willingness to invest in a relationship (Saad, 2007). The greater involvement of women in gift giving compared to men (Fischer and Arnold, 1990; Areni, Kiecker and Palan, 1998) is reflected in the greater variety of contexts and relationship where females give gifts (McGrath, 1995). In fact, females put more effort into gift selection than males (Beatty et al., 1996), investing more time looking for gifts and searching for more detailed meanings in the selected gifts than men (Larsen and Watson, 2001). Women emphasise social ties through favourite objects and they are more likely to choose handicrafts, antiques/heirlooms, bracelets/necklaces and representational items of family members that tie them to previous generations (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988) as gifts. When women choose a gift, they consider whether the recipient is likely to like the gift or not (Rucker et al., 1991).

In contrast, when giving a gift, men tend to value gifts in terms of economic value (Rucker et al., 1991) preferring objects such as art pieces, functional items and other living things as gifts (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988). These gender differences might be a consequence of socialisation (Areni et al. 1998). This results from the ways in which males and females experience their early social environment, showing that males are more individualistic and women more relationship oriented (McGrath, 1995).

Regarding *personal values*, people engage in gift giving in part to fulfil their values in life (Beatty et al., 1991). Values are "a relatively enduring belief, subject to situational and social determinants, that influences attitudes and guides behaviour in ways that may or not be apparent to the individual" (Lowrey et al., 1996: 38). Regardless of culture, gender or generation, givers' effort in gift selection and the number of gifts given are positively related to givers' values appreciating warm relationships, and negatively related to givers' values emphasising fun and enjoyment (Beatty et al., 1991).

With respect to *identity* considerations in gift giving, givers can use gifts to express their individual self (Belk, 1988), to show a new relationship status to other peers by giving a gift to a partner in public (Christopher et al., 2015), or to feel better about themselves (Beatty et al., 1991). Depending on the impression that givers want to transmit to the gift receiver, their emotional and financial investment in a gift can vary (Segev et al. 2012). Hence, a givers' identity exerts a dominant force in gift selection and this identity can be threatened when givers buy a gift that is not

consistent with their identity (Ward and Broniarczyk, 2011). However, little research addresses the identity aspects of gift giving (Klein et al., 2015).

Finally, a giver's *personality* reflecting aspects such as sociability and need for affiliation might be a better predictor of gift giving behaviour than their values, because it would help to broaden the study of relationships, which are an important aspect in gift giving (Beatty et al., 1996). Personality consists of a series of traits, some general and some more specific to a particular situation (Kassarjian, 1971). However, the use of personality constructs to study consumer behaviour has been controversial. A few studies indicate a strong relationship between personality and consumer behaviour, others indicate a lack of relationship, and the great majority indicates a weak relationship (Kassarjian, 1971). One of the major criticisms of personality constructs is the use of self-reports to measure personality (Nichols, Licht and Pearl, 1982; Podsakoff and Organ, 1986), although the use of self-report measures and their practical utility makes them indispensable in many research contexts (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). A second criticism about personality is personality variability (McCrae and Costa, 2003). Although personality constructs such as individual's need for affiliation and friendship, might be a better predictor of gift giving behaviour than single-item scales such as values (Beatty, et al., 1996), the gift giving literature has given little attention to personality constructs, with the exception of Hyun, Park and Park (2016), who studied the role of givers' narcissism in gift giving.

2.2.4.2. Characteristics of gift receivers

Further to the role of the giver, the role of the receiver is central to gift giving. This is because givers focus on the receiver, who is the object of the relationship goal that the giver wants to achieve through gift giving (Baskin et al., 2014). The individuals who receive a gift are different from those who do not (Sherry, 1983) and givers recognise that; within their social network, givers value some receivers more than they value others (Lowrey et al., 2004). In fact, a giver's relationship with the receiver affects gift expenditures (Saad and Gill, 2003; Webley and Wilson, 1989; Belk, 1979), gift selection strategies (Otnes et al., 1993), givers' emotions (Wooten, 2000), types of gifts (Belk, 1996), amount of gifts offered (Caplow, 1982) and gift giving motivations (Larsen and Watson, 2001; Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993; Caplow, 1984; Sherry, 1983).

Considering that givers' perceptions of gift receivers affect many gift-giving outcomes, such as buying more expensive gifts to closer recipients (e.g., Saad and Gill, 2003), it is important to investigate how givers differentiate between gift receivers in order to understand gift giving behaviour. Gift research has made comparisons among gift receivers by using the nature of the relationship, genetic relatedness, emotional significance, the ease of gift selection and the stage of the relationship as indicators of relationship closeness.

Regarding the nature of the relationship, researchers have focused on particular gift recipients such as romantic partners (e.g., Huang and Yu, 2000; Belk and Coon, 1993; Nguyen and Munch, 2014), family members (e.g., Rucker et al. 1992; Caplow, 1982), friends (e.g., Wooden and Wood, 2004) and workmates (e.g., Ruth, 2004).

This focus excludes from consideration other recipients such as step-family and children's teachers and, as Ruth et al. (1999) suggest, concentrates on relationship labels (e.g., mother, friend), which do not fully contextualise relationship experiences in gift giving. Gift relationships have often been classified on the basis of familial proximity (Roster, 2006), with the underlying assumption that family relationships are central to relationship closeness (Berscheid and Peplau, 1983). In fact, we can find a variety of classifications involving the nuclear family, extended family and non-family (Rucker et al., 1992); family, family insiders and strangers, which range from the closest to the most distant relationships (Leung et al., 2008). These classifications have been used to scale the economic importance given to the gift, according to the emotional value of the family relationship based on a predetermined order of relationship closeness (i.e. spouse, children) (Caplow, 1982; 1984). Researchers have also organised gift receivers around genetic closeness by using a coefficient of genetic relatedness, which represents the percentage of genes that the giver shares with the receiver (Saad and Gill, 2003). However, the current variations in family patterns and the increase of alternative relationships to traditional family structures (e.g., stepfamily, foster children) require a more general approach to study close relationships than assuming that family is central when studying relationship closeness (Berscheid and Peplau, 1983).

In addition to using the nature of the relationship as a criterion to study relationship closeness, researchers often mention the emotional significance of the receiver to the giver. For example, Joy (2001) classifies relationships according to their emotional closeness in a gift continuum comprising five main categories from

the closest to the most distant: romantic partner, close friend, good friends, just friends and hi-bye friends[1]. In a different way, Caplow (1982) mentions that kin receivers could be organised in terms of the importance of the relationship to the giver, under the assumption that particular types of receivers such as a spouse represent a specific level of closeness. Furthermore, Caplow (1982) considers blood related family in the same way as family by marriage involving: primary relationships described by a single term (e.g., mother, son, wife); secondary relationships described by two terms (e.g., mother's father); tertiary relationships described by three terms (e.g., mother's brother's daughter) and remote gift giving relations.

Despite the importance of relationship closeness in gift giving, the assumptions of the abovementioned classifications can be misleading, thus restricting their applicability. This is because these classifications (1) assume the closeness of some relationships without explicitly indicating what makes a relationship close; (2) neglect the role of third parties who can be more important than the actual receiver in explaining relationship closeness with the receiver; and, (3) adopt a static approach to compare gift relationship in a context where gift relationships change over time. In the following, we discuss these limitations.

First, the analysis of relationships based on the relationship nature, closeness and the variations on relationships have often been studied in isolation, involving assumptions about the *emotional significance* of the receiver for the giver, without explaining what makes the relationship close. Although Saad and Gill (2003)

[1] Hi-bye friends are rarely linked with strong emotional attachments (Joy, 2001).

indicate that the coefficient of genetic relatedness provides a useful criterion to study closeness, this premise limits its applicability to the context of genetically related kin. Lack of knowledge about what makes the relationship close makes it difficult to distinguish different types of gift receivers. For example, how can a giver differentiate between two receivers who are both close friends of a giver but one receives gifts often and the other does not; or between two recipients who are distant but one of them receives gifts regularly and the other does not?

Second, although donors and recipients are key components of the gift exchange (Sherry, 1983), gift exchanges could potentially include larger gift giving networks, for example, a member of the group drawing another person to the group and suggesting giving him/her a gift (Belk and Coon, 1993). On some occasions, givers also give to receivers for whom they do not necessarily care about, although this helps them to maintain another relationship that is more valuable (Lowrey et al., 2004). Despite the existence of other individuals different from the giver and the receiver in gift giving experiences, the literature has paid little attention to the role played by these figures in relation to givers and receivers, thus over-restricting gift research to the giver-receiver dyad.

Finally, comparisons among gift receivers in terms of the nature of the relationship presume that gift giving relationships are *static*, which contrasts with the gift literature suggesting several factors that affect gift relationships. In fact, there is evidence that gift relationships change with the life cycle (Lowrey et al., 2004; Minowa et al., 2011; Otnes et al., 1997; Sherry, 1983), the stage of relationship (Belk and Coon, 1993), physical distance (Caplow, 1982) and divorce and remarriage

(Otnes et al., 1994b). However, how these factors affect different gift relationships has been overlooked. Therefore, the nature of the relationship by itself and a general understanding of closeness are not sufficient to usefully compare relationships in a gift-giving context.

One of the most important implications of the understanding of relationships in gift giving is that the connection between the giver and the receiver has a strong impact on gift giving motivations (Larsen and Watson, 2001).

2.2.5. Dyadic gift giving motivations

The gift giving process begins with an individual motivated to give a gift (Hill and Rohm, 1996). Motivation is "an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's behavior" (Murray 1964: 7). Researchers have used different approaches to study gift giving motivations, researching motivations from a recipient's perspective after receiving a gift (e.g., Goodwin et al., 1990; Horne et al., 1996; Wolfinbarger, 1990), gathering self-reports from a giver's point of view (e.g., Rugimbana, 2002; Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993) and analysing the perceptions of gift observers (Branco-Illodo and Saunders, 2014). A great number of studies have examined the views of gift receivers, who attribute certain motivations to the gift giver (Banks, 1979; Wolfinbarger, 1990), as the receiver often interprets givers' motives to give (Belk, 1979; Sherry et al., 1995). This seems to be a response to the difficulty of capturing motives because givers are often unaware of their own motivations (Goodwin et al., 1990), reluctant to disclose them (Lowrey et al., 2004), or simply do not think carefully about the motives behind gift giving (Komter and Vollenberg, 1997). However, in order to understand why givers give a gift, it is

essential to capture givers' self-perceived motivations (Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993) as gift givers have been found to have very different perspectives from those of gift receivers about what leads them to give a gift (Zhang and Epley, 2012).

Gifts are given in order to satisfy a wide variety of goals (Baskin et al., 2015) as the gift exchange results from multiple motives that range between altruism and agonism on a motivational continuum (Sherry, 1983). Few researchers have asked themselves whether gift motivations are a mutually exclusive and exhaustive list of motives, or if different motives occur in combination. The few authors considering this issue claim that multiple combinations can occur within the same event (Babin, Gonzalez and Watts, 2007; Rugimbana, 2002) and those motives to give are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Davies, 2010; Wolfinbarger, 1990). In fact, givers can give for more than a single motive or value (Beatty et al., 1996; Davies, 2010; Sherry, 1983), which suggests that gift giving motivations are multifaceted, reflecting the many desires that the giver faces (Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993). However, the distinction between different motives simultaneously influencing the gift giving decision is blurred (Ertimur and Sandikci, 2005). In fact, how givers balance competing gift giving motivations remains to be stablished and, consequently, is proposed as an area for further research (Steffel and Boeuff, 2014). Despite the fact that multiple gift giving motivations occurring in the same gift event have been acknowledged by extant research, how these gift motives relate to each other has received little research attention and this is one of the main unresolved matters in the understanding of gift giving motives.

The inspection of the literature shows multiple classifications of gift giving motives. One of the main assumptions underlying gift giving motivations is givers' aim to maintain relationships with gift receivers (e.g., Lowrey et al., 2004). In most cases, this implies the need to reciprocate gifts (e.g., Anton et al., 2014; Joy, 2001; Sherry, 1983; McGrath, Sherry and Levy, 1993), with some exceptions (e.g., Belk and Coon, 1993). Despite the research emphasis on relationship maintenance and reciprocity in the study of motivations, the literature assumes that a continuous exchange of gifts helps the giver to maintain relationships with gift receivers, rather than examining why this occurs.

We discuss below the prototypical motivations covered by extant gift giving research, which can be grouped around five main motivational categories. These include gift giving as: (1) an economic exchange (e.g., Malinowski, 1922); (2) a social exchange and an obligation (e.g., Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993); (3) motives of altruistic (e.g., Banks, 1979) and agapic love (Belk and Coon, 1993); (4) self-interest (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1990); and (5) personal identity and impressions management (e.g., Klein et al., 2015).

2.2.5.1. Gift giving as an economic exchange

One of the main motivations present in the gift literature is the economic exchange, which suggests that givers are motivated by a market economy with balanced or negative reciprocity and simultaneous exchange with receivers (Arnould et al., 2004). According to the 'economic man model', where the objective is the acquisition of things without any moral inhibition, social interaction is considered a system of mutual rewards and implies reciprocity (Belk and Coon, 1993). Although

gift giving reinforces the tradition of exchange (Belk, 1979), the economic exchange model of motivation provides a limited theoretical basis to explain gift giving behaviour (Larsen and Watson, 2001: Belk, 1979). This is due to three main reasons. First, most individuals do not accept that gifts are simply commodities to trade and consider that if they do, givers should give cash rather than gifts to eliminate potential gift inefficiency (Larsen and Watson, 2001). Second, the foundations of economic exchange are limited because the sentiment the gift conveys is more important than its material worth when gifts are voluntary and altruistic (Arnould et al., 2004). According to Belk (1979), there are other functions of gifts, including being a way of communication, social exchange and a form of children's socialisation (Belk, 1979; Schwartz, 1967), where goals are not fulfilled by economic exchange. Finally, the idea that gifts operate as transactions of "inter-tribal" commerce defines gift giving as a system of economic exchange (Malinowski, 1922). This approach neglects the impact of gift giving and gift taking on the social environment, thus suggesting that gift giving is a system of social exchange (Mauss, 1954). Therefore, the understanding of economic exchange as a motivation to give is very restricting.

2.2.5.2. Gift giving as a social exchange

Further to the economic exchange model, gift-giving motivations have often been explained by the social exchange paradigm. Although the two models assume the existence of an exchange, translated by giving to receive something in return at some point, they differ in the importance of the gift. The importance of the gift rests in its economic worth for the economic paradigm and, in the symbolic

meaning attributed to the gift for the social exchange approach (Belk and Coon, 1993). Gift giving as a social exchange refers to a moral economy with balanced reciprocity whereby the exchange has a symbolic value and people give and take resources of different nature, including gifts, obtaining outcomes from those resources and from the social interaction generated by their exchange (Arnould et al., 2004). If gifts represent a moral indebtedness, the recipient wants to reciprocate to restore the balance of gifts given and received (Mitrut and Nordblom, 2010). From a social exchange perspective, a gift can create a strong bond between donor and recipient (Mauss, 1954). In this way, the claim that "gift giving is the cement of social relationships" (Komter and Vollenbergh, 1997:747) supports the idea that gifts represent connections with other people and affect social relations in a different way from how other acquisitions do (Arnould et al., 2004). This view reflects the social value of the gift and the importance of relationship maintenance as an underlying motivation to give (Tuten and Kiecker, 2009).

Further to the idea of social exchange as a way to maintain relationships, social norms have been often associated with the obligation to give for specific social occasions (e.g., Goodwin et al., 1990; Park, 1998), by considering that social norms and the obligation to give are synonyms within the gift giving context. From this point of view, social life is a constant and obligatory exchange of gifts among social groups (Mauss, 1954). In fact, the gift is not specified beforehand and the nature of the return gift cannot be negotiated, as it is at the discretion of the person who returns the gift (Adloff, 2006). Therefore, there is a strong sense of obligation

embedded in social exchange because failing to reciprocate can influence social relationships.

Social norms are important for the occurrence of gift giving, and the social norm of giving strengthens the feeling of the gift giving duty (Mitrut and Nordblom, 2010). Gift giving in certain occasions, such as Christmas, has a set of attached social norms that signal appropriate behaviour and influence gift selection (Wolfinbarger, 1990). Here the giver might need to give a gift to the receiver to take part in a social event because of the cultural expectations (McGrath, 1995). Although social norms carry a certain sense of duty and appropriateness, the premise that social norms are an obligation to give (Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993) needs further clarification, because social norms and obligation are not the same concept. For example, the social norm of giving a gift on Valentine's Day can be an opportunity for givers to show someone how much they care by giving a gift, instead of a duty and an obligation (Otnes et al., 1994a).

2.2.5.3. Motives of altruistic and agapic Love

In contrast to the economic and social exchange paradigms, altruistic motives assume voluntary gift giving without expectation of return (Wolfinbarger, 1990). The gift literature includes several variants of altruism as a motivation to give, involving the concepts of "pure gift" (Homans, 1958), "agapic love" (Belk and Coon, 1993) and "impure altruism" (Mitrut and Nordblon, 2012), which are defined next.

Altruism has largely been studied from the perspective of the gift receiver, as the literature has mentioned that it is the receiver who should attribute an act of

altruism to the giver (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1990) because this is a very difficult motive to bring to light (Rugimbana et al., 2002). For example, Banks (1979) indicates that altruism is a relevant gift giving motive that arises when the receiver is capable of appreciating a gift but not able to return it. In the same way, the receiver's appreciation of the selfless interest of the giver is manifest when the giver aims to repair a loss experienced by the recipient (Wolfinbarger, 1990). The definition of altruism in gift giving is consistent with the concepts of "pure gifts" and "agapic love". "Pure gifts" are non-calculating, non-rational, altruistic and voluntary (Arnould et al., 2004) acts, where the gift giving decision is not influenced by an expected return gift (Babin et al., 2007; Banks, 1979; Malinowski, 1922) and gifts might express unselfish love (Arnould et al., 2004).

Love is an altruistic motive that represents the sacrifice of the giver in terms of time, affordability and thought (Wolfinbarger, 1990). In the context of romantic relationships, using gifts to express love (e.g., Huang and Yu, 2000; Cheal, 1987) and care to the recipient (Otnes et al., 1994a) is well documented. Gifts motivated by love are given without any intention of manipulation (Belk, 1996) and it is the love behind the gift that makes those gifts invaluable (Huang and Yu, 2000). Further to the traditional notion of love, the idea of "agapic love" signals selfless interest and expresses a much deeper emotion compared to gift giving as "pure gifts" (Belk and Coon, 1993:393). Pure gifts focus on the issue that reciprocity is not expected (Malinowski, 1922). The presence of agape means selfless and all-giving love (Hendrick and Hendrick, 1996), it excludes gift reciprocity and it has a positive influence on resources spent to find the perfect gift (Babin et al., 2007).

A third form of altruism considered in gift giving is impure altruism, referring to the feeling of social obligation to give, irrespective of the recipients behaviour, in some situations or to certain people, such as the poor (Mitrut and Nordblom, 2012). Impure altruism has been used extensively in economics to explain charitable gift giving (e.g., Andreoni, 1989), although Mitrut and Nordblom (2010) present a model where social norms are related to reciprocity and impure altruism as motivations for gift giving behaviour.

From an anthropological perspective, altruistic gifts are not interesting because they do not create any obligations or social connections with other people, which is where the importance of gift giving lies in anthropology (Laidlaw, 2000). From an evolutionary point of view, altruism exists and it would not have evolved unless it has some benefits for the altruists (Zahavi and Zahavi, 1997), even if individuals are not aware of those advantages (Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006). For example, altruistic individuals are more generous when observed because, as the cost of their altruism increases, their status reward rises (Hardy and Van Vugt, 2006). In this case, altruism seems to be self-interested.

2.2.5.4. Self-interest

Self-interest is another motive for gift giving where the giver obtains some desired benefits such as guilt relief, social recognition or status, relationship maintenance and socialisation (Wolfinbarger, 1990). The notion that self-interest as a gift giving motivation has been overestimated (Wolfinbarger, 1990) contrasts with the majority of gift research suggesting that self-interest is one of the main gift giving motivators. The relevance of this motivation is not only because self-interest is

essential for individuals to engage in human interaction (Belk, 2010), but also because self-interest is a motivation for social exchange based on the benefits that the donor expects to receive as a form of gratification (Adloff, 2006).

Furthermore, a biological perspective based on the theory of evolution supports the notion that human beings operate according to the notion of the "selfish gene". Dawkins (1989) coined this term to explain that each gene pursues its own interest above other genes existent in the environment where they live. From this point of view, gift giving is part of human nature and is manifested through four Darwinian modules of the mind including survival (self-protection), reproduction (mate attraction and retention), kin selection (passing genes to further generations) and reciprocity (to form coalitions and affiliations) (Saad, 2007). For example, gifts may be used as a courtship strategy to attract or to retain a mate, as a manifestation of the reproduction module (Saad and Gill, 2003). Gifts could be also an investment in offspring according to their likelihood of passing their genes to grandchildren, reflecting the evolutionary kin selection module (Barrett, Dunbar and Lycett, 2002). Finally, gifts may be a way to strengthen social bonds and promote affiliations, as a manifestation of the reciprocity module (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013; Saad, 2007).

2.2.5.5. Personal identity and impressions management

The final motivation observed in the literature involves shaping the givers or the receivers' identity through gift giving, which provides an alternative motive to existing paradigms such as social, economic exchange or agapic love (Klein et al., 2015). Gift giving can contribute to the creation of an identity such as the self-

identity or the identity of the receiver by children socialisation (Banks, 1979; Schwartz, 1967). For example, the toys that parents select for their children can reflect a parent's expectations (Belk, 1979) and their ideal self-concept (Belk, 2010). This relates to the expressive value of a gift, where givers show some elements of their identity via the gift (Belk, 1979; Larsen and Watson, 2001; Sherry, 1983; Tuten and Kiecker, 2009). At the same time, givers can promote closeness with gift recipients by giving gifts that reflect the identity of the giver (Aknin and Human, 2015).

Gifts have also been used by givers to manage impressions (e.g., Wooten, 2002), and thus, to gain protection from potential harm from the receiver, with whom the giver wants to maintain social bonds (Segev et al., 2012). Creating good impressions is a motivation to give with the main aim of eliciting positive reactions from gift receivers or from an audience, which reflects the high interpersonal stakes and risk of relationship dissolution in gift-giving transactions (Wooten, 2000).

2.2.5.6. Summary and limitations of gift motivations

To sum up, despite the broad range of gift giving motivations investigated in the literature, there is still the need for an in-depth exploration of how gift-giving motivations shape givers' gift giving behaviour.

Firstly, extant research has used givers' self-reports to study gift giving motivations, allowing givers to describe their self-perceived motives (Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993). However, the literature acknowledges that givers have little or no awareness of their motives, which makes motivations difficult to capture (Goodwin, 1990;

Komter and Vollenbergh, 1997), especially by asking givers directly. To overcome this limitation, researchers adopted the perspective of gift receivers as an alternative way of looking at unconscious gift giving motivations (Wolfinbarger, 1990), which can only be disclosed by givers. Therefore, researchers need to find ways that enable givers to reveal gift giving motives that otherwise would remain concealed.

Secondly, the literature indicates that multiple gift giving motivations occur at the same time (e.g., Davies et al., 2010). However, it is not clear whether motivations are mutually exclusive (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1990), if they complement each other in some way (e.g., Rugimbana et al., 2002) and why different motivations might coexist in the same gift giving event. Furthermore, existing studies propose new motivations (e.g., Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993), or emphasise existing ones (e.g., Ertimur and Sandikci, 2005) making little attempt to integrate existing and new gift motives.

Lastly, despite the importance given to relationship management underlying most gift giving motivations (e.g., Lowrey et al., 2004; Sherry, 1983), researchers have overlooked how relationships operate as antecedents of gift motivations. For example, the economic and social exchange motives are based on reciprocity as a mechanism to maintain relationships (e.g., Joy, 2001), although how this mechanism relates to the givers' relationships with the receivers has not been investigated. Only Belk and Coon (1993) suggest that social and economic exchange are common in the early stages of romantic relationships, while the "agapic love" motivation is characteristic of high involvement relationships involving romantic

love. “Agapic love” may also include brotherly, parental, spiritual and familial love (Belk and Coon, 1993). However, the assumption that this motivation is associated with particular relationship types (e.g., brother, parent, family) restricts the understanding of gift motives. This is because not all relationships labels represent the same level of closeness and they do not fully explain how relationships affect gift-giving experiences (Ruth et al., 1999). In the case, of self-interest and identity formation as motivations to give, extant research has not made any connections between motivations and givers’ relationships with recipients. Considering the importance of relationships in the understanding of gift motivations (e.g., Larsen and Watson, 2001; Lutz, 1979), it is essential to further explore how the way in which givers relate to receivers influences gift giving motivations.

In the study of gift giving motives, Hill and Rohm (1996) mention that occasions are also motivations to give. However, the vast majority of the literature focuses on the identification of different types of occasions and how they allow givers to manage their relationships with gift receivers, as we discuss below.

2.2.6. Gift giving occasions

Sherry (1983) suggests that gift occasions are a precipitating condition that can be a structural (e.g., Christmas holiday) or emergent (peace offering) occasion, permitting the expression of a motivational state through a giving strategy (Sherry, 1983). The classifications of gift occasions are normally around the *formality* of the occasion involving weddings, graduations, birthdays or calendric holidays, involving Christmas or Mother’s Day (Larsen and Watson, 2001; McGrath, 1995). Of these, the most popular gift giving occasions are Christmas and birthdays (Belk 1979).

Another classification proposes the *commercial* and *personal* character of occasions, referring to those dates marked by retailers (e.g., Valentine's Day) and private celebrations (e.g., birthdays) respectively (Antón, et al., 2014).

In a different way, gift occasions have been associated with the maintenance of relationships, highlighting informal occasions, which are related to the reconstruction, maintenance of dissolution of a romantic relationship (McGrath, 1995). In fact, the spontaneity of emergent occasions, such as those aiming to express gratitude, friendship, respect or romantic feelings (Minowa et al., 2011) can contribute to initiate, maintain or repair a relationship (Arnould, et al., 2004). These emergent occasions are also related to apology gifts (Minowa et al., 2011; Ohtsubos and Watanabe, 2009; Reisinger and Turner, 1999) and gifts asking for forgiveness (Cowley et al., 2012), which are gaining more and more prominence in gift research. In these cases, the occasions seem to be related to relationship management, although occasions by themselves do not indicate how givers would manage the relationship. The type of gift occasion is one of the main determinants of gift selection (Belk, 1979), as it is a complex factor that helps to explain gift-giving behaviour and contributes to delineate product/market boundaries (Lutz, 1979).

2.2.7. Gift selection

In terms of gift selection, the literature suggests that some gift-giving rules exist (Schiffman and Cohn, 2009; Caplow, 1984). On the one hand, in the case of the gift selection rule described for Christmas gifts, the gift should surprise the receiver, demonstrate the familiarity of the giver with receiver preferences and be scaled in economic value according to the emotional value of the relationship (Caplow,

1984). On the other hand, in the case of romantic relationships gift giving has two gift giving “rulebooks”, that of symbolic communication and that of economic exchange (Schiffman and Cohn, 2009: 1054). Given this, gift-giving dyads must know which book they are following in the gift exchange in order to meet recipients' expectations, that is, whether they try to communicate a message or simply give material goods.

Givers use many different gift selection strategies to choose gifts that comprise purchasing what receivers want, buying throughout the year, buying multiple gifts, making gifts, buying what the giver wants the receiver to have, acquiring similar gifts to the ones previously given, buying on impulse, buying the gift jointly and passing a previous owned item (Otnes et al., 1993). In a similar way, givers give gifts from the closet that they have stored to give when needed (Thomsen and Zaichkowski, 2015).

The internet provides a new environment to analyse gift selection, especially considering the possibility of creating gift lists that givers can view, sharing gift preferences and online shopping (Hollenbeck, 2003). More than 10% of transactions of UK department stores in 2010 took place online (£1.2 bn.), representing a growth from the previous year of more than 3% (Mintel, 2012). Although people still buy the majority of Christmas gifts in stores (Mintel, 2012), 42% of gift givers in the UK surf the internet for ideas before buying gifts, 47% compare prices online, 43% buy a few gifts online and 13% acquire most of the gifts through the internet (Mintel, 2010). Some internet-based companies, such as Amazon, include innovations such as gift vouchers and wish-list pages to select gifts

for family and friends (Keynote, 2009; Gino and Flynn, 2011). These figures suggest that the online environment has the potential to offer new alternative gift selection strategies that facilitate givers' gift choice and recipients' satisfaction with the gift. However, the literature has paid little attention to this matter. A greater research emphasis is needed regarding givers' online gift selection behaviour to broaden the understanding of gift selection strategies.

The gift is one of the core elements in dyadic gift giving (Clarke, 2006; Sherry, 1983). The literature has identified different types of gifts according to the tangible and monetary nature of the gift. In terms of the tangibility of the gift, research differentiates between gifts that are physical goods, and experiential gifts, which are intangible activities in which the giver is invited to participate (e.g., Clarke, 2006; 2008). Recent research has also differentiated between hand-made and machine-made gifts (Fuchs et al., 2015). Regarding the monetary nature of the gift, the literature distinguishes between monetary gifts, involving money; non-monetary gifts, referring to purchased goods (e.g., Prendergast and Stole, 2001; Ruffle, 1999); and gift cards, at a middle point between monetary and non-monetary gifts (Tuten and Kiecker, 2009). Despite the supposed efficiency of monetary gifts, receiving gifts in kind is more frequent than receiving money (Mitrut and Nordblom, 2010).

A vast amount of literature has addressed what constitutes the perfect gift (e.g., Belk, 1996; McGrath et al., 1993). From the point of view of the gift receiver, the "perfect gift" should be wanted, needed, deserved and appreciated. It should be carefully chosen, difficult to find and a surprise, even when expected (McGrath et

al., 1993). The perfect gift represents an extraordinary sacrifice for the giver, who only wants to please the receiver (Belk, 1996). The gift is a luxury uniquely appropriate to the recipient who is surprised and delighted by a desired gift (Belk, 1996). The most costly gifts in terms of time, mental and physical effort are preferred (Robbe and Verhellen, 1994). A gift wanted for a long time, and not simply for a particular gift-giving occasion, gives the receiver more joy than any other gift (Areni et al. 1998). When the gift is handmade or unexpected, it is valued above other gifts because it is customised to the receiver (McGrath, et al., 1993). Spontaneous gifts are more valued by receivers because they are an unexpected surprise and they intensify the receiver's pleasure (Vanhamme and de Bont, 2008; Ruffle, 1999). However, these gifts also incorporate more social and financial risks if they do not match the receiver's preferences (Schiffman and Cohn, 2009; Vanhamme and de Bont, 2008). Belk (2010) describes the perfect gift as immaterial as the thought is more important than the material manifestation of price. This removes monetary considerations of commodity exchange and imposes no obligation of return (Belk, 2010). Thus, givers believe that the most cherished gifts are those that encode love, effort and singularity.

When selecting gifts for multiple receivers, givers try to be thoughtful by looking for different presents for each receiver, and this approach does not necessarily lead to the most preferred gift for the recipient (Steffel and Le Boeuf, 2014). Givers frequently assume that the receivers' appreciation is closely related to the money spent on the gift (Flynn and Adams, 2009) and that recipients want to receive

thoughtful gifts (Steffel and Le Boeuf, 2012). However, receivers prefer receiving gifts that they like rather than thoughtful ones (Zhang and Epley, 2012).

Therefore, givers and receivers have different notions of the perfect gift and there is a mismatch between what givers think the receiver prefers, and what the receiver really wants.

2.2.8. Symbolic meaning of gifts

Although gifts usually involve money, tangible goods and services, this way of categorising gifts has been de-emphasised in favour of the meanings or feelings aroused by those goods and services (Arnould et al., 2004). This is because gifts are more important to receivers for their symbolic value than for the material benefits of the gift (Wolfinbarger, 1990), being that gift giving is a way to transform commodities into sacred possessions with symbolic content (Belk and Wallendorf, 1989).

In order to manage relationships with gift receivers, givers adopt different social roles, which are "sets of behaviours created solely in response to interaction with others" and, when givers select a particular gift, this helps them to communicate with the receiver by transmitting a particular message (Otnes et al., 1993: 231). In this case, gift giving seems to be "a means of exercising interpersonal influence; involves choice of gift that possesses certain symbolic properties that the giver wishes to see transferred onto the receiver" (McKechnie and Tynan, 2008: 133). Motivations such as altruism might help to explain the symbolic meaning that the giver wants to transmit to the gift receiver, for example, by giving an expressive gift

that the receiver wanted (Wolfinbarger, 1990). In order to express a particular message by giving a gift, givers can adopt six different roles, involving the roles of the pleaser, the compensator, the socialiser, the provider, the acknowledger and the avoider (Otnes et al., 1993).

Symbolic messages can include self-identity communication, love and intimacy and the value of a relationship (Schiffman and Cohn, 2009). However, the same objects convey different meanings for different people and individual nuances of meaning are overshadowed by cultural differences (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988).

2.2.9. Gift giving emotions

Extant research emphasises the importance of emotions throughout the gift giving process from gift selection, delivery to post-purchase. In reviewing the gift literature, Ruth et al. (1999) identify ten emotions relevant to gift exchange: love, happiness, gratitude, pride, fear, anger, sadness, guilt, uneasiness and embarrassment. Givers' positive emotions and negative emotions caused by the self (giver) increase gift giving, while negative emotions caused by other people reduce gift giving (Hooge, 2014; 2016). The feelings communicated through gift giving and those aroused in the gift-giver and the receiver are an important part of the gift-giving experience (Ruth, 1996). This is because although people normally experience emotions privately, these emotions are a reflection of interpersonal responses (Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer, 1999) between giver and receiver. However, with some exceptions (Ruth et al., 1999), the role of emotions in interpersonal relationships (Bagozzi et al., 1999) and the cognitive appraisals of consumption emotions (Ruth, 2002) have been neglected.

Emotions such as surprise, disappointment, pride or embarrassment arise when comparing the expectations of giving a gift with the outcome of the gift-giving act (Ruffle, 1999). However, there are also positive and negative emotions before and during the selection of a gift (Taute and Sierra, 2015), for example the anxiety experienced by the gift giver when selecting a gift for a difficult recipient (Otnes et al., 1999). If the gifts are associated with a future relational life they arouse positive emotions, while gifts weakening a relationship and carrying undesirable messages involve negative feelings (Ruth et al., 1999). Farewell/parting gifts are an exception and they arouse mixed emotions, because the sense of loss, grief, sadness and even anger accompany the happiness of the receiver (Ruth et al., 1999).

From the perspective of gift-givers, givers experience discomfort when selecting a gift that does not fit with their identity but it is the appropriate gift if they want to please the receiver (Ward and Broniarczyk, 2011). The presence of witnesses when giving a gift produces feelings of fear for the giver (Wooten, 2000). Moreover, when selecting a gift, the levels of anxiety are lower for those individuals who feel more satisfied with their relationships because they do not fear the loss of their partner (Nguyen and Munch, 2011). Gifts facilitate the expression of sentiments (Belk, 1979), and make giving a good indicator of emotional involvement with family members and friends (Komter and Vollebergh, 1997). Finally, a gift may be inspired by sympathetic feelings, feelings of being part of someone else's life or by a moral obligation to another person because s/he has given us a favour or a gift (Komter and Vollebergh, 1997). In fact, positive and negative emotions caused by the self or other person can motivate gift giving in order to maintain, strengthen or weaken

relationships with the gift receiver (Hooge, 2014). However, there is little understanding regarding the emotions that givers associate with particular gift receivers and how those emotions operate as gift giving motivations.

2.2.10. Summary of the limitations of extant gift giving research

After the review of the dyadic gift giving literature, we identified a number of gaps in the literature around the structural components of dyadic gift giving, the understanding of gift-giving relationships and givers' motivations to give. These limitations fall into three main areas.

First, little attention has been paid to the dimensions defining and differentiating dyadic gift giving from other forms of giving. This is important because some elements that have been considered as important in gift giving research (e.g., role of third parties, motivations) have not been studied as a structural level analysing how they interact with each other to characterise gift giving. Therefore, dyadic gift giving is limited to the giver-receiver dyad, assuming that gifts serve the general purpose of relationship stabilisation with the gift receiver.

Second, researchers have assumed that relationships of a particular nature (e.g., family) were closer than others by definition, without indicating what made them close. By looking only at the nature of the relationship and by accepting that specific receivers represent established levels of closeness, researchers are not considering the way in which givers relate to recipients' changes. Therefore, the literature adopts a static approach to study gift relationships. Equally, studies have neglected the impact of third parties in the characterisation of the giver's

relationship with the receiver by over-relying on the giver-receiver dyad and leaving much gift giving behaviour unexplained.

Third, despite the importance given to gift giving motivations and the acknowledgment that gift giving motivations are multifaceted and difficult to capture, the literature has overlooked conflicting classifications of gift giving motives, failing to explain the existence of multiple gift giving motivations occurring within the same gift-giving event. Furthermore, the underlying assumption that gifts are mechanisms to manage relationship, does not explain why individuals want to maintain those relationships via gift giving and the role of relationships as antecedents of gift motivations. The question "why" has been rarely addressed by researchers when studying gift giving motivations (Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1991).

Considering the need for further research on gift giving relationships to explain relationship closeness, motivations to give and the influence on the dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving, it seems that the present research could benefit from insights from Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969). Attachment, assumes a human need to be close to significant others as a response to their need for protection (Bowlby, 1969); it operates as a motivational model that explains the strong desire to form enduring interpersonal attachments (Baumeister and Leary, 1995); and it is one of the most popular perspectives in the study of close relationships (Feeney and Noller, 1996). In the following section, we will analyse the basic premises of Attachment Theory highlighting the aspects that can be useful to illuminate the abovementioned limitations in gift giving research.

2.3. ATTACHMENT THEORY

2.3.1. Introduction

This section provides an overview of Attachment Theory outlining some of the main points and the origin of attachment as a theoretical framework. Bowlby (1977: 203) indicates that, "*attachment is conceived as any form of behaviour that results in a person attaining or retaining proximity to some other differentiated and preferred individual, who is usually conceived as stronger and/or wiser*" and this individual is an attachment figure.

The origin of Attachment Theory dates back to the early work of Bowlby and Ainsworth in their study of the relations between infant and caregiver (Bretherton, 1992). The experience of the child with the caregiver is the most important factor guiding the creation of attachment relationships, being that the goal of children is to seek protection from attachment figures, and the goal of *attachment figures* is to provide protection, comfort and care for the child (George and Solomon, 2008). In the last forty years Attachment Theory has become one of the leading frameworks to study social development and close relationships (Fraley et al., 2011) and one of the "*landmarks of contemporary psychology*" (Hazan and Shaver, 1987: 511).

In the following two sections, we will focus on a key distinction in the attachment literature, which is the differentiation between adult attachment as *normative* and the existence of attachment styles reflecting *individual differences* in people's internal working models (Collins and Feeney, 2000). First, we will emphasise the *normative* aspects of the theory, having in mind the potential usefulness of

Attachment Theory as a frame of study to shed light on some of the relationships and motivational lacunas in gift giving behaviour. The analysis includes attachment as an ultimate motivation, rooted in evolutionary theory, and examines how individuals organise their attachment networks. At the end of this section, we will briefly revise some of the most important aspects of *individual differences* in attachment, which refer to differences in attachment patterns, and we will indicate how these patterns relate to *normative* attachment.

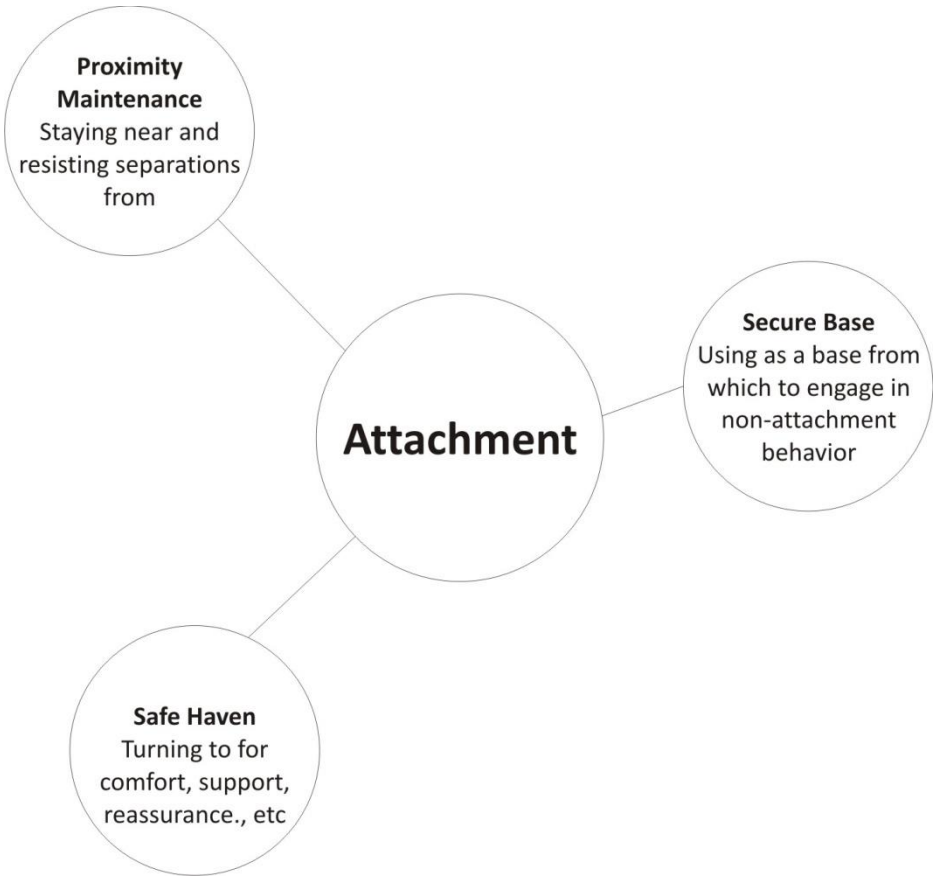
2.3.2. Normative attachment

The attachment system is *normative*, which means that it is relevant to the development of all people throughout their lives (Crowell et al., 2008) reflecting a generalised orientation towards others not only in close relationships but also across all social life (Tidwell et al., 1996). Bowlby (1977) emphasises that "*attachment behaviour is held to characterize human beings from the cradle to the grave*" (Bowlby, 1977: 203). The idea that humans are naturally predisposed to form close relationships is a result of their need for security satisfied within social relationships (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

There are four defining functions of attachment to a particular figure, involving *proximity maintenance*, *separation protest*, *safe haven* and *secure base* (Hazan and Shaver, 1994), as depicted in figure 2.2. First, when individuals achieve something or feel threatened, they actively seek to be close to an attachment figure who is used as a target for *proximity maintenance* (Fraley and Tancredy, 2012). Anxiety and stress are primary motivations in people of all ages to seek proximity to other individuals (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). Second, associated with proximity

maintenance is the feature of *separation protest*, as individuals experience distress when separated from an attachment figure (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). Third, in childhood and adulthood, distressed individuals turn to an attachment figure who serves the function of a *safe haven* providing safety, comfort, assurance (Fraley and Davies,1997), encouragement and support (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2005). Finally, people use attachment figures as a *secure base* from which to engage in non-attachment behaviour and learn about the environment actively (Ainsworth, 1979; Hazan and Shaver, 1994). The role of a secure base is being available to the attached person and ready to respond actively when it is clearly necessary (Bowlby, 1988). The more confident individuals are with their secure base the more they will take it for granted and they feel secure to explore the environment (Bowlby, 1988). This security is because attached individuals feel that they can count on their secure base to be there for them no matter what (Trinke and Bartholomew, 1997), thus these individuals can pursue their personal goals safely and effectively (Feeney, 2004b).

Figure 2.2: The defining features of attachment



Source: Hazan and Shaver (1994: 4)

An individual will be a full-blown attachment figure when s/he provides the four functions of attachment (Feeney, 2004a). This figure is not fully interchangeable with any other (Ainsworth, 1979) although, in some cases, individuals can cope with the loss of an attachment figure by finding a new relationship of the same type (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). The attribution of these functions to the attachment figure happens gradually, from proximity maintenance, separation protest, safe haven and finally secure base (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). The full process of attachment, takes two or three years (Bowlby, 1969), at least two years to develop

for romantic relationships (Feeney and Noller, 1996), and around three and a half years to develop full-blown attachments with friends (Doherty and Feeney, 2004).

When an individual is deprived of an attachment figure, attachment manifests by separation protest, despair and emotional detachment, because any obstacle to proximity maintenance with the attachment figure triggers certain behaviours that make the individual attempt to restore this proximity, when separated from a protector (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). For example, a child who is going to be separated from his mother will cling or cry in an enactment of separation protest when he is separated from her and if she does not come back, he will grieve. After a while, he will stop thinking about her as a safety system because the thought hurts him, so the child will detach emotionally from his mother. A strong emotional tie with the attachment figure exists regardless of whether the tie is positive, negative or mixed (Trinke and Bartholomew, 1997).

The caregiving behavioural system, responding to the needs of dependent others (Bowlby, 1969) is an important part in the understanding of attachment (Hazan and Shaver, 1994), given that this system alerts attachment figures to the needs of others and motivates them to provide comfort and assistance to those individuals who depend on the attachment figure (Collins and Feeney, 2000). Becoming attached to caregivers and providing care for dependent individuals enhances the chances of survival, reproduction and successful parenting (Mikulincer et al., 2005). The caregiving system provides a safe haven of support and a secure base for individuals to explore and grow, thus being complementary to the attachment system (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2009).

2.3.2.1. Attachment networks and attachment levels

Children and adults may have multiple attachment figures (Ainsworth, 1979; Trinke and Bartholomew, 1997), involving romantic partners, parents, friends, siblings, adult children, deceased spouses, God, siblings, friends, doctors, caregivers, clergy and pets (Cicirelli, 2010). Pets can serve the functions of secure base and safe haven, affecting their owners' physiological well-being in the same way as human relationships soothing and supporting their partner (Zilcha-Mano et al, 2012). Most of the Attachment Theory research was conducted on romantic relationships (Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Simpson et al., 1996; Simpson et al., 1992), because romantic partners often become the main attachment figures of adults (Davidovitz et al., 2007), followed by siblings (Cicirelli, 1989), family and friends (Joplin et al., 1999).

Despite the fact that an individual will have multiple attachments and s/he will show attachment behaviour, not all the figures of attachment are equally significant. Maternal attachment is the most accepted form of enduring social bond (Carter, 1989). Other attachment figures from childhood tend to persist throughout adult life with new people being assimilated within an existing model, although parents, spouse and children are the typical figures individuals attach to (Doherty and Feeney, 2004; Bowlby, 1977). In order to classify the individuals within an attachment network, Trinke and Bartholomew (1997) designed an instrument able to organise the attachment figures of the individual in a hierarchy according to the strength of attachment, representing individuals' close relationships around the four attachment functions (i.e. proximity maintenance, separation protest, safe

haven and secure base). These relationships fulfil attachment needs for adults and they differ in attachment strength in different life situations (Doherty and Feeney, 2004).

'Having an attachment' or 'being attached' to someone refers to the search for contact with a small group of people, as discussed earlier, and that is different from 'attachment behaviour', indicating a person's search for temporary contact with a variety of individuals from time to time (Bowlby, 1988). 'Attachment behaviour' is common during childhood and adolescence, where children search for new attachment figures. Here, the relationships might last hours, days or months, and in adulthood the existing bonds are also complemented with new ones (Bowlby, 1988). Furthermore, attachment behaviour manifests when entering new environments such as the workplace (Nelson and Quick, 1991), in the relationship with group leaders (Davidovitz et al., 2007) or in a psychological therapy situation (Bowlby, 1988; Mallinckrodt et al., 1995).

2.3.2.2. Attachment as a motivation with an evolutionary basis

Attachment is a motivational system that functions to regulate proximity between an individual and his/her primary attachment figures because it is essential for the survival of the individual (Bowlby, 1969; Fraley and Davies, 1997). This is consistent with the idea that humans are *ultimately* motivated by a strong desire to form enduring interpersonal attachments, and individuals tend to resist the loss or breaking of social bonds, even if they are difficult to maintain, because, if this ultimate motive is not satisfied, it can lead to ill effects (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). In fact, attachment behaviour is organised by means of a control system

within the central nervous system that maintains physiological measures such as blood pressure or body temperature within set limits (Bowlby, 1988).

Attachment is a behavioural system which assumes that human beings have an innate tendency to create strong emotional bonds with significant others as a manifestation of their search for protection (Bowlby, 1969). A behavioural system is a fundamental part of the 'equipment' of many species because it conveys a survival advantage which, in the case of attachment, is the protection of those to whom the individual keeps close (Ainsworth, 1989). Considering the biological function of attachment (Bowlby, 1969), the attachment system promotes the survival of young and relatively helpless offspring within their environment (Bowlby, 1982; Granqvist et al., 2012). In fact, attachment developed because young humans needed to feel safe to explore the environment, as long as a familiar protector was available in case of need. This protector must be willing to take care of the individual who needs protection, thus, caregiving complements the attachment system (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

From an evolutionary perspective, the goal of the attachment motivational-behavioural system is to promote safety through the relationship with an attachment figure or caregiver (Bowlby, 1969). Given its survival benefits, Attachment Theory has the potential to combine ultimate and proximate explanations in theoretical work on close relationships (Fraley and Tancredy, 2012). Ultimate motivations are concerned with the reasons why a particular behaviour exists, which are related to humans' survival challenges such as self-protection, taking care of family, finding a mate, retaining that mate or making friends

(Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013). In contrast, proximate motivations explain how a specific behaviour works (Scott-Phillips et al., 2011) including the temporal causes and effects of the behaviour (Fraley and Tancredy, 2012) as well as what activates and terminates the expression of the behaviour (Simpson and Gangstead, 2001). Ultimate and proximate explanations of behaviour complement each other (Scott-Phillips et al., 2011).

2.3.3. Individual differences in attachment: Attachment styles

Beyond the ideas of normative attachment, Bowlby studied individual differences. Depending on the model of interaction developed by individuals with their parents, or caregivers, individuals develop their own patterns of attachment according to a working inner model (with perceptions of the self and other) resistant to change (Bowlby, 1988). These attachment patterns are named *attachment styles,* and the fact that they are relatively stable throughout people's lives has made this framework very appealing to study personality psychology (Fraley et al., 2011).

The literature includes three main attachment styles: *secure* attachment, where the attachment figure is responsible, helpful and provides protection and comfort; *anxious-resistant* attachment, existing uncertainty of separation and *anxious-avoidant* attachment, where the individual aims to become emotionally self-sufficient (Ainsworth, 1979; Bowlby, 1988). During the last thirty years, the main topic in attachment research has been attachment styles, which has been measured by utilising different methods such as the Adult Attachment Interview (George et al., 1985) and different self-report questionnaires (e.g., Hazan and Shaver, 1987). Instead of three attachment categories, the most recent measures

have identified four attachment styles (i.e. secure, preoccupied, fearful-avoidant and dismissive-avoidant attachment), which are organised around two different dimensions, the individual's perceptions of the self and the other (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). S*ecure* attached people, feel worthy and they can rely on others because others are responsive and accepting. *Preoccupied* individuals, however, have a negative perception of themselves although they evaluate others positively which makes preoccupied people search for social acceptance to achieve self-acceptance (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). By contrast, avoidant individuals can be *fearful-avoidant*, when they tend to reject people to protect themselves against rejection, or *dismissive-avoidant*, showing negative disposition towards other people avoiding close relationships to maintain a sense of independence and invulnerability (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). The initial classification did not consider that avoidant individuals minimise intimacy for different reasons (i.e. fear of rejection from others and self-sense of invulnerability). An adaptation of Bartholomew and Horowitz's scale (1991) by Brennan et al. (1998) is now one of the most used attachment measures in psychology (Mende, Bolton and Bitner, 2013).

Attachment orientations around anxiety (self) and avoidance (other) moderate normative or typical attachment behaviours, for example, when facing stress avoidant individuals tend to be slower at accessing an attachment figure (Granqvist, et al., 2012). Although using attachment styles has been fruitful to predict relationship outcomes in such relationship satisfaction, Attachment Theory has

neglected the normative implications of this theory in close relationships development in adulthood (Fraley and Davies, 1997).

2.4. ATTACHMENT THEORY IN CONSUMER RESEARCH AND GIFT GIVING

Adult attachment research has had a strong influence on the science of relationships (Shaver and Mikulincer, 2010) and it is one of the most popular theoretical perspectives influencing the research of close relationships (Feeney and Noller, 1996; Simpson et al, 1996). In the last two decades, Attachment Theory has emerged as an alternative to social exchange theories to ask what participation in relationships requires from individuals (Miczo, 2002). Social exchange theories assume that people are motivated to minimise costs and punishments and to maximise rewards (Miczo, 2002).

The application of Attachment Theory to consumer behaviour is relatively novel. Attachment has been linked to consumer self-concept (Malar et al, 2011), celebrities as brand endorsers (Thompson, 2006), brand attachment (Dunn et al., 2014), effects of emotional attachment to brands to create emotional attached repurchase (Grisaffe and Nguyen, 2011), the effect of nostalgia on charitable gift giving (Zhou et al., 2012) and attachment to commercial settings (Debenedetti et al., 2014).

Attachment theory has been suggested as an appropriate framework to explain gift giving (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013; Mizco, 2002). Nguyen and Munch (2011) introduced the first study of gift giving within an Attachment Theory framework,

based on the idea that attachment orientations affect gift-giving perceptions in romantic relationships by using an experimental design.

In this study, we consider that using aspects of normative attachment can help to advance gift-giving research, specifically those aspects related to relationship closeness and motivations.

At the same time, the attachment motivational system conveys survival advantages that might explain the reasons why givers want to use gifts to maintain relationships with significant others. This might add another level of analysis to the study of gift giving by considering biological accounts of consumer behaviour, that have been neglected until now in most consumer research (Tadajewski and Saren, 2008; Pham, 2013).

2.5. CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this chapter, we discussed existing literature on gift giving. Dyadic gift giving is a specific form of giving where relationship management is a key factor. However, the focus on managing relationships with gift receivers has overshadowed other important aspects such as the structural components that form gift giving. When researchers looked at those, this derived into the identification of other forms of giving that are non-dyadic, thus adding very little to the understanding of dyadic gift giving.

The relationship between the gift giver and receiver is a major determinant of gift giving behaviour via gift giving motivations. The internal factors of givers such as personality, identity or gender affect gift giving in a different way from external

factors involving the givers' relationship with the gift receiver. The relationship with gift receivers has received much attention in gift research. However, scholars have relied on the nature of the relationship and established assumptions about relationship closeness, which leads to misinterpretations of what makes a relationship close for givers.

Givers' relationships with recipients are related to gift motivations. In fact, the literature highlights the role of relationships as antecedents of motivations (e.g., Lutz, 1979). The dominant approach to study motivations is the exchange paradigm, assuming that gifts are motivated by reciprocity. Although there are some attempts to look for alternative explanations, such as the idea of altruistic "Agapic love" (Belk and Coon, 1993), there is little research about how relationships operate as antecedents of gift motivations. Furthermore, there is a growing body of research mentioning that different motivations occur at the same time in gift giving. However, none has tried to elucidate why this might happen and how motivations relate to each other.

It is also worth noting that givers' motivations are related to gift occasions and the selection of gifts. Givers use gift selection strategies in order to maintain their relationship with the receiver and givers mostly only look for the perfect gift when giving to close gift recipients.

Gift giving motivations are also related to the symbolic meanings that the giver wants to transmit. In fact, givers are more likely to communicate symbolic meanings via gift giving to those individuals who are considered close. Furthermore, we studied the role of emotions. Emotions are present throughout the gift giving

process, including when the giver aims to maintain the relationship with the gift receiver and emotions can serve as motivations to give.

Griskevicious and Kenrick (2013) suggest attachment as an appropriate theory to look at gift giving behaviour. In our literature review, we included an account of the main features of attachment, emphasising the human need to be close to special others as a way to search for protection (Bowlby, 1969).

We provide an overview of Attachment Theory with a main focus on the normative dimension which concentrates on the characteristics that define attachment figures as wiser and stronger individuals providing protection for an attached person. These involve the concepts of the secure base, safe haven, separation protest and proximity maintenance. In this section, we also give an account of the links between Attachment Theory and evolutionary psychology. In fact, attachment is a motivation with benefits for the survival and well-being of the individual. To conclude this part, we briefly indicate what individual differences mean in terms of Attachment Theory.

The chapter concludes by suggesting ways in which Attachment Theory could be useful to explain the abovementioned gift giving limitations. The use of this theory in consumer research is quite recent and has mostly focused on individual differences. In our research, the significance of attachment might be especially noteworthy to explain gift giving relationships and motivations and thus we will use attachment insights to interpret the data.

We aim to understand dyadic gift giving by addressing the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the main dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving?

RQ2: How do givers relate to gift receivers?

RQ3: How do relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations?

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we observed some important limitations of the existing dyadic gift giving literature and, as a result, we propose an empirical investigation, which aims to avoid making some of the assumptions made by previous research.

This chapter gives a detailed account of the methodology that we used in this thesis. We begin by explaining the research objectives around the neglected issues that we identified in the literature. Subsequently, we discuss and review the research paradigms, the rationale for our philosophical approach to research and offer an account of the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research methods.

Following this, we explain and justify the research design, which involves background questionnaires, online diaries and follow-up semi-structured interviews. This study will use multiple qualitative methods to deal with complex social science phenomena (Healy and Perry, 2000) attempting to complement each of their weaknesses by taking advantages of their strengths.

After that, we present the research process, which begins with the design of the instruments we used for data collection including background questionnaires, semi-structured diary entries, a questionnaire for participants to select their preferred research incentive, a website to host them and an interview protocol. The description of the data collection process follows, involving two stages at two

different seasons of the year and a detailed account of the sample selection and the participants' profile.

Finally, we offer a critical account of the inductive data analysis process, where we used an interpretivist approach to analysis and we use insights from Attachment Theory to interpret the data. The chapter concludes with a brief account of the ethical issues associated with this research study and a summary of the topics discussed in the present chapter.

3.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In the previous chapter, we introduced the main literature in gift giving highlighting the issues that captured the majority of research interest to date and including the most recent research in the field. Although the literature in dyadic gift giving is vast, we identified a number of research limitations that deserve further research attention. We summarise those limitations below in order to set the research objectives.

Traditionally, gift giving has been assumed to be an aggregate of dyadic exchange rituals, thus leaving many dimensions of gift giving unexplored (Giesler, 2006). Recent research (e.g., Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012) has acknowledged the need to analyse gift-giving structures other than the giver-receiver dyad. The inherent assumption concerning dyadic gifts is that givers give only to maintain their relationship with the receiver, which neglects the link between the dyad and their networks (Parks et al. 1983). This over-reliance on the giver-receiver dyad limits the understanding of dyadic gift giving forms and the relationship

maintenance goals of givers through gift giving, restricting dyadic gift giving to a single form of giving. An underlying assumption of this single form of giving is that the focus of the giver is the gift receiver (e.g., Baskin et al., 2014), thus overlooking other aspects that allow the observation of dyadic gift giving as a whole. Therefore, the first objective of this research will be to understand the main dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving.

Furthermore, existing gift relationships classifications assume that specific types of recipients, such as family, are close by definition (e.g., Caplow, 1982) without explaining what makes them important to the giver. Similarly, the study of relationship closeness in gift giving is limited to the giver-receiver dyad, neglecting the influence of third parties who tie the giver and receiver together, with the exception of Lowrey *et al*. (2004). Another aspect that limits the understanding of relationships is that they can change over time. However, prior research adopts a static approach by assuming that the factors that could cause relationship change affect all receivers in the same way. As a result, the second objective of this research will be to comprehend how givers relate to gift receivers.

The excessive dependence on the relationship between the giver and receiver in the study of gift giving has been translated to the study of gift giving motivations. Although scholars have referred to relationships as antecedents of gift giving motivations extensively (e.g., Larsen and Watson, 2001) and considered the implications of this understanding for practitioners (e.g., Lutz, 1979), how relationships operate as antecedents of gift motivations is relatively unexplored. At the same time, extant research recognises the existence of multiple motivations

occurring at the same time (e.g., Sherry, 1983) which, in some cases, leads to the overlap of conflicting motivations (e.g., Babin et al., 2007). Despite this, the literature has overlooked how these motivations relate to each other. Consequently, the third objective of this research will be to grasp how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations.

Finally, in terms of research methods, we identified that consumer research has rarely used diaries. The study of gift giving could usefully employ online diaries to minimise participant forgetfulness, intrusion of researcher on informants' privacy and, therefore, allow the observation of some aspects of gift giving behaviour that e informants otherwise might be unaware of or reluctant to share with the researcher.

In order to achieve these research objectives, we will use insights from Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) to make sense of some of the ways in which individuals explain their behaviour. This is because Attachment Theory is one of the most popular frameworks to study close relationships (e.g., Cicirelli, 2010) which makes it relevant for gift giving within in the context of important interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, attachment is a motivational model associated with the maintenance of relationships (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Recent research suggested that, approaching gift-giving from an attachment perspective can be a novel way to deepen the understanding of gift giving behaviour (e.g., Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013).

3.3. RESEARCH PARADIGMS AND METHODS

Every research process is underpinned by philosophical assumptions that predispose researchers towards the adoption of various paradigms, methodologies and research designs to investigate particular phenomena. The first section provides an overview of the most common research paradigms in social research and their main differences. The second part follows with the justification of realism as the standpoint of the researcher, concluding with a focus on qualitative methodology. This enables access to aspects of gift giving which could not be observed using quantitative methods.

3.3.1. Research paradigms

Philosophical ideas remain relatively hidden in research, although they need to be identified because of their influence on the practice of research (Creswell, 2009). Philosophical assumptions are described as accepted statements without direct empirical support, and they are based on different views of reality, social beings and knowledge (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). They are important because the same phenomenon may seem different when looked at from different research philosophies and, therefore, generate different results and conclusions (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

There are different ways to assess research philosophical assumptions, involving paradigms (e.g., Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Deshpande, 1983); worldviews (e.g., Creswell, 2009:6); ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies (e.g., Cunliffe,

2011; Morgan and Smircich, 1980); and ontologies, epistemologies, axiologies and methodologies (Lee and Lings, 2008).

A paradigm is a set of assumptions about the world, shared by the community of scholars, and provides a conceptual and philosophical framework for the organised study of the world (Deshpande, 1983). The term “worldview” can be considered as a synonym of paradigm describing the basic set of beliefs or assumptions to guide inquiries (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). According to these authors, worldviews differ in ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology and rhetoric (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Ontology refers to the assumptions of the nature of social reality and the meaning of being a human (Cunliffe, 2011; Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Epistemology and axiology should be determined after ontology (Lee and Lings, 2008). While epistemology refers to the assumptions about the nature and purpose of knowledge (Cunliffe, 2011; Morgan and Smircich, 1980), and how we gain knowledge of what we know (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011), axiology is the essence about the aims of the research in trying to understand or to predict the world (Lee and Lings, 2008). Methodology refers to the process of research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011) and depends on ontology, epistemology and axiology (Lee and Lings, 2008). Finally, rhetoric alludes to the language of research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

Different worldviews reflect, implicitly, different grounds for knowledge about the social world (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). The idea that methodology and epistemology are linked, as well as both being linked to technical issues and research methods, has been a convention increasing in prominence (Bryman,

1984). According to this idea, when a scholar accepts a set of paradigmatic assumptions, they should also accept the associated criteria to select the appropriate tools to investigate that world, which leads to a tendency to categorise schools of thought, such as positivism and idealism, in a mutually exclusive way of conducting research (Deshpande, 1983). However, members of one school can share epistemic beliefs from another school (Deshpande, 1983) so only examining the data gathering techniques is not enough to know the methodological orientation of a study. This requires the examination of assumptions, aims and research processes (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

The paradigm debate can be understood as the conflict between competing scientific views of positivism and interpretivism, which are two extremes of a broader range of paradigms. Morgan and Smircich (1980) provide a general overview of the relationships between human nature, ontology, epistemology and methodology in a continuum ranging from the most subjective to the most objective philosophical position (Cunliffe, 2011). On the one hand, extreme subjectivism assumes that social reality is constructed on the basis of the perceptions of individuals (Murray and Ozanne, 1991). Subjectivist epistemology emphasises the importance of understanding processes between human beings and their relationships with their world. On the other hand, extreme objectivism considers social reality exists as a concrete structure independently of human perceptions (Murray and Ozanne, 1991). The basic epistemological perspective for an objectivist approach is to study the nature of relationships among the elements that constitute this structure (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). At the extremes of this

continuum, there are two dominant paradigms: Interpretivism, at the subjectivist pole, and positivism, at the objectivist end of Morgan and Smircich's model. Scientific realism would be towards the objectivist end of this continuum, although their assumptions about objectivity are different from those of positivism. In fact, realists rely on multiple perceptions of a single reality; even if this can be only imperfectly understood, they consider that the findings about that reality are probably true (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Table 3.1: Network of basic assumptions characterising the subjective-objective debate in social sciences

	Subjectivist Approaches to Social Science			Scientific Realism		Objectivist Approaches to Social Science
Core Ontological Assumptions	reality as a projection of human imagination	reality as a social construction	reality as a realm of symbolic discourse	reality as a contextual field information	reality as a concrete process	reality as a conceptual field information
Assumptions About Human Nature	Man as pure spirit Consciousness, being	Man as social constructor, the symbol creator	Man as an actor the symbol user	Man as information processor	Man as an adaptor	Man as a responder
Basic Epistemological Stance	To obtain phenomenological insight, revelation	To understand how social reality is created	To understand patterns of symbolic discourse	To map Contexts	To study systems, process, change	To construct a positivist science
Some Favored Metaphors	Transcendental	Language game accomplishment, text	Theatre culture	Cybernetic	Organism	Machine
Research Methods	Exploration of pure subjectivity	Hermeneutics	Symbolic analysis	Contextual analysis of Gestalten	Historical analysis	Lab experiments surveys

Source: Morgan and Smircich (1984: 492)

Apart from interpretivism at the subjectivist side of Morgan and Smircich's (1980) continuum, positivism at the objective extreme, and scientific realism in the middle, there is a fourth paradigm that should be taken into account: Pragmatism. This paradigm is difficult to place in this continuum because, depending upon the stage of the research, pragmatism adopts an objective or subjective perspective (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The major differences between positivism and

interpretivism, as the two dominant paradigms, are summarised in table 3.2 and discussed below, followed by an account of the main characteristics and underlying assumptions of scientific realism and pragmatism.

Table 3.2: Two Dominant Research Paradigms in the Social Sciences

	Positivism	**Interpretivism**
Reality is...	-Objective -Perceived uniformly through the senses -Governed by universal laws -Well integrated for the good of all	-Subjective -Created, not found -Interpreted
Human beings are...	-Rational -Obeying external laws -With no free will	-Creators of the world -Assigning meanings to the world -Not restricted by external laws -Creating systems of meaning
Science is...	-Based on strict rules and procedures -Deductive -Nomothetic -Based on sense impressions -Value free	-Common sense -Inductive -Ideographic -Based on interpretations -Value driven
Purpose of research is...	-To explain facts, causes and effects -To predict -To emphasise facts and prediction	-To interpret the world -To understand social life -To emphasise meanings and understandings

Source: Adapted from Sarantakos (1993: 38-39)

3.3.1.1. Interpretivism

The ontology of an interpretivist approach takes the view that there are multiple realities, because realities exist within the minds of individuals or groups (Lee and Lings, 2008). In terms of epistemology, interpretivist approaches view knowledge of a phenomena as inseparable from its context, which requires the immersion of the researcher in the research context to better understand the meanings and experiences of the object of study (Lee and Lings, 2008). For interpretivists, a category which includes social constructivists and qualitative purists, it is impossible

to differentiate, fully, the causes from effects (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The emphasis on understanding rather than explaining concerns the axiology of the interpretivist research approach, and is a major difference between interpretive and traditional scientific view- points (Lee and Lings, 2008).

3.3.1.2. Positivism

In the 20th century, positivism was considered the "standard view" of the Western philosophy of science (Lee and Lings, 2008; Deshpande, 1983). However, positivism's reliance on pure empiricism indicates that this philosophical perspective has been often mistaken as the foundation of modern science (Lee and Lings, 2008: 30). Positivism is subject to misconceptions in terms of reality, causality and determinism, which is the view that every event has a cause (Hunt, 1991). Ontologically, positivism assumes that the properties for the external world should be objectively measured rather than inferred subjectively (Easterby- Smith et al., 2008). Positivists "know", or obtain knowledge from the external world, because of their ability to sense (Deshpande, 1983: 102). Epistemologically, it is a common belief that positivists reify social structures and treat them as objects (Murray and Ozanne, 1991). This is inconsistent with the view that science restricts itself to observables and, therefore, positivism rejects reification, which means positivism rejects treating abstract concepts as real existing things (Hunt, 1991). Regarding the role of humans, Morgan and Smircich (1980) consider that from an objectivist perspective, humans are seen as responding mechanisms that operate in a lawful and predictable manner to stimuli and environmental conditions.

Moreover, when analysing the role of causality, some authors consider that a positivist approach places emphasis on the identification of causal links (e.g., Hudson and Ozanne, 1988) and the existence of a network of causal relationships between context and behaviour (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). By contrast, Hunt (1991) emphasises that any research guided by positivism would necessarily avoid both the assumption of causality and the search for 'real causes'. This is because in terms of axiology, positivism seeks for prediction, not for deeper or causal explanations, and positivists view "cause" as unobservable (Hunt, 1991). Therefore, causality represents a problem to positivism because it is not possible to observe one thing causing another, only to see their superficial correlation (Lee and Lings, 2008).

Despite the predominance of positivism in business school research, this paradigm has not been very productive in social sciences like marketing (Sohb and Perry, 2005). A positivist perspective may be inappropriate to study complex social phenomena, which involves reflective humans, such as marketing (Healy and Perry, 2000; Sohb and Perry, 2005). One of the reasons for this is that the replication of positivist research does not normally produce the same results as previous research in marketing. Furthermore, the few studies that support prior research are normally conducted by the same researcher, which confirms that reality cannot be measured by viewing it through a "one-way, value-free mirror" as positivism suggests (Sohb and Perry, 2005: 1196).

3.3.1.3. Scientific realism

Scientific realism is placed at a middle point between direct realism (holding the objective view of positivists that perceptual processes result on direct awareness of the external world) and relativism (holding the subjective view of constructivists that each perception is one of multiple realities) (Hunt, 1990). Given the complexity of the realism world, realist research must be primarily concerned with theory building, which can subsequently be tested (Healy and Perry, 2000). There are open philosophical debates over realism that remain unresolved, although the idea of realism has attracted "increased philosophical attention following the demise of positivism" (Maxwell, 2012: 4). The main characteristics of scientific realism are summarised in table 3.3, followed by a more detailed account of the assumptions of this paradigm.

Table 3.3: Main characteristics of scientific realism

	SCIENTIFIC REALISM
ONTOLOGY (Nature reality)	-Reality is "real" but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible (Healy and Perry, 2000). -World exists independently of being perceived accepting classical realism and rejects naive/direct realism (Hunt, 1990) -Properties of the world should be objectively measured (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). -There are things we cannot observe directly but it does not mean they do not exist (Lee and Lings, 2008)
EPISTEMOLOGY (Knowledge)	-Findings are probably true (modified objectivism) (Healy and Perry, 2000). -Perceptions of participants and peer researchers are neither value-free nor value-laden, rather value-aware (Healy and Perry, 2000). -Human knowledge and the real world are different (Harré, 1986) because some of our perceptions of reality are more accurate than others (Hunt, 1990). -Distinction between "truth" and "truth with certainty", which means that science is objective but different from "science has the objectivity of a god's eye view" (Hunt, 2003:238) -Inductive realist theory generation is possible (Hunt, 2015) -Scientific observations are theory-laden (Hunt, 2008; 1993) -Causality is possible because unobservables are relevant (Lee and Lings, 2008).
METHODOLOGY	-Interpretation of research issues by triangulation, qualitative and some quantitative methods (Healy and Perry, 2000) -Methodology is the manner in which a science accepts or rejects the truth of knowledge, being related to justification of knowledge and not its discovery (Lee and Lings, 2008) -Importance of testing marketing theories but this does not imply any specific techniques and rather it is open to all the techniques whose objective is the search of truth (Hunt, 1990)

Firstly, scientific realist ontology states that the world exists independently of its being perceived, as classical realism posits, although this does not include the idea of naive (direct) realism that our perceptual processes result in a direct awareness

of the external world (Hunt, 1990). The fact that we cannot see something does not mean it does not exist (Lee and Lings, 2008). Lee and Lings (2008) claim that, terms such as motivation are almost never defined by observation although they refer to real entities that can be measured and studied in the context of theoretical explanations because they are theory-laden. Scientific observations are "theory-laden" when scientific observation is equal to perception and equal to a function of sensations interpreted by theories (Hunt, 1993: 83). Reality is "real" but only perceived imperfectly (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Secondly, scientific realism is more than an ontological perspective because it also adopts a particular epistemological stance (Zinkham and Hirscheim, 1992). The problem of scientific realism is commonly thought to be epistemological because human knowledge and the real world are different (Harré, 1986: 34). Perceptions can contribute to genuine knowledge about an external world but "some of our perceptions are 'more accurate' or 'closer to the truth' than others" as critical realists argue (Hunt, 1990: 9). According to scientific realism, the job of science is to improve these perceptions to generate the most accurate description of the world by adopting a middle position between direct realism and relativism (Hunt, 1990).

Truth is an attribute of beliefs and linguistic expressions, not an entity in the external world that researchers can study (Hunt, 2005). Hunt (2012) acknowledges that realists have had difficulties in explaining what approximate truth is. However, scientific realism distinguishes between "truth" and "truth with certainty", which means that science is objective but science does not have "the objectivity of a god's eye view" (Hunt, 2003:238). This approach considers truth as the most powerful

objective of theory and research (Hunt, 1990) and emphasises the importance of theory in scientific investigation (Zinkham and Hirscheim, 1992). The inductive realism approach gives a reason to believe that entities and structure postulates that a theory really exists (Hunt, 2012). At the same time, multiple perceptions of reality are neither value-free (as in positivism), nor value-laden (as interpretivism), rather value-aware, which means that realists accept that there is a world out there to discover even if those perceptions are imperfect (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Finally, the scientific realist approach to research design is open to all techniques whose objective is the search of truth (Hunt, 1990). This is not to say that the researcher adopts a pragmatic position. Hunt (1990) denies the anarchistic view that "anything goes" and that all procedures and techniques are appropriate. The methodology of science is the manner in which a science accepts or rejects the truth of the knowledge created by the techniques it uses. It is concerned with the justification of knowledge not its discovery (Lee and Lings, 2008: 39). Realist marketing researchers might use many methodologies from theory building methodology and interviews following an interview protocol, to the quantitative methodology of structural equation modelling (Healy and Perry, 2000).

Scientific realism is a relevant paradigm for many qualitative researchers in marketing, assuming that the research is dealing with complex social phenomena, the world is not a laboratory and there is a world to discover out there (Healy and Perry, 2000). As a result of the debates about marketing philosophy in the 1980s and 1990s, Hunt (2012: 16) claims scientific realism to be "the most appropriate philosophy of science foundation for marketing research". Bagozzi (1980) was the

first marketing researcher adopting the scientific realism stance, and most research programmes in marketing, such as cognitive theories in consumer behaviour, are at least consistent with scientific realism (Hunt, 1990).

3.3.1.4. Pragmatism

Pragmatism assumes an external reality but its key tenet is that meaning and truth are defined only in relation to their usefulness in action (Lee and Lings, 2008). This paradigm is difficult to place in Morgan and Smircich's (1983) continuum because depending upon the stage of the research, pragmatism adopts an objective or subjective perspective (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). In fact, initially a pragmatic position was used in more applied fields such as evaluation research (Bryman, 2008) and learning (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008), where a researcher's values play an important role in the interpretation of the results (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Therefore, from a pragmatic view, there are no particular theories or frameworks shaping knowledge and understanding (Easterby- Smith et al., 2008). Pragmatism rejects choices associated with paradigm conflicts, supports the use of mixed methods in research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) and emphasises the appropriateness of research methods to answer the research questions (Bryman, 2008).

3.3.2. Determining an appropriate research paradigm

This paper adopts a scientific realist approach because of its fit with the research questions, the researcher's ontological and epistemological position and the constraints of the research context .

A basic ontological assumption of this thesis is the existence of an external reality where unobservables are measurable and real although imperfectly perceived and understood. Variables such as relationship closeness and gift giving motivations are not visible or directly observable. However, they exist, they can be measured and the theory behind the relationships among variables aims to explain a concrete reality. Considering that all relationship phenomena, such as interpersonal attachment, can be reduced to observables would be a mistake (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). In fact, in this study observations of a concrete reality are guided by Attachment Theory, which is not directly observable but it exists. Furthermore, the researcher assumes that observers are not passive receivers of data. They interpret information using concepts such as language, culture or previous expectations, accepting that some interpretations are more representative of reality than others (Lee and Lings, 2008). Therefore, according to the tenets of scientific realism, it is not possible to achieve a "purely objective" approach to research and theory guides knowledge (Maxwell, 2012).

At an epistemological level, this thesis assumes that it is possible to use inductive realist research to generate theory. In fact, realist research must be concerned with theory building before any attempt is made to test the applicability of a theory to a population (Healy and Perry, 2000). Finally, the researcher acknowledges that it is impossible to know the truth with certainty and to be completely objective, agreeing with the idea that science thrives on its inability to explain everything and continues asking questions to be closer to the truth (Dawkins, 2012).

Accepting a paradigm position normally leads to the acceptance of the tools considered appropriate for data collection within that paradigm (Deshpande, 1983). However, different methods have distinct limitations and, by excluding alternative methodologies, marketing scientists may constrain themselves into using a limited set of partially appropriate techniques to solve a small subset of marketing problems (Deshpande, 1983). In the next section, we introduce qualitative methods and the underlying assumptions behind these methodologies.

3.3.3. Research methods: Qualitative research

A major element of the research approach is the specific methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research is the method used throughout this study. The major characteristics of traditional qualitative research are induction, discovery, exploration, theory/ hypothesis generation, the researcher as the primary data collection instrument and qualitative analysis (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Qualitative research is a way to explore and understand inductively the meaning individuals assign to a particular social or human problem (Creswell, 2009). Deshpande (1983) suggests that a marketing researcher aiming to generate theory should carefully study and employ qualitative methods to understand human behaviour and, afterwards, the application of quantitative methodologies would be more appropriate to seek the causes of social phenomena without subjective interpretation.

Table 3.4: Strengths and weaknesses of qualitative methods

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
-The data are based on the participants' own categories of meaning. -It is useful for studying a limited number of cases in depth. -It is useful for describing complex phenomena. -Provides individual case information. -Can conduct cross-case comparisons and analysis. -Provides understanding and description of people's personal experiences of phenomena. -Can describe in rich detail, phenomena as they are situated and embedded in local contexts. -The researcher identifies contextual and setting factors as they relate to the phenomenon of interest. -The researcher can study dynamic processes. -The researcher can use the primarily qualitative method of "grounded theory" to generate inductively a tentative but explanatory theory about a phenomenon. - Can determine how participants interpret "constructs". -Data are usually collected in naturalistic settings in qualitative research. -Qualitative approaches are responsible for local situations, conditions and stakeholders' needs -Qualitative researchers are responsible for changes that occur during the conduct of a study and may shift the focus of their studies as a result. -Qualitative data in the words and categories of participants lend themselves to exploring how and why phenomena occur. -One can use an important case to demonstrate vividly a phenomenon to the readers of a report. -Determine idiographic causation (i.e. determination of causes of a particular event).	-Knowledge produced may not generalise to other people or other settings. -It is difficult to make quantitative predictions. -It is more difficult to test hypotheses and theories. -It may have lower credibility with some administrators and commissioners of programmes. -It generally takes more time to collect the data when compared to quantitative research. -Data analysis is often time consuming. -The results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies.

Source: Adapted from Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004: 19-21)

Qualitative research has a number of strengths and weaknesses, which are detailed in table 3.4. Among the strengths are that the data is based on a participant's own categories of meaning, it is a useful approach to study cases in depth (Johnson and Owuegbuzie, 2004) and it allows a deeper understanding of a phenomenon (e.g.,

gift-giving behaviour) (Harrison and Reilly, 2011). Therefore, qualitative research will be employed to generate rich and unstructured information that might be used to develop hypotheses or measurements to be quantified subsequently (Lee and Lings, 2008). The knowledge obtained from qualitative research might not be generalised to other settings, the collection and analysis are often time consuming and the results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases (Johnson and Owuegbuzie, 2004). Qualitatively oriented researchers often subscribe to interpretivism (Cunliffe, 2011).

In terms of the implications for sampling, qualitative methods normally use purposive sampling to generate a sample addressing the research questions, recruiting a small sample and focusing on in-depth information generated by the cases (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

According to Deshpande (1983) qualitative methodologies are more suited to theory building. Silverman (2010: 124) points out that "there are not right or wrong methods" of research, there are only methods appropriate to the research topic and the model the researcher is working with.

Most gift giving studies use a qualitative approach (Davies et al., 2010) with interviews being one of the most common data collection methods (e.g., Clarke, 2009; Curasi et al., 2004; Hollenbeck et al., 2006; Joy, 2001; McKechnie and Tynan, 2006; Schifman and Cohn, 2009; Wolfinbarger, 1990). Interviews are sometimes combined with other research methodologies such as participants observation (Bradford and Sherry, 2013; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1991), photographs

(Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012; Marcoux, 2009; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988) and surveys (Wooten, 2000; Park, 1998).

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

Although realist research is often divided into two stages, involving a relatively exploratory inductive phase and a confirmatory stage that verifies the conceptual framework developed in the first stage (Sobh and Perry, 2006), in this thesis we will focus only on the first phase concerned with an inductive approach. This is because given the complexity of the realist world, realist researchers are primarily concerned with theory building before any attempt to test theory (Healy and Perry, 2000). Therefore, testing quantitatively the relationships between attachment and gift-giving behaviour is out of the scope of this study and we will conduct this phase at a post-doctoral stage.

In this research, data will be collected from the same participants by using three main data collection techniques: (1) A self-report questionnaire to gather background information about the participants; (2) semi-structured online diaries, containing closed and open-ended questions to obtain data about gift-giving behaviour and description of the relationship between giver and receiver for each gift-giving event; and (3) semi-structured interviews to gather general views of gift-giving and to clarify some issues raised on diaries. Table 3.5 shows the sequential design as adopted for this research.

Table 3.5: Diagram for Sequential research design

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION	QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION	QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION
Procedures: Self-report background questionnaires	**Procedure:** 1st Diaries 2nd Face-to-face semi-structured interviews	**Procedure:** Interpretivist approach to analysis	**Procedure:** Discussion of the extent to which qualitative dimensions were validated
Products: Identification of sample in terms of attachment style, gender, income and number of household members	**Products:** Diaries Interview transcripts	**Product:** Coded text, identification of categories and theoretical concepts: gift giving relationships and motivations	**Product:** Description of findings

Source: Based on the diagram presented by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 124)

This study uses background questionnaires, online diaries and face-to-face interviews, building on the strengths of questionnaires, online diaries and interviews to overcome limitations within each of these methods. The strengths and weaknesses of each data collection method and how weaknesses can be addressed are described in detail in table 3.6, showing that these three data collection methods complement each other well because of three main issues.

First, questionnaires provide background information on the informants before recruitment in an anonymous, quick and less expensive way than other methods, such as interviews (Sarantakos, 2013), whose main weaknesses are the influence of the researcher in the interview process (Grubber et al., 2008), amount of time needed (Quinlan, 2011) and cost (Leeuw, 2008).

Table 3.6: Strengths and weaknesses of each data collection method.

DATA C. METHOD	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	HOW TO ADDRESS WEAKNESSES
Screening Questionnaires	-Questionnaires are less expensive than other methods, are easy to administrate, produce quick results, offer greater assurance of anonymity, are stable and consistent, and offer a considered and objective overview of the issue (Sarantakos, 2013)	-Questionnaires do not allow probing, prompting or clarification of questions (Sarantakos, 2013). -The identity of the respondent and the conditions under which the questionnaire is answered are not known (Sarantakos, 2013) -Questionnaires do not provide the opportunity to motivate participants or to researchers answer informants' questions (Sarantakos, 2013).	INTERVIEWS DIARIES
Online diaries	-Diaries allow sensations, thoughts and emotions to be monitored and reported with little retrospection (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Bolger et al., 2003). -Diary data are temporally ordered (Clarkson, 2008), -Data collected in a relatively intrusive manner (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Alaszewski, 2006) -Diaries examine reported events and experiences in their natural, spontaneous context (Bolger et al., 2003) - Diaries minimise motivational and cognitive distortions common in traditional questionnaires (Tidwell et al., 1996). -Online diaries, would overcome several weaknesses of traditional diaries including reduction of the perceived risk of participants others reading their diaries (describing emotions and interpersonal events) (Bolger et al., 2003). -Improved mobile communication to interact with participants (Bolger et al., 2003). -Reduction of transcription costs (Bolger et al., 2003).	-Diaries require a certain level of commitment especially if they are written for long periods of time (Clarkson, 2008; Alaszewski, 2006; Bolger et al., 2003) - Possibility of sample bias at the end of the study might exist, because of people unwilling to participate and high rates of drop out (Clarkson, 2008) -Diarists decide how and when to complete the diary, thus it is more difficult to build a relationship with them than in participant observation or interviews (Alaszewski, 2006). - Achievement of high compliance rates is essential. (Tennen et al., 2006). -Populations with members not familiar with computers may produce better data with paper and pencil methods (Green et al., 2006) or be unwilling to enrol in electronic diary studies (Bolger et al., 2003).	INTERVIEWS -USING INCENTIVES Although the possibility of sample bias at the end of the study might exist, because of people being unwilling to participate and high rates of drop out (Clarkson, 2008), this might be addressed by using incentives and payments to increase motivation (Alaszewski, 2006). When participants are not motivated to participate in research studies by cash incentives, contributions to charity can be an effective way to increase participation rates (Wenemark et al., 2010). - ONGOING CONTACT It is important to maintain ongoing contact with participants in a personal but non- intrusive manner (Clarkson, 2008), provide face-to-face explanations, informal written guidance and use diaries as part of a diary interview method (Alaszewski, 2006). -INTERACTION ONLINE Improved mobile communications allow interactive contact with participants thus offering an additional method to increase diaries' completion levels (Bolger et al., 2003). - Typed electronic diaries enhance compliance and recording behaviour in real time (Tennen et al., 2006).
Interview	-Possible to develop a comfortable relationship with the interviewee who engages in confidential, formal, open and honest communication with the researcher (Quinlan, 2011). -Interviews allow the researcher to provide clarification if a question is not clear, to ask for further explanation of vague answers (Teddlie and Tasakkori, 2009)	-The interviewer might influence the responses of the interviewee (Gruber et al., 2008). -Limited ability of participants to recall their experience in retrospection when trying to reconstruct the phenomena of interest (Bolger et al., 2003). -Face-to-face interviews are extremely costly (Leeuw, 2008). -Time consuming (Quinlan, 2011).	QUESTIONNAIRES ONLINE DIARIES

Second, online diaries allow emotions and thoughts to be reported with little retrospection, thus reducing forgetfulness (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Bolger et al., 2003), the data are temporally ordered (Clarkson, 2008) and diaries minimise motivational and cognitive distortions common in traditional questionnaires (Tidwell et al., 1996). Online diaries also compensate some of the weaknesses observed in interviews, by reducing transcription costs, and overcoming the problem of recalling past events (Bolger et al., 2003).

Third, interviews provide clarifications about questions and allow the researchers to ask for further explanation (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). This strength of interviews addresses a major limitation of questionnaires and online diaries, which is the lack of room for clarification of questions (Sarantakos, 2013). According to Sarantakos (2013), questionnaires also do not provide the opportunity for collecting additional information as interviews do and it is possible to obtain partial responses.

Consistent with a sequential research design, this investigation aims to generate information about unknown issues of a phenomenon; a goal often associated with qualitative research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). This phase includes three main data collection techniques: First, a self-report questionnaire aimed at gathering background information about participants. Second, semi-structured diaries were employed to report about particular gift-giving experiences with particular relationships. In addition, semi-structured interviewing was used after completion of the diaries to collect more general and contextual information and to clarify issues that emerged in diaries.

3.4.1. Background questionnaires

In this research, questionnaires are used to obtain background information about participants' demographics and to assess participants' attachment style before diary completion. This approach has already been used by Green et al. (2006), who undertook background questionnaires immediately before diaries. It should be noted that the screening questionnaire will be used exclusively to select participants for the research and to obtain some general information about individuals. Therefore, this questionnaire is not a quantitative instrument designed to be tested statistically.

3.4.2. Diaries

Diaries will be employed to assess gift-giving behaviour in this project. In diary studies, diarists provide ordered reports about events in their daily lives for a determined period of time (Clarkson, 2008). Gift giving, as a "human universal" behaviour (Saad, 2007: 113) might benefit from the use of an events diary because diaries provide a powerful set of methods for studying various human phenomena (Bolger et al., 2003) as we discuss below.

Diaries can be used in a range of research designs, such as experimental, survey, unsolicited, naturalistic or ethnographic and they can be combined with other methods (Alaszewski, 2006). For example, the diary techniques can be used before other methods to generate questions for interviews (Clarkson, 2008). However, the choices and decisions should be made in the context of the purposes and design of

research (Alaszewski, 2006), because diary research is more effective when the design and research question are complementary in form (Bolger et al., 2003).

A major advantage of diaries is that they can be used to overcome some of the limitations associated with other research methods including memory recall problems, data organisation issues, difficulties to observe phenomena and informants' reluctance to disclose personal experiences. Diaries offer access to facets of social life not easy to reach through research methods such as interviews (Alaszewski, 2006). One reason for this is that diaries allow sensations, thoughts and emotions to be monitored and reported with little retrospection, thus minimising forgetfulness (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Bolger et al., 2003). Another important strength of diary collection is that data are temporally ordered by informants according to the order of occurrence of events (Clarkson, 2008); collected in a relatively unobtrusive manner (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Alaszewski, 2006); and events and experiences are reported in their natural, spontaneous context (Bolger et al., 2003). Over time, as participants become more comfortable writing diaries, introspection increases and self-conscious comments decrease (Jacelon and Imperio, 2005). Although diaries are self-reports, they minimise motivational and cognitive distortions common in traditional questionnaires where people are not good at retrospecting and summarising past experiences and as a result, questionnaires' respondents incur in cognitive biases or self-conceptions rather than reporting the details of their lived experiences (Tidwell et al., 1996). Gift researchers have suggested that gift exchange could benefit from the use of unobtrusive methods (Sherry, 1983). Studying respondents' gift giving

motivations and thoughts indicates that they might be opaque to researchers, and even to respondents themselves, until revealed indirectly. This is because direct questioning often only reveals gift exchange in its idealised form (McGrath et al., 1993). Therefore, diaries aim to access diarists' actual gift giving motivations, emotions and thoughts, minimising participants' idealised descriptions that only try to impress or please the researcher.

There are some limitations in the use of diaries, although there are also ways to conduct them and to minimise their negative effect as explained below. First, participant motivation is a key factor in diary studies (Tennen et al., 2006; Green et al., 2006; Bolger et al., 2003) because poorly motivated participants are likely to undermine accuracy or completeness in data collection (Green et al., 2006). Therefore, diaries require a certain level of commitment from participants, especially if they are written over long periods of time (Clarkson, 2008; Alaszewski, 2006; Bolger et al., 2003). Although the possibility of sample bias at the end of the study might exist, because of peoples' unwillingness to participate and high dropout rates (Clarkson, 2008), this might be obviated by the appropriate use of incentives and payments to increase motivation according to Alaszewski (2006). Second, considering that diarists decide how and when to complete the diary, it is more difficult to build a relationship with them than in a participant observation study or with interviews (Alaszewski, 2006). Therefore, it is important to maintain ongoing contact with participants in a personal but non-intrusive manner (Clarkson, 2008), provide face-to-face explanations, give informal written guidance and use diaries as part of a diary interview method (Alaszewski, 2006). Besides, improved

mobile communications allow interactive contact with participants offering an additional method to increase diary completion rates (Bolger et al., 2003). Third, the achievement of high completion rates is essential. This is facilitated by typed electronic diaries, which enhance compliance and record behaviour in real time through event-contingent recordings (Tennen et al., 2006). Completion rates need to be considered in terms of number of entries and their validity (Bolger et al., 2003). Finally, keeping diaries is more expensive than other research methods such as surveys, because of the costs of developing diaries, recording equipment and training of diarists (Alaszewski, 2006). However, this method can be very cost-effective, particularly in situations where data are gathered from the same person in a relatively short period of time (Clarkson, 2008).

Concrete experiences (e.g., the giving of a gift) should be investigated using the event-based design that requires participants to provide a self-report each time the event occurs (Bolger et al., 2003). According to Bolger and colleagues, an event-based design requires a clear definition of the event to avoid any ambiguity. In the study of attachment and social interactions, Tidwell et al. (1996) argue that event-based accounts of contemporary actions are effective in minimising any distortions in self-reports. For this purpose, dyadic gift giving events involving two people who know each other will be analysed from the perspective of the gift giver. Diarists, as gift givers, will also be able to report a potential gift giving experience where in the event a gift was considered but not given. It being enough to have identified a situation where the diarist thought about giving (or not) a gift to a particular person. The absence of a gift is a way of symbolic communication typical of those

gift givers who adopt the role of “avoiders”, a role expressed through the absence of a gift that serves to send deliberate messages to potential gift-recipients (Otnes et al, 1993).

“Paper and pencil” has been the most traditional and common approach used in diary research (Clarkson, 2008:80) for more than forty years (Bolger et al., 2003). The mode of diary completion adopted is more an issue of study design, participants’ motivation and preferences than whether a diary is paper and pencil or electronically administrated (Green et al., 2006). Older adults with normal sensory ageing have found difficulties with the “high-pitched prompt” of electronic diaries (Tennen et al., 2006: 116) and populations with members not familiar with computers may produce better data with paper and pencil methods (Green et al., 2006) or be unwilling to enrol in electronic diary studies (Bolger et al., 2003).

Online diaries overcome several weaknesses of traditional diaries including reduction of the perceived risk of third parties reading participants’ diaries, which describe emotions and interpersonal events in their environment; improved interaction with participants thanks to new mobile communications; and reduction of transcription costs (Bolger et al., 2003). Despite the advantages of diaries allowing sensations, thoughts and emotions to be reported with minimum retrospection (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Bolger et al., 2003), little intrusion (Clarkson, 2008; Green et al., 2006; Alaszewski, 2006), and the possibility of overcoming limitations in a relatively easy way, gift-giving researchers have yet to take advantage of these strengths. In consumer behaviour, diaries have been used infrequently, with only a few exceptions (e.g., Marchand and O’Donohoe, 2014). In

gift giving, diaries can be used by informants as a way to record gift-giving experiences exhaustively (Sherry, 1983). Considering this, the study of gift-giving behaviour addressing differences across relationships can benefit from diaries as a data collection method. Furthermore, during the process of diary completion, the researcher can maintain frequent contact with informants, which can help to build rapport with informants and to prepare them for the next phase of the research.

3.4.3. Follow-up semi-structured interviews

There are different definitions of interview, depending on the assumptions of the researcher. On the one hand, an interview is a conversation with a purpose, where the interviewer's goal is to elicit knowledge about the respondent's world (Alverson and Svenson, 2008). On the other hand, an interview requires a person, the interviewer, who asks questions and guides a conversation with another person, the interviewee (Teddlie and Tasakkori, 2009; Sims, 2008). The interviewer aims to establish a context-free truth about reality following a research schedule to guide the interview and obtaining responses relevant to it (Thorpe and Holt, 2008).

Interviews as a research method have a number of advantages. One-to-one interviews make it possible to develop a comfortable relationship with the interviewee who engages in confidential, formal, open and honest communication with the researcher (Quinlan, 2011). Interviews allow the researcher to provide clarification if a question is not clear, to ask for further explanation of vague answers (Teddlie and Tasakkori, 2009) and to motivate respondents (Leeuw, 2008) so they offer the advantages of interactive communication between the researcher and the interviewee.

Regarding interview disadvantages, most are concerned with the presence of the interviewer. The first major drawback is the possibility that the interviewer might influence the responses of the interviewee, depending on the former's race, gender or physical appearance (Gruber et al., 2008). The researcher can also lead participants' responses and, therefore, bias the data (Quinlan, 2011). Similarly, the presence of the interviewer can inhibit informants when answering sensitive questions and, therefore, they might provide socially desirable answers (Leeuw, 2008) or responses that accord to their estimate of the interviewer's expectations (Gruber et al., 2008). This leads to some concern about how to minimise the "contamination" of interview data by the interviewer influence (Sims, 2008: 117). A second limitation of interviews is the possibility of misinterpreting some of the things observed about the interviewee concerning for example body language, feelings of discomfort and the limited ability of participants to recall their experience in retrospect when trying to reconstruct the phenomena of interest (Bolger et al., 2003). Finally, face-to-face interviews are both extremely costly (Leeuw, 2008) and time consuming (Quinlan, 2011).

There are different types of interviews, semi-structured and in-depth interviews being the most common for social sciences (Alasuutari et al., 2008) and marketing research (Hanson and Grimmer, 2007). While semi-structured interviews are guided by a topic guide, containing the questions to ask of each participant, in-depth interviews are less structured, more driven by the interviewee and seeking rich, in-depth answers (Lee and Lings, 2008). Semi-structured interviews are very useful when there is a theoretical appreciation of the topic (e.g., after a literature review),

allowing the development of a topic guide with specific questions and offering a lot of flexibility to follow up the points raised by the interviewee (Lee and Lings, 2008). In this case, we will use an interview schedule to conduct semi-structured interviews and we will include specific questions for each participant in order to fill gaps from their diaries. This approach will allow us to explore in depth issues raised by informants in their diaries and that require further attention.

To the researcher's knowledge, the combination diary-interview has not been used in gift-giving research to date, although the usefulness of this approach has already been acknowledged in other disciplines such as health research (e.g., Elliott, 1997) and sociology (e.g., Zimmerman and Wieder, 1977). The combination diary-interview method has five advantages: It accommodates different response modes, captures diarists' own priorities, illuminates the context where the event took place, records and reflects on the experience and is a means of understanding what has been taken for granted (Elliot, 1997). Diaries can be used to formulate questions for follow-up interviews providing a rich data source about daily participants' activities (Jacelon and Imperio, 2005) and allowing the researcher and informant to fill in any gaps in the data (Elliot, 1997).

In this thesis, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used to complement online diaries. This is because interviews address some of the limitations of diaries, allowing interaction in real time to allow clarification of questions or answers provided by interviewees (Teddlie and Tasakkori, 2009). This makes it possible for us to further explore some issues raised in gift-diaries and enables informants to provide other views about gift giving. The weaknesses of face-to-face interviews,

such as the ability to remember, influence of the researcher (Bolger et al., 2003), time cost (Quinlan, 2011) and financial cost (Leeuw, 2008) were addressed beforehand through the diary data collection process. Semi-structured diaries were completed immediately after the occurrence of the gift-giving event, thus minimising the opportunity for forgetfulness. Participants decided when and how to complete the diary online, making this method less intrusive as they could fit the task around their other commitments. As participants provided electronic copies of their diaries, transcription was unnecessary, saving money and time for the researcher.

Semi-structured interviews were considered more appropriate than in-depth interviews, because the former are particularly useful when the researcher has a clear theoretical understanding of the topic, for example, after literature review (Lee and Lings, 2008). In this case, gift giving is being studied from an attachment perspective. There are some expected links between Attachment Theory and gift giving, through the relationships between gift-giver and receiver, emotions and different gift-giving situations.

3.5. RESEARCH PROCESS

The aim of this section is to review and justify the research process followed in the study involving a sequential, multi-method research design as used by Marchand and O'Donohoe (2014). The chapter is organised into four sections. The first section provides a description of the research instruments and the assessment of their appropriateness. The data collection process is outlined in the second section,

followed by an account of the sample selection methods and finally overview of the sample profile.

3.5.1. Design of research instruments

Five different instruments were developed to collect exploratory data from gift-givers including background questionnaires, diaries, a questionnaire for participants to select their preferred incentive, an interviewer schedule for the semi-structured face-to-face interviews and a website. The aim of the website was to host background questionnaires, online diaries and the incentive selection questionnaire, as well as to provide participants with information about the research. Details about the development of each instrument are described below including a section reporting the process and results from two pilot studies conducted to assess the appropriateness and functionality of the above mentioned instruments.

3.5.1.1. Background questionnaire design

A background questionnaire was developed electronically using Google docs to identify participants' backgrounds (Appendix 1). Background questionnaires are easy to administrate, produce quick results and offer a considered and objective overview of the informants' profiles (Sarantakos, 2013). The opening section of this first data collection instrument aimed at establishing more detail about the gifts that participants planned to give during the data collection period. We enquired about this by asking informants about the number of gifts they planned to give, the occasions on which those gifts would be given, their attitudes towards the

Christmas season and to gift giving at this time of the year. Attitudes about the Christmas season were rated in a 7-point-Likert type scale. This was to be consistent with the type of scale used to measure attachment styles as discussed below.

This questionnaire also asked for some personal details about the participants' to help in understanding and interpreting diaries and subsequent interviews. For this, we assessed informants' attachment styles (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991) and relevant demographics for gift giving behaviour such as gender. The seven-point Likert-type measurement scale developed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) was adopted to assess attachment styles. This measure was chosen as a result of a pilot study (see section 3.5.1.5 for further details). Although in the initial version of this questionnaire we used the scale proposed by Brennan et al. (1998), which is one of the most used self-report measures of attachment (Mende et al., 2013), informants indicated that completing the 36 questions asked by this scale was onerous and tedious. Therefore, we decided to use the questions from the Relationship Questionnaire developed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) because when attachment is a secondary area of investigation, this questionnaire has the advantage of being very short with adequate reliability and discriminant validity (Ravitz et al, 2010).

Closed-ended questions about gender and income were based on the criteria of the UK Office for National Statistics (2012), having participants choose from a closed list of options. In addition, a number of open-ended questions asked about the number of household members, gift-occasions and expected number of gifts to be given

during the diary completion period. Finally, informants were asked about their willingness to take part in the next stage of the study; as a consequence, it was necessary to provide an email address to establish contact if they were interested. In order to ensure anonymity, participants were given guidelines to create a new email account to avoid disclosing their identity. This may have deterred the less technologically literate and the busy participants.

3.5.1.2. Online diary design

The online questionnaire was designed in order to enable participants to report their gift giving experiences (Appendix 2). This semi-structured diary-entry began with the introduction of the email address in order to link each diary entry with the background information initially provided in the participants' background questionnaires and a definition of the gift to contextualise gift giving. Diary entries contained a set of different questions divided into two parts: The gift-giving experience and the relationship between giver and receiver. Gift-giving records contained a mixture of open and closed-ended questions.

The first part of the diary-entry questionnaires involved questions about relevant topics drawn from the gift literature such as givers' reasons to give a gift to a particular person and participants' emotions about the gift-experience. Questions about occasions involved fifteen occasions likely to occur in the period of data collection, for example Christmas and birthdays, and others such as expressions of gratitude or apologies (Minowa et al., 2002). Participants were offered the option of selecting multiple occasions simultaneously and entering an occasion missing from the list. When addressing gift-givers' emotions and givers' perceptions of the

emotions of the receiver, the alternative answers to this question were guided by the classification of gift giving emotions proposed by Ruth et al., (2004). Four new emotions, excitement, surprise, disappointment and anxiety, were identified as a result of a pilot stage as we will explain in section 3.5.1.5.

The second part of each diary-entry also combined open and closed-ended questions about the type of relationship between gift giver and receiver as well as a detailed description addressing physical distance between giver and receiver; frequency of contact and amount of time the giver and receiver had known each other (Trinke and Bartholomew, 1997).

At the end of the diary entry template, we included a reminder for participants to send a picture of their gift by email and we thanked them before and after they clicked the "submission" button.

3.5.1.3. Selection of incentives questionnaire design

In order to know how participants would like to receive their incentives after taking part in the research, we designed a short online questionnaire using Google docs (Appendix 3). This instrument only included three questions. In the first one, informants were asked to enter their email address. Afterwards they were required to indicate if they wanted to receive their £30 pound incentive as an Amazon voucher or a charity donation. If participants chose the Amazon voucher, they simply had to submit the form. However, if selected the second option, we included a list of nine charities for participants to choose their preferred option before the form submission.

3.5.1.4. Website design

The background questionnaires, diaries and incentive selection questionnaires were hosted in a website designed for the purpose of the study using Google sites (https://sites.google.com/).

This website provided a platform to recruit and inform participants about the research while providing guidance in a lively way. For this, we employed photographs to illustrate the contents of each section and we used friendly language. We designed three different webpage layouts concerned with three different stages of the research including (1) introduction of research and assessment of participants' backgrounds, (2) online diary and (3) selection of incentives. The site design was consistent across the three webpages (e.g. blue background, banner at the top, same text font and colours) and the contents were adapted to each section in order to facilitate participation in the research process for informants.

The first website screen was used as a home page (Appendix 4) and it aimed to inform participants about the research and to host the selection questionnaire to be completed by those people interested in taking part in the project. We designed a banner at the top reproducing the online advertisement used for recruitment and the logo of Nottingham University Business School. Following this banner, we introduced the researchers involved in this project as well as their contact details and we explained step by step the different research phases. We specified the time typically required for completion of each stage, incentives, assurance of anonymity,

confidentiality, and a link for the selection questionnaire in case informants could not see it straightaway at the end of the webpage.

We used the second website page (Appendix 5) as a platform for gift giving diary entries and the main objective of this page was to guide informants when completing the diaries. For example, we encouraged participants to complete all the diary fields, to be accurate, to provide any further comments in the last field of the diary entry and we reassured informants in that their responses were neither right nor wrong. Furthermore, we changed the top banner to include pictures illustrating gift giving. These pictures were taken by the main researcher. In this part, the urged informants to send their own gift photographs by email.

Finally, the third website page hosted the incentive selection questionnaire for participants to indicate how they wanted to receive their £30 incentive (Appendix 6). This included a banner on the top with the logos for Amazon, McMillan Cancer support, Wildlife Trusts, Children in Need, National Trust and Impact Nottingham. Below the banner, we included a small paragraph explaining how to select the incentive and how to obtain more information about each charity followed by the incentive selection questionnaire. At the end of this page, we embedded links providing details about the £30 Amazon voucher, each of the five charities and their goals including details of the alternatives detailed on the Impact Nottingham charity to which informants could choose to donate their £30 gift.

3.5.1.5. Pilot studies

In the development of background questionnaires, semi-structured online diaries, selection of incentives questionnaires and the research website, we conducted two pilot studies. The fundamental purpose of a pilot study is to examine the feasibility of instruments and to identify modifications needed in the design of a larger project (Leon, Davies and Kraemer, 2011). Although pilot studies are often unreported or discussed very briefly, researchers should make the best use of their research by reporting issues arising from the pilot phase, as well as the improvements made to the design of the study and research process (Van Teijlingen and Vanora, 2002). In order to ensure methodological rigour, pilot studies should explicitly detail and define their objectives (Lancaster, Dodd and Williamson, 2002).

The first pilot study of our research intended to assess the emotions that should be included in the online diaries guideline. Our starting point was the list of gift giving emotions drawn by Ruth et al. (2004). This study was conducted in the US some 10 years before our data collection in the UK. Therefore, we considered it appropriate to examine the potential existence of additional emotions missing from Ruth's list. For this, we conducted 10 face-to-face interviews with people living in the UK who were approached in the vicinity of Nottingham University Business School Campus. Pilot interviews were recorded by taking notes manually. In our content analysis, we found support for the list of emotions proposed by Ruth et al. (2004) and in the data we identified four new emotions (i.e. excitement, surprise, disappointment and anxiety) that we incorporated into the template used by informants to complete each diary entry.

The second pilot study was designed to pre-test online the contents and functionality of background questionnaires, diary-entry templates, incentive selection questionnaires and the hosting website. For this, we used a convenience sample of 10 postgraduate students and administrative staff at Nottingham University Business School. These individuals were different from those of the previous pilot study. We sent them an email with a link to each of the website pages where we embedded the background and incentive selection questionnaires, and the online diary template. We asked informants to complete all of them as participants, following the instructions provided. The reason for sending all the instruments to the same people was that in this way they could check the consistency of the information provided and how this was presented across the research instruments. In the actual data collection study, all informants were exposed to all these instruments. At the same time, we asked the individuals participating in this preliminary study to: (1) identify any potential misunderstandings in the text of the instruments; (2) examine the website and layout of the four instruments (i.e. background and incentive questionnaires, diary template and website) to minimise inconsistencies; and; (3) probe whether the instruments worked properly on different electronic devices (e.g., laptop, PC, smart-phone, tablet), operational systems (e.g., Android, Apple), and internet browsers (e.g., Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox).

As a result of the feedback from the second pilot study, we effected changes in background questionnaires, online diaries template and the hosting website. The only instrument that did not need any change was the selection of incentives

questionnaire, possibly due to its simplicity. The background questionnaires required changes to the initial scale to measuring attachment styles (Brennan et al., 1998) because the pilot test showed that it was long and tedious to complete. To address this we focused on a simplified scale (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991) to make it easier for participants to complete. In addition, some questions were reworded using a more relaxed and friendly language. For example, we replaced the headline "*personal information*" by "*In order to understand your diary, we would like to know a little bit more about you…*" and we corrected some typographical errors.

As for the diary template, we included an indication of what a gift is and we emphasised that a gift is not necessarily something tangible or something bought from a store. This addition was made in response to a question from one of the participants in the pilot study, who was not sure whether buying dinner for a friend for his birthday could be a gift.

Regarding the webpage, we replaced the list of research phases by a table illustrating the different research stages and we included a link to the Nottingham University webpage, where informants could check information about the researchers. Finally, we made some adaptations to allow participants to use the most convenient technology for them to complete their diary. These included resizing the photos used for the website (some of them were too big), the width and length of questionnaires and offering the option of clicking in a link in case respondents could not see the template of the background questionnaire or diary entry straightaway in the website screen.

Before the final data collection, we contacted the same pilot study informants again for them to review the changes made in the instruments and these individuals confirmed that the contents and functionality of the instruments were both suitable.

Therefore, these pilot studies allowed us to identify practical problems in the research process (Van Teijlingen and Vanora, 2002) and these issues were resolved before the main data collection stage.

3.5.1.6. Interview schedule

After a thorough examination and some initial analysis of the data collected from diaries, an interview protocol was developed to assist the researcher in the conduction of semi-structured interviews and to explore more general views about gift giving and receiving (Appendix 7). The first part of the interview guide focused on gift giving and the second part addressed views about gift receiving.

As an icebreaker, informants were asked to indicate what made, for them, a perfect gift and the preferred types of gifts for them to give and to receive. In addition, a number of questions were designed to better understand their views about gift relationships, gift giving in difficult situations such as gift rejection and favourite gift experiences. Beyond the questions in the interview protocol, informants were encouraged to expand some of the issues they mentioned in their diaries as indicated in the data collection section (3.5.2).

3.5.2. Data collection

In this thesis, data were collected in two rounds, involving 28 participants in total.

The first round took place between December 2012 and March 2013, to investigate Christmas gift giving. For this, we recruited 14 informants in the Christmas season through the publication of a banner in a local website (www.thisisnottingham.com). During this initial round, we also generated publicity through the publication of a press release in the *University of Nottingham Newsletter* and the *Nottingham Post* newspaper. Furthermore, we were interviewed about the gift giving study on *BBC East Midlands Today* and *BBC radio* Nottingham, which supported the recruitment process by stimulating interest from the public in our research. The advertisement informed participants that they could receive a £30 gift, or choose to donate the sum to a charity, if they completed all the stages of a gift-giving project. People interested in the research clicked in the banner or entered the link provided and they were immediately re-directed to the website exclusively designed for this research project. As indicated in section 3.5.1.4, the first screen of this webpage consisted of a statement including detailed research information concerning the researcher, institution, description of the research process, incentives for participation, ethical issues about confidentiality, and participants' freedom to withdraw from the study at any time (Appendix 4). From this welcome page, participants had access to a screening questionnaire designed to assess their background information relevant for the investigation.

Twenty-four participants completed this initial questionnaire in the first round of data collection. We thanked all of them for their interest on the research and invited them, by email, to take part in the next stage of the project. Informants received accurate information about the whole research process and precise

instructions to complete a gift diary for a four-week period. This involved completing a diary entry each time participants gave, or considered giving, a gift. Fourteen of the initial twenty-four participants started the diary completion stage. From this first stage of data collection, thirteen of the fourteen diarists agreed to be interviewed face-to-face to complete the research process.

The second round of exploratory research, recruited fourteen participants during May/June 2013 to cover different occasions excepting Christmas. The data collection procedure was the same as for the first round conducted for Christmas gift research except for the recruitment of participants. At this stage of the study, we used a purposive sampling approach, which aimed to reach a variety of gift givers by engaging Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) administrative staff members to recruit new informants. We sent potential recruiters an email indicating the requirements of prospective participants, who should (1) be over 30 years old (i.e. more experienced gift givers); (2) not working at the University of Nottingham or known to the research team; and (3) be willing to take part in the study by completing the online questionnaire, online diary and an interview). In total, we received the help of nine recruiters who were incentivised with £15 Marks and Spencer vouchers for each recruited participant. During this second round, all 14 participants completed the whole research process.

Throughout the first and second rounds of data collection, once informants showed their interest in keeping a diary for over a four weeks period, the researcher maintained regular contact with them in order to answer diarists' questions and to let them know when their information had been received correctly. All the emails

were personalised by being addressed to each participant by his/her name individually, thus avoiding sending the same impersonal email to the whole group of participants. We made a great effort to keep informants interested by providing recognition and information, and we thought very carefully about the language used in our emails to avoid that participants felt overwhelmed by our reminders and requests. This proved to be a time consuming task as, for example, a four lines email to remind participants that they needed to complete their diary could take from two to three hours to write. This interaction by email was very important to keep participants interested in the research and to create rapport, which later proved very useful for interviews. A total of more than 200 emails were exchanged via the email account created exclusively for use in this study. In these emails, informants asked questions, sent pictures, shared some personal experiences affecting their participation in the research (e.g. being ill, not having internet access for a few days) and also reported how they were coping with their diaries (e.g. writing notes about experiences to report them online later). At the same time, as researchers, we provided support by answering participant's queries, reminding informants about our availability and the completion of their diaries, reassuring respondents that we had successfully received their experience reports and guiding them towards the next steps in the research process.

After completion of the diary stage, interviews were scheduled at the time and place most convenient for the informant. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, with the average interview lasting 53 minutes. Interviews followed an interview schedule (Appendix 7) and we used questions specific to each participant

in order to guide the interviewee towards matters where we required more information. We enquired about this by using prompts such as "*I read in your diary that it's [gift-giving] different with your father in-law*", or "*this Christmas with the iPad you bought for your husband and the electric blanket for your mum, was your motivation different?*" In many cases, informants provided more details about the experiences that they had reported in their diary because they had additional material they wanted to share in terms of the gift event and/or their relationship with the recipient. This can be seen in Lesley's diary (Appendix 8) and follow-up interview (Appendix 9). For example, in the diary entry *019G*, Lesley reports a positive gift experience with her husband's grandparents. In her interview, Lesley provides new insights about this experience that happens every year and causes a certain level of anxiety. This anxiety is a response to the generous amount of money Lesley and her husband receive as a Christmas gift. Although in the diary, Lesley indicates that she lost her own grandparents and she likes seeing her husbands' grandparents, the sense of debt with them is different from that experienced with her own grandparents. As Lesley indicates in her interview: "*with Jason's [my husband's] grandparents, quite often, they give us a lot of […] so we always try to get them something nice. And we always buy them a hamper at Christmas but we hand pick the hamper ourselves and make the hamper ourselves […] I don't like taking money off them[…] so, we always try to get something nice back for them […] that [gift exchange] can be a little bit uncomfortable […] if they were my grandparents it would be like with my parents, I would know them very well and if my parents gave me a lot of money that's fine […] we don't have the opportunity to spend the money on his grandparents*". The combination of diaries

and interviews was a major element in understanding the distant, although important, relationship with the Lesley's husband's family. Therefore, diaries and follow-up interviews were used in a complementary way in order to seek additional information about informants, to obtain further insights around specific events, to better understand participants' gift giving experiences and givers' views about the people involved in those experiences (e.g. gift recipients), which is detailed in the section of data analysis (section 3.6).

Upon completion of the whole process (i.e. background questionnaires, diaries and interviews), informants were encouraged to go online to select their incentive of either a £30 Amazon online voucher or the donation of a similar sum to a charity. Links with information about Amazon vouchers and selected charities were also provided in the gift-research website (see Appendix 6). Only four participants decided to donate their money to a charity. The remaining informants preferred to receive their Amazon voucher and, in some cases, they even indicated how they were going to use their reward (e.g. to buy a book, to get a treat). All incentives were processed and informants confirmed by email that they had received their voucher or the confirmation of their chosen charity donation.

3.5.3. Sample selection and participant descriptions

The 28 participants who took part on this research were purposively selected at two different times of the year by using a screening questionnaire as explained in section 3.5.2. A purposive sample reduces a non-response rate (Fraedrich, 1993) and screening participants is a way to ensure that participants meet the study eligibility requirements (Hooley, 2012). In the recruitment process, at both rounds

of research, we aimed to gain access to informants from different ages and backgrounds instead of relying on a convenience sample such as students. This is because young adults tend to have limited giving experiences (Otnes et al., 1993; Wooten, 2000) and, therefore, they are not the best group to study gift giving behaviour (Webley and Wilson, 2001).

As a result, we obtained a diverse sample profile, in terms of gender, age, income, household size and stage in the life cycle. We describe them in table 3.7, below, to demonstrate the variety of the sample. Consumer research often describes the sample as a way to indicate the broad or limited diversity of the informants (e.g., Marchand and O'Donohoe, 2014; McKechnie and Tynan, 2006).

In terms of gender, 20 participants of the 28 were women. The greater response of women is not surprising as other studies have reported that the fact that women are more involved in gift giving which can explain their greater response to a gift giving study compared to men (Otnes et al., 1993). Ages ranged from 18-74, most participants lived with their family comprising between one and four family members except for a couple of respondents living with friends or housemates. The data also show a wide variety of income levels, including people whose weekly income was less than £200 to individuals earning from £1,000 to £1,499 a week.

Table 3.7: Description of sample profile

NAME	GENDER	AGE	INCOME (£ per week)	HOUSEHOLD SIZE (No members)	SOME ASPECTS ABOUT THE INFORMANTS' LIFE STAGE
ANNE	Female	18-24	<£200	3	Anne is studying at University and she lives with her family. She does not mention having a partner.
EVE	Female	35-44	£200-£299	3	Eve does not explain her marital situation. She lives with her two children.
AGNES	Female	18-24	<£200	3	Agnes is an only child, who lives with her parents and is about to go to University. She is in a new relationship.
STEPHANIE	Female	35-44	£600-£699	1	Stephanie does not mention a partner. She lives on her own.
RUTH	Female	25-34	<£200	3	Ruth is married and has a two-year-old daughter. Ruth's parents are divorced and they remarried more than 27 years ago. Now, she has several half-siblings.
JOHN	Male	35-44	£500-£599	1	John is single and he is looking for a girlfriend. John lives alone and is far from his parental family.
LESLEY	Female	35-44	£400-£499	2	Lesley is married and does not have any children. She lives far from her parents although she tries to visit them frequently because they are getting old.
EMMA	Female	18-24	<£200	4	Emma is a student and lives with her housemates. She has been in a relationship for five years.
MARY	Female	45-54	£1000-£1499	3	Mary cohabits with her partner of 36 years and has a 15-year-old child. Most of her family died and her partner, child and an aunt by marriage are her only family now.
ROSE	Female	18-24	£200-£299	2	Rose finished her studies at University and has recently started new job. She has been in a relationship for six years.
SUSAN	Female	18-24	<£200	7	Susan lives with her housemates while she is at University. Her parents are divorced and she has now several half and step siblings. Susan has a boyfriend.
MARTHA	Female	35-44	£300-£399	4	Martha is married and she has two young children. Martha lives far from her parents and sister, who reside abroad.
PETER	Male	45-54	<£200	1.5	Peter is divorced and has a 15-year-old daughter. He does not have a stable job and his financial situation now is strained.
KIM	Female	18-24	<£200	5	Kim has just started her studies at University and lives with new housemates. After the school term, she lives with her parents and brother. Kim does not mention a partner.
CAROL	Female	55-64	<£200	2	Carol has been married for over 40 years, has two children, three grandchildren and a fourth grandchild is on its way.
JAMES	Male	25-34	£600-£699	5	James is single, shares the house with friends and lives far from his family.
SARAH	Female	35-44	<£200	3	Sarah is married and she has just had a baby. At the moment she is not working and she is spending as much time as she can with her child.
JOAN	Female	25-34	£1000-£1499	4	Joan is married and has two children. She has started a new job recently.
ROBERT	Male	25-34	<£200	2	Robert cohabits with his partner of almost 10 years. He does not have any children.
PAUL	Male	55-64	£500-£599	3	Paul has been married for over 20 years and he has a teenage daughter. He runs his own business.
LUCY	Female	25-34	£1000-£1499	2	Lucy is in a long distance relationship and lives far from her family. All of them reside in another country. Lucy does not have many friends and she is very focused on her job.
PENNY	Female	35-44	<£200	2	Penny has been married for five years and now she is pregnant of her first baby.
BRIAN	Male	25-34	£900-£999	2	Brian lives very far from his family, who live in a different country. He has a girlfriend, with whom he has been dating for two years and they have just moved in together
SALLY	Female	65-74	£200-£299	2	Sally is retired and she has been married for over 40 years. She has two children and two grandchildren.
LEO	Male	35-44	£200-£299	1	Leo lives far from his family and is cohabiting with his girlfriend, of less than 11 months. He recently met his girlfriend's family.
LAUREN	Female	55-64	£200-£299	2	Lauren is married and she does not have any children. She lost her father recently and she takes care of her Mum.
AMY	Female	35-44	£600-£699	3	Amy has been married for 15 years and has a young son.
ANTHONY	Male	25-34	<£200	3	Anthony is married and he has a five-year-old daughter. He is unemployed and he spends lots of time with his child.

To support the use of Attachment Theory as a part of the theoretical underpinning of this research, all participants answered some questions as part of their screening questionnaire to identify their attachment style (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). As a result, the majority of our participants (20 out of 28), clearly showed a secure attachment style with a positive perception of themselves and others, thus making it difficult to make valid and systematic comparisons of individual differences with the few individuals who showed a negative perception of themselves or others. The greater number of secure individuals in our sample, accords with the majority of attachment studies, which indicate that between 55-65% of the population show a secure attachment style with positive perceptions of the self and the other (Hazan and Shaver, 1994; Magai, 2008).

The initial theoretical focus of this study was on understanding how attachment styles, representing individual differences based on givers' perceptions of the self and the other (Ainsworth, 1989), affected gift giving. However, this focus was redirected to normative attachment, which is based on a givers' need to be close to significant others. This happened for two main reasons. Firstly, most participants represented secure attachment orientations, which were assessed in the initial background questionnaire. Secondly, we realised the importance of understanding normative aspects of behaviour before aiming to understand individual differences, that is attachment styles (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). In fact, consumer research could benefit from a normative attachment approach. Therefore, the attachment perspective guiding our research will be normative attachment rather than the analysis of individual differences.

Despite this research being inspired by Attachment Theory, the present study did not start with a predetermined notion of how attachment could advance gift research. In fact, participants were allowed to describe gift giving relationships and experiences in their own terms without being prompted and reminded to address specific components of the theory. In many of the reports, informants spontaneously mentioned different attachment features in relation to their gifts and in other cases, the data suggested alternative explanations that we integrated in our findings.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

After concluding the online diaries, the subsequent follow-up interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription service. Some experts recommend the use of a transcription service because of the independent verification of transcription accuracy it offers (Curry et al., 2009). The diaries included accounts of 157 gift-giving experiences and the interview transcriptions produced more than 400 pages of data, obtaining over 700 pages of text in total.

Following transcription of the interviews, we conducted our inductive data analysis, moving back and forth between the primary data and existing literature (Turner and Rindova, 2012). In our analysis, we combined data from background questionnaires, online diaries and interviews in order to obtain a broader picture of participants' lived experiences. We used these different data sources in a complementary and reflexive way to be able to analyse the same experiences and the same people involved from a different angle and thus, to obtain a deeper understanding of how

participants approach gift giving. We paid attention to the meaning of the text and the connections between the different data sources (Maxwell, 2012).

We adopted an interpretive approach (Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy, 1988) to allow new themes to emerge from the data. The interpretive analysis was a close, critical examination of the text, describing each gift-giving experience (Ruth et al. 1999). After reading the data, we performed both, a "first order analysis" to capture givers' understanding of their relationships with receivers and reasons to give a gift, and a "second order analysis" to progress findings to a theoretical order analysis by comparing emerging insights with existing theory (Turner and Rindova, 2012). For this, we used the "streamed codes-to-theory model for qualitative inquiry" proposed by Saldaña (2009: 12). This process moves from *raw data*, which are systematically organised into *codes* representing similar meanings; from *codes* sharing some characteristics to *categories*, thus forming a new whole with a consolidated meaning; from *categories* to higher-level theoretical *concepts*, which are more abstract constructs; and from *concepts* to *theory*, which shows how theoretical *concepts* interrelate (Saldaña, 2009). We conducted the analysis from the perspective of the giver and we describe this process below in five steps (for an example of the analysis process, see Appendix 10).

Step 1: Data organisation. We assigned a number to each diary entry according to the chronological order of completion of gift givers followed by a G (e.g. 103G) for the gift giving Christmas data, and by GS (e.g. 056GS) for the data collected in the summer. In exceptional cases, diary reports were followed by an R (e.g. 005R) when the giver completed a diary record mentioning relevant insights for the present

research in a gift receiving experience. Once assigned a unique code for each diary gift event, gift experiences were organised by participant, thus preparing them for the next stage of analysis.

Step 2: Reading and familiarisation with the data. Once organised, we read through all the data in order to gain a general sense of the information and to create a general idea about individual participants' conversations (Creswell, 2009). The reading of each diary was followed by the reading of the interview for the same informant. We wrote notes in the margins of the text that we used afterwards in the coding process (e.g. special relationship, always in the giver's gift list). During this first stage of our analysis, we also looked for connections between diaries and interviews about concerning specific gift giving experiences (e.g. when Lesley bought a hamper set for her husband's grandparents), or particular individuals involved (e.g. Leslie's niece). This can be seen in Leslie's diary (Appendix 8) and interview (Appendix 9), where the code of the diary entry was written next to the relevant paragraph of the interview (highlighted in yellow and underlined) and a note was made in the relevant diary entry about this connection. As an illustration, at different points in the interview, Lesley provides details about the relationship with her mother in-law and the type of gift giving between them, which is connected with the *091G* diary entry. The combination of these two sources was a key factor to understand the dynamics of how Lesley relates to her mother in-law.

Step 3: Initial coding process. Following the process of familiarisation with the data, we conducted a "first order analysis" by using initial coding. Initial coding splits text into discrete parts to be examined and compared for similarities and differences

(Saldaña, 2009). In this way, we began the analysis of the diaries and interviews by dividing the data into relevant "text segments" (Greenwood et al., 2002: 66). This text segments reflected different aspects of specific relationships (e.g. relationships that stand out, being always there, helping) and reasons to give a gift as described by informants (e.g. social occasions, to show care, to teach social norms). This relatively open coding process of the data was performed to uncover and code as many reasons as possible in order to create a deeper understanding of participants' relationships with gift receivers and what had motivated them to give a gift. We considered codes as tags assigned to units of text representing units of meaning (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The observations from this first order analysis provided information about the features of givers' relationships with gift receivers and givers' reasons to give a gift to a particular recipient.

Step 4: Interpretation and combination of codes into categories. Following multiple re-readings of the initial codes resultant from the "first order analysis", we refined and reworded some of them (Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy, 1988; Saldaña, 2009). As an illustration, initial codes such as "relationships that stand out" were reworded as "uniqueness" of the relationship because of the links identified with Attachment Theory describing individuals as unique and not wholly interchangeable with anybody else (Ainsworth, 1991). At this stage, we performed a "second order analysis" to develop the findings observed in the data to theoretical observations (Turner and Rindova, 2012). For this, we progressively combined codes that were similar in essence into categories. This is because relationships between the codes developed in the initial coding stage are very common (Saldaña, 2016) and this was

clearly seen throughout our data. For example, the code labels “uniqueness”, “responsiveness”, “based on support” and “permanent” relationships in the givers gift list constituted the *category* of “sacred gift recipients”. These characteristics had as a common denominator attachment traits signalling strong emotional attachment and that givers attributed to special gift recipients (i.e. sacred recipients). These interpretations of the data, leading to theoretical *categories*, were guided by Attachment Theory and we integrated them into an overall scheme of classification explaining how givers’ described their relationships with receivers and their gift giving motivations. Theoretical *categories* may be derived from prior theory (e.g. Attachment Theory), or inductively developed theory, and place the coded data into a framework (Maxwell, 2012).

Step 5: Development of framework. At this stage, we progressed from theoretical *categories* (groups of codes) to theoretical *concepts* (Saldaña, 2009). As an illustration, the *categories* “sacred”, “personal”, “social” and “surrogate” receivers were translated to the *concept* of “direct” receivers, who are sources of emotional security for the giver. *Concepts* in turn were integrated into an overall scheme of classification showing how *concepts* interrelate and lead to theory development (Saldaña, 2016). For example, the theoretical *concepts* of “direct” receivers, as sources of emotional security, and “mediated” receivers, as extensions of special others, suggested a taxonomy of gift recipients answering the question of how givers relate to gift receivers, thus proposing a new *theoretical framework* to understand gift-giving relationships (see example of the full process from raw data to theory in Appendix 10).

To assess the quality of the research, we used the criteria proposed by Spiggle (1994) to evaluate qualitative research, which concern the grounding and interpretations of the data. These criteria include the *usefulness* of the research in helping to better understand a specific issue (e.g., new way to classify gift recipients); *innovation*, referring to new ways of looking at the behaviour (e.g., use diaries in combination with follow-up interviews, which is an underused research method); *integration*, indicating the representation of inferences in a holistic framework (e.g., integration of existing and new motivations into a common framework); *resonance*, enriching the understanding of identical, similar or dissimilar phenomena (e.g., identification of different dyadic gift giving forms); and *adequacy*, referring to the quality of ideas and the extent to which we trust them (Spiggle, 1994).

Furthermore, consistent with an inductive approach to research, we examined the validity of our emergent insights by turning to individuals external to the project to test its credibility (Creswell and Miller, 2000) including PhD colleagues and academics at Nottingham University Business School with whom we discussed the proposed data analysis process in detail. We also provided thick descriptions of the codes in rich detail, in order to allow readers to understand the events described in the study and to make decisions on the applicability of findings (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Finally, we presented our theoretical findings at different international conferences obtaining peer reviews, which provide support, challenge assumptions, push researchers to the next step, ask hard questions about methods and, in

summary, help to establish credibility (Creswell and Miller, 2000). This allowed us to incorporate suggestions in the development of our theoretical framework.

3.7. RESEARCH ETHICS

In the research design, instrument design and data collection we took a series of steps in order to address the ethical issues. First, we obtained formal ethical approval from the University of Nottingham for the development of this project.

Second, although information from background questionnaires and diaries was collected online, the website used Google sites and Google docs as the support platforms for the questionnaire, which is secure because access to the data is only available to the researcher and it is protected by a password.

Third, in this study incentives were key in obtaining committed participants. With this in mind, ethical issues might arise in situations when participants are dependent on the researcher, the research is risky, degrading or the incentive is very large to compensate for high levels of aversion to participation in the study by respondents (Grant and Sugarman, 2007). This study does not involve any of these risk factors. Due to the requirement for the participation of the same respondents into a series of different research methods (online questionnaires, online diaries and interviews) and the exclusively online contact of the first two methods, the incentive was necessary to achieve high levels of commitment. It also offered a symbolic way to compensate participants for their time. Respondents received the incentive as an Amazon voucher or donated it to a charity.

Finally, given its personal nature gift giving and attachment behaviour might be considered a sensitive topic. In this study, participants had access to the issues they were going to be asked during the selection process. All personal data were confidential and the researcher at no point linked this information to the respective participant's transcripts. During completion of online background questionnaires, informants provided the name and email address they wanted to use to maintain contact. They were not asked to reveal their identity to anyone during the course of the online background questionnaires, online diaries or interviews. Data collection online for the first two stages gave respondents an easy way to withdraw at any point without embarrassment. Participants were also able to opt to leave unanswered any questions that made them feel uncomfortable. Before transcription and analysis of the data, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant.

3.8. CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an overview of the realist paradigm underpinning the research and the sequential inductive design based on qualitative research methods. The researcher's philosophical assumptions and the selection of the research design have been contextualised within the most common approaches in marketing and particularly gift-giving research. Furthermore, this chapter included an analysis of the research process, how the target population was identified, how the research instruments were designed (i.e., questionnaires, diary entries, selection of incentives questionnaire, hosting website and interviews) and a detailed account of data collection. Having provided a detailed account of data

collection, this chapter described the inductive qualitative data analysis process and concluded with the research ethics issues considered for this investigation.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports the findings observed from the data analysis in the two stages of data collection. Of the 247 gift-giving experiences reported by informants in their diaries and interviews and by using insights from Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), three distinct forms of giving involving *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving emerged from the data. These forms represent obvious differences that broaden the current understanding of dyadic gift giving from the perspective of the giver.

In the following sections, we will analyse each of these three dyadic gift giving forms, giving a detailed account of their structural characteristics around the main focus of the gift, the presence of intermediaries, types of relationships involved and givers' relationship goals motivating gift giving. Within each gift giving form, we will place a special emphasis on the ways in which givers describe their relationships with gift receivers and the gift giving motivations. In this chapter, insights from Attachment Theory will aid our interpretations to shed light on dyadic gift giving as a distinctive gift giving form.

The first section reports *direct gift giving*, where the focus of the giver is the gift receiver. This is followed by the depiction of *inter-linked gift giving*, where the most important element is the mediator, who is a giver's special other different from the recipient. The third part presents the findings of *indirect gift giving*, where donors stress the importance of the gift event by introducing a proxy figure (e.g., mystical

figures), whose presence is a key factor to make the experience special for those involved. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings, where *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* dyadic gift giving forms are integrated. These findings will be discussed together in light of the literature review in chapter V (p. 203).

4.2. DIRECT GIFT GIVING: EMPHASIS ON THE GIFT RECEIVER

Direct dyadic gift giving was, by far, the most prevalent form of dyadic gift giving, involving 187 gift experiences where givers' descriptions made it clear that the receiver was the central element in the gift event. These descriptions show a direct relationship between the members of the dyad, where the existence of the bonds tying the giver with the receiver and the inclusion of the recipient in the donors' gift list do not depend on their bonds with any other individual acting as an intermediary. At the same time, we observed that the action of giving was from the giver straight to the gift receiver.

From the givers' data, we identified different types of direct gift receivers, whose relationship was important to the giver in different ways. The level of importance of the relationship and the perceived closeness to the gift giver were expressed only in terms of the specific traits connecting the giver and the receiver. When looking at the gift giving features that made direct gift receivers important, worthy and close to the giver, we identified four types of direct receivers, namely "sacred", "personal", "social" and "surrogate" recipients.

Next, we will discuss these four types of direct gift recipients, the givers' relationship goals associated and how these goals are pursued by *direct* dyadic gift giving.

4.2.1. Gifting to "sacred" receivers as a way to nurture the relationship

Givers reported that gifts to "sacred" receivers were a way to nurture the relationship. In the following, we report how givers described their relationship

bonds with “sacred” gift receivers, the relationship goals associated with those receivers and how donors could achieve those goals and cherish the relationship with gift receivers via gift giving.

4.2.1.1. Sacred gift receivers

Almost all participants reported giving gifts to individuals who were depicted as very close, extremely close and the most important person to the giver. We refer to these people as “sacred” gift receivers. This is in line with the idea of specific persons as sacred and clearly different from others and a gift is a sign of the special connection between them (Belk et al., 1989). In fact, informants emphasised the exclusiveness of these relationships by describing the strong bonds tying them to receivers. Our analysis shows that relationships with “sacred” receivers are long-standing, consistently supportive and go beyond traditional roles. This shows that important and close relationships are not necessarily reflected in specific relationship labels such as mother, spouse or sibling.

Uniqueness

One of the specific traits of “sacred” gift recipients was the uniqueness of the relationship. A number of participants described gift receivers as “the most important”, “the best”, “the closest” and the “only”, clearly endowing these relationships with an exclusiveness that made them stand out from other relationships. Robert illustrates this when he describes gift giving to his partner, who is different from any other person:

> *"She is **my partner and I love her deeply** [2]! […][3] she is **the most important person in the world** […] the gifts I always try to give to her in particular have a personal touch that goes beyond the material and the common"* {Robert, diary, 015GS} [4].
>
> *"With my partner [gift giving] it's **different from everything else** or **with everyone else.** It's completely different because she is you know **the most important person for me** so it's **always very important for me to express myself** in the way that I want and in the way that I feel, so that particular experience is the **most engaging**, is the **most wonderful** is the **most rewarding** and is **the most important one for me**. I **can't compare it with any other experience**"* {Robert, interview}.

The indication that this relationship is "the most important" to Robert agrees with the importance of an individual as unique and not wholly interchangeable by anybody else, which suggests the existence of strong affectional bonds (Ainsworth, 1991). The uniqueness of the relationship is translated to the way in which Robert approaches gift giving, which is a particularly special experience to him.

Additionally, some gifts also evince the unique character of sacred relationships by emphasising benefits that no other relationship confers to the giver. For example, Susan gives a sentimental gift to her best friend, who plays a unique role as a confidant outside Susan's family context:

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[2] Emphasis added to highlight a specific point related to the discussion. Bold letters in informants' quotations will have this purpose all across this findings chapter.
[3] [] Square brackets indicate that text has been added to clarify a point or to show that some text has not been included because it does not add anything new and helps to simplify the quotation.
[4] {} Curly brackets indicate the participant's pseudonym and the data source of the quotation.

> *"She [the gift receiver] is **my best friend, one of the closest people to me**, especially because she is not in my family I feel that I can tell her anything. We have a **very close relationship and I feel like her sister and almost part of her family** […] she is doing a year abroad in America so **we don't see each other as frequently as usual!** […] I chose jewellery as it is a special present for her 21st which **she can keep for a long time and will hopefully develop sentimental value**"* {Susan, diary, 025G}.

Despite the fact that her best friend is abroad, Susan still considers her friend one of the closest people to her. Susan wants to signal the importance of this relationship by giving a gift that aims to express high sentimental value. Friendships can be sufficiently close to be considered enduring affectional bonds where the friend is considered as a unique valued person who cannot be replaced by anyone else and whose emotional bonds continue across time and despite the existence of physical distance (Ainsworth, 1989).

Responsiveness

Several participants also emphasised the responsive character of their relationships with sacred receivers, with whom the giver could count on "no matter what". Agnes illustrates this idea by reporting that her parents are closer to her than other relationships because she can always rely on their availability:

> *"[I always give to my] family **who are always there** […] **I always give** [my parents] gifts […]I prefer giving **gifts to people who are closer** to me […] my*

*parents […] they **do a lot for me**, obviously, so I've got more occasions to give them gifts"* {Agnes, interview}.

*"I would describe my relationship as being **very close and loving, and they are both essential to every single day of my life** as I live with them, eat with them and **they provide for me** so we all get along coherently"* {Agnes, diary, 002RC}

Agnes highlights that her parents "are always there", they "do a lot" for her and they are "both essential" for her, which relates to the secure base component of attachment that parents tend to promote (Feeney and Noller, 1996).

In agreement with this reasoning, another participant alluded to the responsive character of the relationship with her mother and sister, as they will always be there for her. Joan indicated that giving to these two people is something instinctive as these two receivers will always be part of her life:

*"For example my mother and my sister, they are the easiest people to give gifts. It just comes very natural to me […] I do tend to go a step further with my Mum […] I know **my Mum will always be my Mum and my sister will always be my sister no matter what**"* {Joan, interview}.

In a similar way, Leo is more generous when giving gifts to those receivers who have shown him that they are consistently trustworthy:

*"If he's [the receiver] **very close to me** it [the **gift] has to be really nice**, maybe **expensive** gifts […] [A close friend] has to **be reliable**, you have to*

know them for years. ***If I had any problems we would be helping each other*** *through the years. It's not like friends just for a few drinks"* {Leo, interview}.

It seems that Leo use gifts to differentiate close friends who are there for him in difficult times from others, which agrees with the idea of important individuals being considered as a secure base, a person to whom the individual has the urge for proximity when feeling unwell, anxious or tired (Bowlby, 1988).

Based on support

Givers also described as sacred those close relationships considered to be specific sources of support. For example, Eve describes her experience of giving a gift to a very good friend who has provided her with a great deal of help for more than 12 years:

> *"[I gave my friend] pine cones from Amnesty International […] I thought this gift would be ideal […] She is an* ***excellent friend for over half a dozen years*** *and has been an* ***immense source of support*** *when I have needed it"* {Eve, diary, 055G}.

In her interview, Eve highlights that close friends are those who are available when she needs them:

> *"[Strong relationships] its people that's* ***I've known for long enough*** *and I* ***get on long, well enough*** *and we've you know s****pilt blood, shared happiness, shared tears*** *whatever, there's a, a* ***strong enough bond*** *there to know that you know* ***I can call any day, I can text any day, I can ask for help***" {Eve, interview}.

For Eve her friend seems to be an important person to turn to for support when needed, which characterises long-lasting friendships. This agrees with the idea of the safe haven, reflecting the support and comfort provided by an attachment figure (Feeney and Noller, 1996). In adulthood, mental representations of attachment include many methods of establishing contact and asking for comfort such as talking, phoning, sending emails or texts to a comforting figure (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2012).

In a similar way, Carol, who has known her husband for 40 years, illustrates this when she impulsively bought him a gift and she highlights how significant the relationship is in terms of love and care:

> *"I knew that my partner would enjoy the book [gift] […] [he is]* ***loving, caring extremely important*** *[…] purchasing the book was a* ***spur of the moment thing****. I was so glad I did"* {Carol, diary, 001GS}.

This spontaneous gift appears to be a reflection of the attachment of Carol to her husband who is loving and caring. While love is a sign of commitment that facilitates long-term pair bonding (Fletcher et al., 2015), a partner perceived as a good caregiver provides a safe haven of support and comfort (Collins and Feeney, 2000).

Permanent members of the givers' gift list

Another idea emerging from the data refers to the perception of relationship with "sacred" recipients as being more *permanent* than those with other gift receivers. Greater perceived permanence of the relationship with the receiver made giving

gifts to "sacred" recipients a more relaxed experience than giving for other people because they do not expect gifts. As Susan indicates, she does not feel much pressure in giving to his family:

> *"With my **family it's not so strict** [gift-giving] […]. I don't feel like they expect anything but **I always give a gift to my dad and step-mum, brothers and sisters** […] family I think **is important** but they're not…they're **expecting it less** [than friends]…so it's…if you **didn't give them a gift I don't think they would be as upset**. But, I find them the **most important** because they are sort of **the closest relationship**"* {Susan, interview}.

For Susan, giving "sacred" receivers a gift involves little pressure compared with giving within other relationship contexts. This seems to be a result of the permanence of the relationship with "the most important" and "the closest" people to Susan, which suggests that they are unique bonds for her. As the theory of attachment suggests, special individuals cannot be completely replaced by any other person (Ainsworth, 1989).

Another important aspect of "sacred" recipients as permanent members within the givers' gift list is the idea that givers wanted to give them gifts despite physical distance. For example, John always gives gifts to his brother. Living far from each other does not change John's desire to give gifts to his sibling:

> *"You **always buy** your mum a Christmas present and your dad and your **brother** […] I've **known my brother for thirty-five years** so it's, its, everything's been done [Christmas gift giving] twenty-nine, thirty times since*

you've been little, you remember it all going through your life […] we're family so we're bound for life […] ***I don't even see him that often because he lives hundreds of miles away****, [but] it doesn't mean we're not friends, we're not close or we don't love each other"* {John, interview}.

In his diary, John further emphasises the importance of relationship with his brother:

*"**He's my only sibling** and we are **similar people**. He is important to me, **I'm glad I have him**" {John, diary, 029RC}.*

Despite the physical distance, the fact that John considers that he can count on his brother, to whom John has given gifts for almost 40 years, suggests that John's brother is a secure base and a *permanent* member of John's gift network. Adults feel secure simply by knowing that the attachment figure can be contacted if needed (Hazan and Shaver 1994). These bonds can be sustained over time and across physical distance with only intermittent contact (Ainsworth 1991), which explains why family bonds are usually less vulnerable to changes in physical distance (Caplow 1982).

Therefore, our data show that relationship closeness in the context of "sacred" gift receivers is associated with unique, responsive and supportive relationships, which agrees with the concept of attachment. Specific attachment figures are not fully replaceable (Ainsworth, 1989), they provide a secure base, from which people can explore, and they provide an emotional and physical safe haven, which is a source of comfort and support (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2003). These types of gift receivers

were always permanent within the givers' gift list and they received gifts frequently over a number of years and through changes in the giver's life cycle or physical distance.

4.2.1.2. Surrogate receivers

"Surrogate" gift receivers are a special case of direct relationships. Although surrogate recipients are important by themselves and the giver-receiver relationship does not depend on the relationship with anybody else, the fact that surrogate receivers substitute for a missing figure in the giver's life makes them a distinct category from sacred, personal and social recipients. In fact, surrogate gift receivers normally become "sacred" in time.

This type of receiver is normally a substitute for a specific kin individual in the eyes of the giver, becoming a surrogate kin receiver. Some of the surrogate kin receivers that participants mentioned were a stepfather substituting for an unresponsive biological father, a niece adopting the role of a daughter, or a friend who seems like a sister. Sally illustrates this as she lost her sister and looked for a "pseudo-sister" in an old friend, who now receives gifts regularly and who is now a surrogate sister for Sally:

> *"**She was [my] best friend at school** and we lost touch for 35 years and found each other over Friends Reunited so **I often give her a gift** […] **she's a bit like a sister to me**. I lost my sister. **My sister died**, and **I think it's so nice to have sort of pseudo-sisters**. You know, **a sister is a very important relationship** and wh**en that relationship goes because you lose your sister***

> ***then you sort of need other sisters*** *[…] she [my* ***sister] was there all through my life*** *[…] she was a bit older—I'm sure we argued all the time, but better,* ***quite important, sibling relationships are quite important*** *I think to everybody"* {Sally, interview}.

This interview excerpt, suggests that Sally's old friend is a surrogate sister to her, providing Sally with the security that her deceased sister is unable to give.

Sally's sister seemed to be an attachment figure to Sally. In fact, she emphasises that, regardless of their differences, her sister was very important to her and she had been there all her life. A shared background of experiences over a long period of time promotes the development of attachment bonds within the family context despite rivalries (Ainsworth, 1991) and the role of a sister is a typical attachment figure for women in old age (Cicirelli, 1989). The loss of the sibling bond, when Sally's sister died, and the need to compensate for the unavailability of Sally's deceased sister, appears to be the reason why Sally looked for a surrogate sister who reflects the image of a caring female sibling. When people lose their most important bonds, finding a new relationship of the same type seems, in many cases, to be a viable and effective way to cope with the loss (Baumeister and Leary, 1995).

Lesley provides another example of surrogate relationship. She does not have any children and for Lesley, her 16-year-old niece is like a daughter:

> *"[I]* ***Was trying to choose a Kim Kardashians bag for my niece*** *[…] [we are] Very close - she tells me everything and is* ***very important to me - she is like a daughter*** *and I* ***can rely on her*** *if I need her to do any errands for me! […]*

*[We **contact by] Facebook most days** or by text about once a week […] I knew she wanted a particular brand of bag but I didn't think it was particularly good value. **I know she values my opinion** and I didn't want to buy something I didn't like […] I would rather give her vouchers and take her shopping to spend them. We always **have really good shopping trips** and then go for food […] **it is a treat for both of us***" {Lesley, diary, 014G}.

Lesley seems to consider her niece as a surrogate daughter as "*she is like a daughter*" [to Lesley]. It appears that Lesley's niece perceives Lesley as a safe haven of support by confiding in her, and as a target for proximity maintenance by contacting her regularly and by having a positive interaction when they get together. This indicates that surrogate gift receivers tend to become "sacred recipients" showing signs of attachment (e.g., emotional support).

4.2.1.3. Gifts to cherish the relationship with "sacred" receivers

The awareness of the characteristics that make sacred recipients close to the giver is important to understand what motivates donors to give gifts to those recipients and achieve givers' relationship goals. We define goal as a "cognitive representation of a desired endpoint that impacts evaluations, emotions and behaviours" (Fishbach and Ferguson, 2007: 491). When describing their gift giving motives, givers revealed a combination of reasons whose main goal was to cherish the relationship with "sacred" receivers and to praise the strong bonds that donors shared with them. In fact, the gift was not a need for the relationship to continue. As Eve illustrates, she wants to give gifts to her close friends because it is a beautiful thing to do rather than a necessity for the relationship:

"I like it especially when I give a gift to someone that I don't need to, where I ***have a friendship or I have a relationship that doesn't need to have a gift*** *it, its* ***secure enough****, its, it's something that* ***I know is going to be something of a constant in my life****. And a* ***gift is like a decoration****, it's a gesture […] it's not something where if I don't give this gift this person won't stay my friend or this person won't stay in a relationship, I like it to be* ***an embellishment rather than a security*** *[…] if I was to have never given a Christmas presents to my friends this year,* ***they'd still be my friends now*** *[…] which made the* ***giving of the gift perhaps a lot more pleasurable*** *[…] it's something freely given and so it's a beautiful thing to do […] you need those relationships in life […] I like it when the* ***relationship is that good and that strong and when the present isn't a necessit****y […] it's a lot more joy giving […] if I have a strong enough relationship with someone […]* ***I'm more inclined to buy them a gift because it's a nice thing to do****, not because I feel as though I ought to."* {Eve, interview}.

By considering that gifts to sacred recipients are a "decoration", "a nice thing to do", a "gesture" or "embellishment" of the giver-receiver relationship, Eve emphasises that her reason to give a gift is to nurture the relationship with those individuals, who are an essential part of her life. Although Eve does not consider gifts to be indispensable to keep the bonds with key people in her life, she recognises that this is the reason why she tends to give these presents to important gift recipients. In fact, later in her interview she emphasises that "*if giving a gift doesn't help your relationship move on then I don't see the point really*". This

suggests that she might not be aware of her desire to keep the relationship by giving a gift. Although many goals are conscious, goal pursuit can be completely outside the conscious awareness (Fitzsimons et al., 2003).

In a similar way, John asserts that he wants to give a gift to his parents, motivated by the strong bonds that tie them all together. As it was with Eve, giving a gift to his parents is not a requirement for their relationship because he thinks that the bonds that they share with him are forever. However, the closeness of the relationship makes giving an obvious thing to do:

> *"There's **less pressure on the present giving with a family member** because you've **got a bond that's never going to be broken** […] I'm bonded with them then that means I've **been bonded with them for life** because we're talking [about] family"* {John, *interview}.*

> *"They [the gift receivers] are **my parents so of course I want to give them presents** […] my parents are close to me as most parents are. **I've a huge amount to be thankful to them for**"* {John, diary, 068G}.

John feels little stress about giving gifts to his family. However, he wants to give his parents presents to honour the strong bonds that he shares with them.

As indicated above, gifts were not essential for the "sacred" relationship to continue. Givers cherish relationships with "sacred" recipients in order to achieve the following goals: (1) Show "sacred" receivers that givers feel cared for; (2) take care of the receiver; or, (3) maintain strong bonds with receivers in dysfunctional relationships.

Show sacred receivers that givers feel cared for

The majority of givers reported feeling motivated to give by the provision of care they received from sacred gift recipients. For instance, Ruth reports giving a gift to her mother motivated by the assistance that Ruth receives from her female parent:

> *"I wanted to give my mum some good presents as **she has done a lot for me** […] I am very close to my mum and **rely on her a lot for emotional support** and friendship. **I am her only [child],** so we are close"* {Ruth, diary, 078G}.

Another example of this is Agnes, who is motivated to treat her friend via gift giving by the responsiveness that Agnes perceives from this "sacred" gift receiver:

> *"I gave this person [my friend] a gift **because she is the most thoughtful person I know**, always putting everybody else before herself, so **I wanted to treat her to a gift of her own** […] Janet is **extremely important**, she is **one of my best friends** and I see her almost every day, **I know I can count on her**"* {Agnes, diary, 009G}.

Agnes seems to give a gift to her friend motivated by the care she perceives from her friend. In both cases, Ruth and Agnes' experiences suggest that in the context of "sacred" relationships, perceiving that the receiver cares for the giver can act as motivation for gift giving. This is consistent with Attachment Theory, as the drive to maintain a minimum amount of lasting and significant interpersonal relationships requires pleasant interactions and affective concern for each other's welfare (Baumeister and Leary, 1995).

Take care of the receiver

Informants also reported that their reason to give a gift was to take care of "sacred receivers" and provide them with the support they need by giving a gift. For example Sally, reports giving to her children because they have young families and they need money, and to her grandchildren because she loves over-indulging them:

> *"My **children I often give money to**. Because **they're young with young families** […] you give money where the need is […] when you are a grandparent, **your main aim in life is to spoil your grandchildren**. I just like to spend money on them, give them things, make them things […] my children and my grandchildren they are **my close family**, and they're **very special to me**"* {Sally, interview}.

It seems that Sally's motivation to give a gift to her children and grandchildren is a way for Sally to take care of her offspring by "spoiling" them. It seems that, Sally's goal is to respond to the perceived need for care of her offspring by giving gifts to them. The attachment behavioural system in the child is complemented by a caregiving system in the parent, who is motivated to protect the young by ensuring that children's needs are met (Bell and Richard, 2000). Specifically, a mother has a bond with her child that can be formed and maintained by being a caring, nurturing, responsive and accessible mother who gives security to her child (Ainsworth, 1989). In the same way, children feel motivated to keep proximity to their caregivers; caregivers feel a strong desire to keep close to their young children to respond to any potential threat or needs expressed by the child (Collins and Feeney, 2004).

The relationship goal of taking care of the gift receiver is also evident in Peter's report when he reveals the reasons that lead him to give gifts to his only daughter:

> *"[I wanted to give the gift] for Christmas, to* ***encourage reading and learning new skills*** *[…] [I was] happy* ***fulfilling my fatherly duty*** *at low cost […] [my daughter is the] closest family member,* ***apple of my eye****"* {Peter, diary, 032G}.

In his interview, Peter emphasises this idea:

> *"I can see the gifts that I bought my daughter because we are pretty close and* ***I know what she wants and I try and deliver it*** *[…] it is important to me that Amy doesn't say "I wanted this and I can't afford it" […] my closest person to me is my daughter, Abby, who is 14 […]* ***giving to my daughter is nurturing her interest in the world*** *even though it's an iPad and also it might lead to employment because she has got IT skills"* {Peter, interview}.

This reveals that Peter uses gifts to take care of his daughter by stimulating her learning in a way he considers beneficial for her. This is in line with the role of parents stimulating and supporting their children in the exploration of the world, thus, parents serve as a connection between the child and the external world (Palm, 2014). Furthermore, Peter mentions that the receiver is an only child. An only child normally receives most of the resources and care from parents as a way of parental investment, which is greater in families with an only child than in families with more children (Hertwig, Davies and Sulloway, 2002).

In some cases, the goal of taking care of the receiver was a result of a difficult situation faced by a sacred gift receiver, as Lesley's report shows:

> *"Helen [is] a good friend who had had **a really stressful year due to personal problems so I wanted her to feel good** […] I know **she will know I care** and that I **want to give her something that can help destress** her […] she is very important and **was there got me when I went through a tough period** at work - **she has always supported me** and I want to do the same for her"* {Lesley, diary, 102G}.

As described, stressful situations activate the attachment system and the individual looks for proximity with those individuals who can help to manage that distress (Mikulincer et al., 2000). Furthermore, Lesley and her friend seem to support each other in difficult times, which agrees with the notion of attachment in adulthood that is normally reciprocal and where an individual can provide and receive care (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

The motivation to take care of the receiver was also evident in the context of "sacred" recipients experiencing the loss of a significant other. A clear example of this is Lauren, whose mother lost her partner recently and this changed Lauren's relationship with her mum:

> *"It was my mum's 80th birthday […] [my sister and I] wanted to give her a day to remember […] my mum is lovely. **My father died two years ago** so we **feel very protective of her**, but also **proud with how she has coped**"* {Lauren, diary, 047GS).

Later in her interview, Lauren further emphasised the idea of care and gift giving:

> *"With my mum. We've now, since I lost my Dad, we've now got into this sort of, you know,* ***she's almost like the child now****, we're sort of* ***looking after her*** *and* ***making sure she's okay*** *so it's that kind of gift giving […] with my mum it's are you okay? You know, "****here's some things to make you feel better and look after you****" kind of gift"* {Lauren, interview}.

These excerpts suggest that Lauren's goal is to take care of her mother by giving a gift and help her to cope with the loss of her husband, who was one of the most important persons in her life. This agrees with the idea that events such as the loss of someone cared or caring can act as stressors of the attachment system (Bowlby, 1977). As a result of the reduction of the members in the attachment networks (e.g., loss of a husband), the attachment figures of elderly change from those of their early life (e.g., friends, spouses) to adult children (Cicirelli, 2010).

Maintain strong bonds with receivers in dysfunctional relationships

Finally, givers reported giving gifts to sacred recipients to show that, despite their differences, the receiver is an essential part of the donor's life. This happened when givers' bonds with receivers were strong but the quality of the relationship was not very good. For example, Mary reports that the relationship with her partner has changed over time to become a daily habit, although he is one of the few people she can count on, and this was reflected in her gift giving:

"We [my partner and I] ***used to share a lot, now we share less and less, our interests have diverged, we don't really converse****. He is* ***less important to me*** *than our son is to me"* {Mary, diary, 037RC}.

"[The gift was a] cheque, to cover the cost of a lawnmower, which my partner wanted […] [the relationship with my partner is] ***pretty important. Other than him and our son, I have no family now****, other than an elderly aunt related by marriage"* {Mary, diary, 059G}.

When asked for further details about this experience in her interview, Mary mentioned that her intention was not to give the gift but, in the end, she surrendered:

*"He [my partner] was badgering on about "I must have a lawnmower for the cricket club" and I said "****I don't want to buy, I am not buying you a lawnmower for the cricket club****" […] he just* ***kept going on and on*** *[…] "oh look* ***I will just give you the money****. If you go and buy a lawnmower, I will give you the money for it" {Mary, interview}.*

This emphasises the idea that the existence of attachment bonds motivates Mary to give a gift to her partner to keep him in her life as a companion. Although the quality of the relationships is not as it used to be, Mary's husband is quite important to her after being together for over 30 years.

A similar situation was experienced by Peter, who reported that the relationship with his mother is very important although quite tense. Peter spends unreasonable amounts of money on gifts for his mother because his main goal is to maintain the

relationship with her. In fact, after spending £69 on a gift, by far the most expensive of his list (the cost of the next most expensive gift was £5), he spent £15 more on another present because his daughter told him that his mother wanted something else:

> *"She [my daughter] nagged me, so I bought the present [a body shop set]* ***because I thought okay my mother would appreciate it****. The subtext was "if you loved your mother, you would buy her an extra gift, you would buy that item" […]* ***I wanted to show I loved my mother*** *though* ***we have lots of arguments which is a shame and a drag*** *[…] I don't want to* ***be close because it is too psychologically wearing*** *[laughs], but* ***I want a relationship, I don't want to not have a relationship or cause her pain****"* {Peter, interview}.

Peter's goal of maintaining the relationship with his mother reflects Baumeister and Leary's (1995) claim that people are reluctant to break relationships and social bonds, even when keeping these bonds goes beyond rational considerations. In fact, Peter recognises that this relationship is "psychologically wearing" but he still wants a relationship with his mother.

4.2.1.4. Motivations for gift giving to "sacred" receivers

In the context of "sacred" gift receivers, we identified that a combination of motives enabled givers to pursuit the goal of cherishing the receiver via gift giving. These motives include *triggers* stimulating the thought of giving, *drivers* sustaining

the thought of giving a gift and *roles* that givers wanted to communicate to the receiver by giving a gift in particular.

Motivational triggers: cherish sacred receivers by keeping them in mind

The majority of givers' gifts for sacred receivers were triggered by "social norms" involving the tradition to give in formal gift giving occasions (e.g., Christmas, birthday, baby shower, Father's Day and returning from a trip). Paul illustrates this when he reports buying a gift because it was his wife's birthday:

> *"Close family so my wife and my daughter. They would get the most of my attention […] I bought my wife a piece of jewellery* ***for her 50th birthday*** *[…] it was a lovely surprise and it was an expensive gift but* ***because it was her 50th birthday*** *I spent more than I would normally"* {Paul, interview}.

Paul's thought about giving a gift was prompted by his wife's birthday in order to show her special care. Therefore, the consideration of giving a gift is activated by the birthday of Paul's spouse, which follows a "social norm". In certain situations in the environment of an individual, a relationship goal can become activated automatically (Fitzsimons et al., 2003) and a special occasion can be a motive for gift giving, triggering the gift giving process (Hill and Rohm, 1996) and allowing Paul to take care of his wife via gift giving.

Further to the idea of social norms, givers also indicated that they were more prone to give unplanned gifts to sacred relationships, whose importance made "need identification" and "relationship reminders" act as triggers stimulating the desire to cherish the relationship with the receiver by giving a gift.

"Need identification" as a motivation to give indicates that the giver recognised the receiver's specific need, which activated the thought about giving a gift to meet this need and to cherish the receiver. Lesley indicates that with her mother, she does not need a social occasion to buy her a gift. In fact, Lesley thinks about buying a gift when she sees something that would assist her mother in some way:

> *"With my mum and dad it's different because, obviously, I know them very, very well and they always say "no, we don't want presents" so I always try and…* ***I see a cardigan and I know my mum will like*** *or, this year,* ***she has been feeling very cold so I got her an electric blanket because I knew we could keep her warm*** *[…] I don't always buy a present at Christmas for my mum, it's just sometimes* ***I'll just buy them through the year sometimes just because I see something I know would make her life easier then I'll just buy it so I knew it was something she would really appreciate****. So,* ***it is different****, I think, at that level compared to other people because you are, maybe,* ***associating more with these people [mother] than you would with other people****"* {Lesley, interview}.
>
> *"We haven't always been close but I do appreciate that she is getting old and frail now so [I] like to spend more time with her - she isn't very mobile so I think she appreciates when* ***I go home and look after her****. She is very important to me - aren't all mothers?"* {Lesley, diary, 089G}.

By addressing specific needs that Lesley identifies in her mother's life, Lesley is taking care of her maternal figure, which indicates that "need identification" as a trigger helps Lesley to achieve the goal of taking care of her mother. This concurs

with Attachment Theory as a relationship bond can be strengthen by a person who is attentive and responsive to the needs of a partner (Mikulincer et al., 2005).

Our data indicate that seeing something that a particular receiver mentioned, likes or is associated in some particular way with them, could make the giver consider the possibility of giving a gift to that person. This trigger is "a relationship reminder" and Sarah illustrates this idea when giving a gift to her father after she saw it in the house of a friend and she thought her father would love it:

> *"I once* ***gave my father a Frappé maker because I went to a party in a Greek's apartment and I saw them using this*** *and because* ***my parents love coffee****. So I went online and searched for this kind of machine and I bought it for him. So it was like* ***an idea that came from that moment with experiencing an event that made me think about someone"*** {Sarah, interview}.

Earlier in the interview, Sarah mentioned that her parents are one of her priorities in gift giving:

> *"My sister it's always a bigger [gift] budget than the rest of my friends. My husband also has a bigger budget and* ***my parents*** *I would say. I think* ***these four come in first place*** *[in my gift list]"* {Sarah, interview}.

This suggests that seeing something that reminds Sarah of a particular person, such as her father, energises her thought about giving an unplanned gift, thus, being a "relationship reminder" and, consequently, a motivational trigger.

Brian provides another example of a "relationship reminder" as he would often see things that could make him think about giving them as a gift for other people:

> *"I buy gifts to my girlfriend like on several occasions when it's her birthday or for Christmas or like out of the blue […] [Sometimes gift giving]* ***it's impulsive****. Like, when* ***you see something and this reminds you of somebody*** *and, you know,* ***you can just buy it and give it*** *[…] it* ***depends on the*** *[…]* ***price*** *of the thing and how, you know,* ***close you are with this person****"* {Brian, interview}.

In these cases, external cues made Sarah and Brian think about the recipient and this stimulated their gift giving behaviour as it made them think about buying a gift for these people. This supports that the psychological presence of relationship partners guides givers' behaviour in an unconscious manner (Fitzsimons et al., 2003).

Motivational drivers: cherish sacred receivers by experiencing emotional rewards

The idea of cherishing the relationship with a "sacred" receiver is associated with a positive mind state where the giver feels motivated to give by the experience of "emotional rewards". This is because the giver feels happy when giving a gift, especially if the gift also makes the receiver happy. These states of mind involving strong emotions are *motivational drivers* and refer to the factors that energise, direct and sustain behaviour in the individual (Wong et al., 2008).

Givers emphasised that they wanted to give the gift because this made them feel well about themselves or created a pleasant, fun or enjoyable experience for them.

Most of these informants also mentioned in the interviews and diaries how much they enjoyed giving gifts, which allowed givers to show how much they cared for the receiver. As Anne reports in her interview, she obtains an emotional reward when giving gifts to her brother, as she is impatient to see what he thinks:

> *"I want to give this gift to this person [my brother] as I thought he would like it […] I* ***was happy to be giving this gift to this person and [I] was looking forward to seeing what he thought of it*** *[…] I have a great relationship with my brother. He* ***is one of the most important people in my life****"* {Anne, diary, 106G}.

Anne's happiness, occasioned by giving this gift and her eagerness to see her brother's reaction, seems to motivate her behaviour. An individual who behaves in a way that benefits the other person in the relationship tends to feel good about the positive outcomes obtained by the receiver which, in turn, can motivate people to approach their receiver and to promote the welfare, quality and stability of the relationship (Mikulincer et al., 2005).

In a similar way, Mary indicates in her interview, and in several diary entries, that she gives gifts to her son mainly because she enjoys buying presents for him:

> *"****I like buying gifts for Fred*** *[my son] […]* ***I enjoy buying him gifts*** *and* ***he is always appreciative of them****"* {Mary, diary, 060G}.

> *"****I like to give gifts to my son****,* ***I love to*** *and I will often go out, so I might go out today and if I see something and I think "I think Fred would like that; I know Fred has been looking at that" I will just buy it. So,* ***I buy him quite a***

> ***lot very spontaneously***. *He* ***gets quite annoyed by that*** *and he will say "Mum what on earth have you bought this for me" he'll say "thanks Mum that's great, thanks", but I know he's thinking, "Oh! spending her money""* {Mary, interview}.

It seems that Mary enjoys buying gifts for her son and, thus, she does it each time she has the slightest opportunity. Mary's son's protests do not affect the pleasure that Mary obtains when giving him a gift. From a psychological perspective, emotional rewards arise after successful completion of an intention (Lichtenberg, Lachmann and Fossage, 2011), for example, giving a gift to show care for a son.

The attainment of emotional benefits is also emphasised by Paul, who asserts that he is willing to make an effort in gift giving with sacred relationships and this makes him feel happy:

> *"I have* ***two good friends*** *who I would****, I would make an effort for*** *[…] I am making this effort and* ***I feel good doing this [gift].*** *And they [the receivers] have enjoyed it too but* ***more often than not, [I] give them a gift they enjoy*** *and* ***because they enjoy it I enjoy the experience****"* {Paul, interview}.

Another example of "emotional reward" as a motivation to give was reported by John, who emphasises the happiness he gets from giving a gift and making someone special happy:

> *"I* ***like giving to my mum*** *because my mum's an emotional person and she gets excited about everything so* ***I like giving to her****. I* ***like giving to Melanie, that's my new niece*** *she was born just in May 2012* ***so I enjoyed, even***

***though she's got no emotional range yet**. She just cries and eats and sleeps, that's all she does really. **I enjoyed,** it was a novelty getting a present for **her so I enjoyed** getting one for her and **I quite enjoyed** giving one to my mum because she's, **me and my mum are really close and she's, she's an emotional sort so she always gets really excited** […] **it makes me happy seeing them react to that** to, to, to the gesture of giving them something"* {John, interview}.

Later in the interview, John reinforces the idea that he gives gifts because he feels better about himself when he makes others happy:

*"I **sometimes feel miserable and about life in general**, I think we all do, you have miserable days but **if I can make somebody else happy then I'm, I'm even happier**. […] there's **a purity in giving something and all you get back is happiness**"* {John, interview}.

Overall, gifts aiming to bring happiness to the giver suggest that "emotional rewards" help to achieve the ultimate goal of nurturing a relationship. At a proximate level, consumers tend to behave in ways that allow them to experience happiness and pleasure (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013). This supports the idea that emotional rewards promote altruistic behaviours (e.g., giving a gift) and forming altruistic partnerships (Trivers, 1972).

Motivational roles: cherish sacred receivers by expressing symbolic messages

When deciding to give a gift to a sacred receiver, givers praised their relationship with the receiver by selecting a gift that helped givers to "please", "provide" and

"socialise" the gift receiver. The expression of these social roles agrees with Otnes et al. (1993) as givers help the giver to communicate with the receiver by giving a gift in particular. For example, Kim reports giving her mother a gift that she thinks her mother wants and likes, thus, expressing the role of the "pleaser":

> *[I want to give a gift] because **I know she [my mum] likes scarves** and we used to share them […] Turquoise is one of her favourite colours and so it was suitable. **She had also asked for some plain black tights** […] we are **close and she is very important to me**"* {Kim, diary, 053G}.

This suggests that Kim is motivated to give her mother a turquoise scarf and plain tights as a means for Kim to delight her mother. In fact, part of the gift was "asked for" and the rest of the present was selected based on Kim's knowledge about her mum. Gift receivers are more appreciative of gifts they request than those they do not (Gino and Flynn, 2011), which reinforces Kim's desire to "please" her mother and cherish the strong bonds that tie them.

In a different way, Agnes and her parents were planning a holiday to New York and she bought her mother gifts that she might need for the trip, thus adopting the role of the "provider":

> *"**Radley passport cover** […] **boot socks (for holiday to New York over Christmas!)** […] [I wanted to give the gift] because, as my mum, she is always spending money on myself and my father and at Christmas it is the perfect opportunity to say thank you [...][I]don't know how I'd survive without her input, she is the first person I turn to for everything! […] all the*

presents I had chosen […] ***were mostly related to the holiday*** *[…]* ***any gifts which the giver thought to be appropriate to New York […] would need to be packed****"* {Agnes, diary, 022G}.

Agnes appears to be motivated to give these gifts by the needs that her mother could have in the holiday that they were planning to New York. At the same time, Agnes uses this opportunity to pay tribute to her mother, who is an essential part of Agnes' life.

Furthermore, Martha reported an example of a gift motivated by her desire to "socialise" the receiver, as she gave her son a scooter to encourage him to do exercise safely:

*"[I wanted to give this gift because I] l****ove giving 'sporty' things for exercise*** *[…] this is* ***for my son*** *[…]* ***scooting is tricky and can be dangerous*** *so I am pleased that he has a* ***decent bit of kit*** *he should* ***be able to use safely****"* {Martha, diary, 035G}.

Martha clearly indicates that she takes care of her child by giving him a gift that he can use without getting hurt. The fact that she encourages her son to use the gift in a particular way suggests that Martha aims to socialise him with this gift while she takes care of him. This agrees with the role of the socialiser where the giver wants to use the gift as an instrument of learning for the receiver (Otnes et al. 1993).

The goal of cherishing the receiver (i.e., show the receiver that the giver feels cared for, take care of the receiver and keep strong bonds with distant recipients) can be achieved by motivational triggers, motivational drivers and the expression of

motivational roles. All occur in the same giving event and appear to complement each other. For example, Emma gives a gift to her father to recognise the support she receives from him:

> *"I really appreciate* ***everything that my dad does for me throughout the year*** *[…] I was glad that I was able to spend a little more than usual [on a Christmas gift]. It enabled me to get* ***things that I knew he would like*** *[…] [he is a]* ***very close family member*** *[…] [we speak] daily on chat [online informal conversation], monthly in person"* {Emma, diary, 099G}.

In another diary entry, Emma mentions that her father (and mother) indulges her:

> *"****My parents*** *[…]* ***say they love me*** *and that* ***I'm special and their only one****! Despite protests that* ***they spoil me too much****"* {Emma, diary, 073RC}.

In this case, Emma seems to give the gift in order to show that she feels cared for and, thus, with the goal of retaining the support of a parent. The social norm of giving a gift at Christmas acts, for Emma, as a motivational trigger that makes her think about giving a gift to her father, whereas gratitude seems to be Emma's state of mind driving her thought of giving a gift. Using the giving of a gift to say "thank you" is a reward for the benefits received, as well as a pledge to secure her father's future support (Visser 2008). The gift was finally chosen when Emma decided to spend more money than usual to get a gift that her father would like, thus adopting the role of the pleaser. This would allow Emma to fulfil her ultimate goal of maintaining her father's support. This excerpt shows evidence of multiple gift giving motivations occurring at the same time when giving to "sacred" gift receivers.

4.2.2. Gifting to "personal" receivers as a necessity for the relationship

A second group of direct receivers emerged from our data that were relatively important and close to the giver because of their common interests or the time that they shared together. We labelled these relationships as "personal gift receivers". The emphasis on the frequency of interaction when reporting the important aspects of the relationship and the role of gifts motivated by the desire to develop the relationship are specific of this type of gift receiving.

4.2.2.1. Personal gift receivers

Personal gift recipients are those whose relationship is based on frequent interaction with the giver, although these are not normally trusted or considered as sources of comfort for the giver. Although personal recipients receive gifts regularly, givers would stop or start giving to new people depending on changes in the giver-receiver interaction. Givers considered personal gift receivers to be important mostly because of the time that they spent together because of their shared interests.

Time spent together

Personal relationships are mostly based on the interaction between the giver and the receiver. Joan illustrates this when she differentiates among different types of friends:

> *"You have those friends with whom **you just go out for dinner** and we just **socialise several times basically**. Maybe when you have a difficult time […] **you don't feel so secure to share those moments with** [them], […] friends,*

who aren't as close, ***we'll gather together with other friends and we'll give a gift*** *[…]* ***it's not a one-to-one gift****. It's a group of friends who give to one other."* {Joan, interview}.

Although Joan has friends that are not very close and she would not turn to them in difficult moments, she still wants to give those friends a gift mainly because they spend time together in social events. The need to keep this type of friendship agrees with Attachment Theory, which suggests that "friendship can connote a wide range of dyadic relationships, including relationships with acquaintances with whom one has occasional pleasant interaction, relationships with congenial companions with whom one spends quite a great deal of time in activities of mutual concern or interest" (Ainsworth, 1989: 714).

A reduced frequency of contact with personal relationships seemed to affect the frequency of gift giving, which made gift selection more difficult. For example, Agnes does not see her cousin very often, she gives gifts only when they see each other and finds it difficult to know which gifts to choose for her relative:

"I've got a ***cousin*** *who lives in New Zealand who* ***I don't really see*** *and she comes over every, maybe,* ***three Christmases so I buy her a gift every three Christmases*** *and then you're like, you* ***don't really know what you want*** *so it's more difficult […] I think* ***the amount of contact you have with them makes it [the relationship] close****"* {Agnes, interview}.

Agnes does not know what to buy for her cousin, mainly because her cousin lives far away and they rarely see each other. However, when this person is around,

Agnes always buys her a gift. This suggests that lack of proximity maintenance results in the absence of strong emotional bonds and less knowledge about the person and his/her likes and a certain physical proximity is needed to consider personal receivers in the gift-giving list.

Corroborating the importance of interaction with personal receivers, participants mentioned that changes in their interaction would have an influence on gift giving. This is evident in the case of Anne, who would stop giving gifts if she did not see her friends often or if she loses contact with them:

> *"If I fell out, like out of the friendship group […]* ***if we lost touch****, [if] we didn't see each other at all* ***I probably wouldn't give them a gift*** *or* ***if I became better friends with someone*** *I'd probably* ***start giving them a gift*** *as well"* {Anne, interview}.

In a similar way, Emma reveals that her effort to buy expensive gifts for friends is very variable because she assumes that those relationships can change:

> *"****If I didn't care about the people I was giving the gift to as much I wouldn't put as much effort*** *[…] whereas in some years you* ***might spend a lot of money on one person or put a lot of time and effort*** *into it, you might* ***put less time into it in future because your friendship may have changed for the worse*** *or equally it can work the other way****, if a friendship improves you might put more effort into it or, or more money****"* {Emma, interview}.

Emma reports another example where she emphasises the importance of regular interaction:

> *"I gave the gingerbread to my friend Daniel who* ***I have been friends with since secondary school*** *[…] we remained* ***very good friends. I see Daniel quite regularly so it felt appropriate to give Daniel a Christmas gift*** *as* ***he usually gets me one for birthdays and Christmas*** *and such […] Daniel said he'd rather we* ***bake gifts*** *[…]* ***we see each other regularly and I always invite him out with my friends*** *as he only recently started at Nottingham [University] and does not know many people"* {Emma, diary, 046G}.

Emma goes out with Daniel on several social occasions (as she reported at different parts of her diary). This indicates Emma's desire for proximity maintenance, which supports that interactions with the same group of people in an enduring context of affective concern for each other's welfare are normally more satisfactory than interactions with a changing sequence of individuals (Baumeister and Leary, 1995).

Transient receivers in the givers' gift list

Another characteristic defining "personal" gift receivers is the *transient* nature of these receivers within the givers' gift lists. In fact, "personal" receivers were more likely to lose their place on the giver's gift list with changes in the life cycle or physical distance than "sacred" individuals were. Lucy illustrates this point when she describes changes within her list of gift receivers:

> *"I'm […] far from my friends and family so it becomes even more difficult to do so [giving gifts] […] sometimes* ***I would like to put more effort in but when the time comes I don't really do so****. […] [my friends and I]* ***we don't even meet that often*** *because I am far so* ***I come only for a few days*** *in*

Greece and they have their jobs […] we ***don't speak that often on the phone*** *[…] I* ***don't call that much*** *[…] [my* ***father and brother****, [I talk to them] every week for sure. And sometimes even every day [****I always give a gift to] my father*** *when I go to Crete […]* ***If I'm not meant to meet some people*** *[friends] […] I* ***don't get them a gift****" {Lucy, interview}.*

This suggests that the flow of gifts is more likely to change with friends whose bonds are more vulnerable than that with close family members such as a father. In fact, relationships with friends not involving enduring attachment bonds can drift apart when their interests diverge (Ainsworth 1989).

Similarly, John gives an example of this when indicating that he always gives to his family, on and off to a friend and he would give to a girlfriend while they are seeing each other:

*"Basically [****I give gifts to****] my family unit and […]* ***girlfriends if I'm seeing them at the time****"* {John, interview}.

John gives gifts to a girlfriend of the moment, which suggests that a dating partner is transient in the givers' gift list.

4.2.2.2. Gifts to develop bonds with "personal" receivers

Givers perceived that gifts to "personal" receivers were a necessity to foster relationships with gift receivers. For example, Susan believes that forgetting the birthday of one of her housemates would upset them a lot:

> *"[My] house mates we all club together for each person's birthday so that happens with like…eight times in my house. So I'd say that's quite a sort of strict network, if* ***we forget someone's birthday that would be terrible*** *[…] family I think is important but […] if you* ***didn't give them a gift*** *I don't think they would be* ***as upset [as my housemates****]"* {Susan, interview}.

In contrast with her family, Susan's housemates expect to receive gifts from her and failing to do so might have negative consequences for their relationship. The data shows that givers use gifts with the goal of fostering relationships with personal gift recipients and developing or maintaining existing bonds by promoting interactions between giver and receiver.

A number of participants indicated giving gifts to personal receivers motivated by the wish to build a relationship and to keep these receivers close. An example of this is Kim, who participated in a Secret Santa gifting at University with new friends. Kim is *now quite close to one of those friends:*

> *"[I wanted to give the gift because] it was a Secret Santa present for amongst our* ***group of friends at university*** *[...] she [the receiver] is a* ***good friend of mine*** *that* ***I met at university a few months ago*** *and is* ***now someone I am quite close to****. She is* ***fairly important to me*** *because she, and mutual friends* ***we share, make my time at university fun, so I would like to keep her in my life*** *[…] at University we* ***usually speak to each other every day*** *but since we have gone home* ***I haven't actually spoken to her*** *but we intend to meet up at some point"* {Kim, diary, 006G}.

In this Secret Santa gift event, Kim's relationship goal appears to be her desire to develop bonds with this new friend to keep her in her life in the long term, which can be facilitated by giving a gift. People invest a great deal of time and effort fostering supportive relationships, especially in the context of external threats (Baumeister and Leary, 1995) which, in this case, seems to be the new environment at University where Kim had been for only three months when she wrote her diary. Giving a gift to keep her friend in her life seems to be the first step for Kim to develop emotional bonds, as the gift promotes interaction between them. This is because attachments develop in the context of close physical proximity (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

Gifts were reported to be important for the development of the relationship to the next level. This suggests that the desire to develop bonds with a new romantic partner can be a motivation to give. For this, givers tried to reduce conflicts by giving the right gift, they engaged in physical proximity and playful behaviours that might help them to bond. For example, James does not have a partner and refers to multiple girlfriends in his interview. He mentions the "fun" element of gift giving to a romantic partner and he believes that spontaneous gifts are necessary in this romantic context:

> *"[I give spontaneous gifts]* ***only if it's essential for the relationship*** *[…]* ***Spontaneity for me is tied to relationships*** *[…] I mean* ***a romantic relationship*** *[…] it is different because you like someone and* ***you like them so much that you want to keep on giving to them*** *so* ***you buy them things for fun*** *[…] you are walking together and she sees a dress she likes and you*

say "you know what? Let's get it and you can wear it tomorrow" or something like that. Something stupid like that" {James, interview}.

When James mentions that he is motivated to continuously buying gifts "for fun" to someone he likes a lot, he appears to give gifts that could help him to bond with his partner, thus pursuing a relationship goal. Before attachment bonds are formed, males and females of reproductive age are interested in social interaction with potential mates where they display playful and flirtatious signals characterising their interactions (Zeifman and Hazan, 2008).

Givers used gifts to avoid conflict and facilitate the development of emotional bonds. For example, Anthony gave a gift to his wife when they were still dating and this was for him the best gift experience ever, especially because he got it right and made his partner happy:

"I remember getting a… necklace for my wife […] it was when ***we were seeing each other****,* ***very early on****, actually,* ***my now wife so wasn't my wife*** *then […]* ***not being very confident in it at the beginning and her, really, really liking it*** *and taking it and obviously liking it a lot and that I got it right. That was good because* ***I'd made her happy and felt I'd got the right thing****,* ***got my judgement right****, that was good […] [I felt]* ***relief and happy*** *and just good. Pleased I'd got it right, proud, happy that she was happy, all good things […] [she was] looking surprised that* ***I'd managed to pick out something that was so well to her taste****"* {Anthony, interview}.

The fact that Anthony was so relieved getting the gift right and his emphasis on the good feeling after the positive reaction from his partner, suggests that his gift was motivated by Anthony's desire to bond with her. In fact, by getting the gift right at that early stage, Anthony might avoid conflict and contribute to the development of those bonds. During the early phases of attachment, bonds are not yet developed and conflicts tend to reduce the extent to which one partner seeks proximity with the other, thus affecting the relationship (Feeney, 2004).

4.2.2.3. Motivations for gift giving to "personal" receivers

In the context of "personal" receivers, motivational *triggers*, *drivers* and *roles* assisted givers in the development the bonds with those recipients. We show next how this happened in our data.

Motivational triggers: develop bonds with personal receivers by maintaining social norms

The relationship goal of developing bonds with personal receivers was almost exclusively triggered by "social occasions", as givers knew that gift giving was appropriate and the gift event was an opportunity to interact with the gift receiver. For example, Lauren only gives gifts to personal receivers when it is a social occasion because she is not sure whether giving a gift is suitable on other occasions:

> *"I get a bit nervous but not if it's* ***birthday or Christmas present****. If it was going to be a spontaneous thing* ***I often back out because I am not sure if this is going to be appropriate*** *or I will I think about it that long that the*

moment has passed and then you think no, it's too late to do it now […] [it makes me feel] bad, bad, bad […] my Mum and my partner, I tend to see things and take them things ***but other people, no, I do tend to stick to the birthday, Christmas thing****"* {Lauren, interview}.

Besides "social norms" activating the goal of developing personal bonds with receivers, a new theme emerged from the data in relation to "response to receivers' actions". In this case, the giver responded to a favour or a previous gift from the receiver, which made the giver think about giving a gift. Rose is an example of this when she reports giving a gift to her colleagues after receiving one and that shows her interest in building the relationship because at work they have also been supportive:

"[I wanted to give a gift because] They have been so supportive in my first year of my new job and ***they also got me a present*** *[…] I think that even though she is my senior I get on really well with her and that* ***she has become a really good friend****"* (Rose, diary, 012G).

Motivational drivers: develop bonds with personal receivers by feeling gratitude

Givers also reported that the main reason for them to give gifts was based on their felt "gratitude" as an emotional state. In this case, gratitude seemed to have motivated this gift helping Rose to pursue to goal of fostering the relationship with the recipient. Participants engaged in gift giving spontaneously or they waited for the right occasion to show how grateful they were to a particular person because

they had done something nice or because of their friendship. Peter illustrates this when giving a gift to his friend because he appreciates the friendship they share:

> *"I posted a card with a poetry book through my friend's door […] [I wanted to give the gift because]* ***he is a close friend*** *[…] [I am]* ***grateful for Jack's committed friendship over 20 year****s […] he values me and the poet […] [he is]* ***one of my best friends that I see a lot****"* {Peter, diary, 029G}.

In a similar way, Emma wanted to show her friends how grateful she was for having her for drinks:

> *"[I wanted to give* ***the gift because] my friends […] had me around for some drinks and to watch a Christmas movie****. […] I decided to* ***bring a gift by way of appreciation for the effort that they had put in to have me around*** *to their home […] my friends are really great and they supported me a lot this year […] [they are]* ***really good friends from university****"* {Emma, diary, 017G}.

Peter and Emma's gifts appear to be motivated by gratitude and to show their interest in maintaining the relationship with their friends. Gratitude promotes relationship maintenance (Visser, 2008) and is considered a moral motivator important to the maintenance of social bonds (Gordon et al., 2012). People react with gratitude when they recognise supporting behaviour in another individual, and when gratitude is consistent with their relationship goals (Mikulincer et al., 2005).

Motivational roles: develop bonds with personal receivers by expressing a symbolic message

As with "sacred" receivers, givers also wanted to *please* "personal" gift receivers by giving a gift that they would like. Furthermore, the role of the *sharer* emerged from the data, referring to the giver's desire to share time with the receiver by giving a gift that allowed the giver and the receiver to spend time together. This new role extends the list of social roles proposed by Otnes et al. (1993). According to participants, most of these gifts allowing the giver to express the role of the *sharer* were experiences (e.g., meal, tickets to go together to a concert) or entertainment gifts that the giver and the receiver could enjoy jointly. For example, Eve indicates her desire to be part of the gift that she gives to the receiver, expressing the importance of sharing with this person:

> *"I am not there to fulfil a dream gift for them [my friends] […] it's* ***more about spending time together*** *[…] one of us comes round or we go round to them or something for* ***a meal*** *or* ***half a day or a late breakfast*** *and that, and to* ***walk in the woods****"* {Eve, interview}.

In a similar way, Rose reports that she prefers doing something with her boyfriend or friends rather than giving them a tangible gift:

> *"Kind of* ***day trips or days out****, I prefer that than getting an object [as a gift] […] it would be me and* ***my friends going somewhere*** *or* ***me and my boyfriend going somewhere doing something together*** *as opposed to anything else"* {Rose, interview}.

Eve and Rose prefer to give experiential gifts that they can enjoy with the receiver. By adopting the role of the *sharer*, givers are able to spend more time to their friends and partner which, in turn, contributes to the development and maintenance of bonds.

A physical gift can enable the giver and the receiver to share time with each other. For example, Brian emphasises the importance of giving alcohol to friends, which allows him to share time with them:

> *"With my friends usually their gifts they involve like alcohol that we will then **consume together**, so it's those kinds of **gifts for parties**"* {Brian, interview}.

As in the previous report, this emphasises the desire for proximity maintenance doing something that friends enjoy together, in this case partying.

In our data, we found evidence of these different types of motives happening within the same experience in order to fulfil the goal of fostering relationships with personal gift receivers. We refer to motivational triggers (i.e. social norms) activating the goal of fostering relationship with the gift receiver, motivational drivers (i.e. felt gratitude) and roles that the giver wanted to express (i.e. pleaser and sharer). Robert is a clear example of this:

> *"It is a birthday gift for a **very dear friend** […] [I gave her a] **bottle of sparkling wine,** every **birthday needs a toast with a little bubbly drink** […] she is a very dear and close friend and also **she is hosting a birthday party** […] the gifts tried to be as personal as possible, to **show the level of friendship,** the importance of the relationship for me and the **value I put on***

***our friendship**. It was also a nice way to **show my appreciation** […] every moment we spend together is cherished and very important for me"* {Robert, diary, 007GS}.

Robert illustrates in his report that he wants to *develop bonds* with his friend by showing her the value of the relationship to him. The *social norm* of a birthday party seemed to have triggered the pursuit of this relationship goal, and this thought was driven by *gratitude* as, with the gift, Robert wants to show appreciation. Finally, the gift helps to develop the relationship by encouraging *sharing* and making a toast for his friend's birthday.

4.2.3. Gifting to "social" receivers as a transaction to signal group membership

By contrast with "sacred" and "personal" receivers, where a relationship was already established, "social" receivers were simply part of a common context where the giver and the receiver meet as part of a broader group of people. In this context, gifts are sporadic and the goal of the giver is to signal that they are part of the same group (e.g., group of colleagues).

4.2.3.1. "Social" receivers

The third group of receivers described by our participants were "social" receivers, referring to individuals who would receive gifts on one-off occasions. Occasional gift receivers are unimportant sporadic companions, who are part of a broader context where the giver is immersed. As Martha illustrates, some receivers are simply one-off relationships resultant from a social situation:

> *"There are sort of **one off relationships** where because of **a social situation a context,** a gift is required, but I don't think that would be one where gifts go back and forth"* {Martha, interview}.

Likewise, givers mentioned giving gifts sporadically to other gift receivers, who were not considered by givers as part of their life in any way, although they were part of a common social context. For example, Sally collaborates with the gift giving collections at her workplace, even though she does not interact at all with some of those receivers:

> *"When I **was at work**, when people left—I was a teacher—and when people left at the end of the year they used to, you, they collected for everybody who left and you felt really **you'd got to give to everybody whether you knew them or not** […] [it was a] **sort of corporate gift**"* {Sally, interview}.

Regarding Sally's distant colleagues, she does not indicate any sign of emotional closeness or interest for proximity maintenance with the receiver, which is the first step to develop a bond with another individual (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). Although giving these people gifts does not mean anything to Sally, the fact that she refers to the gift as a "corporate gift" suggests that the person is important as a result of being part of the workplace. This is in line with the idea that regulating closeness with groups is as essential for the individuals' survival as it is with other people (Smith, et al., 1999).

Joan reported another example of social receiver, describing her experience with a colleague whose relationship was restricted to the workplace:

> *"I **used to work with someone**, a nurse who was pregnant and **I wanted to give her a present** […] she's **not one of my best friends at work, no** […] we **don't have many things in common** […] she **works with me as a nurse** and **she does a good job**"* {Joan, interview}.

In a similar way, Joan highlights the importance of her colleague only at a professional level, removing any signs of personal proximity. In this case, Joan gives a gift to a nurse who does a good job, although they do not share many interests or a close relationship inside or outside the work environment.

Our data show that "social" relationships were restricted to particular social contexts. Leisure (e.g., bingo group), university and the work environment were the most popular contexts reported. In most cases, givers did not report the relationship with the receiver to be particularly close, especially out of that particular context. For example, gift relationships with colleagues are often limited to the work environment and giver and receiver communicate out of this domain only occasionally. Stephanie illustrates this when she recounts giving a gift to a colleague, with whom she shares time mainly for work related events:

> *"It is a **Christmas Surprise Santa Gift** […] We sometimes hang out in the evenings or on weekends but mostly we [my colleague and I] **spend time together** because of **work related events** […] [we contact] most working days as **our workstations** are nearby […] I am the one who **suggested this idea to my colleagues**"* {Stephanie, diary, 007G}.

Stephanie's initiative to organise a Surprise Santa gift seems to reflect a group of people who spend time together mainly for work related events. The fact that Stephanie does not indicate that the relationship is close or that she regularly contacts her colleagues out of the job environment, suggests that this behaviour is context-specific. Attachments in the workplace such as those with supervisors, peers or colleagues are important as they can provide members of the team with protection, nurture and support (Nelson and Quick, 1991).

A final characteristic of "social" recipients is that they are *sporadic* members in the giver's gift list. *Sporadic* recipients receive gifts only on one-off occasions, because they do not represent any strong attachment bonds to the giver. Brian illustrates this idea:

> *"There is a **regularity** of the people I give gifts to **except** if there is, you know, **a new friend who has his birthday** and I, I will buy him something"* {Brian, interview}.

The occasional character of Brian's gift seems to reflect the absence of attachment indicators, as he indicates that this gift is an exception to the gifts he gives regularly.

Lauren reports another example of sporadic gift giving in the context of "social" receivers, when she bought a gift for an ex-colleague she had not seen for years and this seemed to signal that they still had something in common. They had been working together:

> *"I am giving a 'hugging ' salt and pepper set as a gift for a couple who are celebrating their civil partnership […] I was **invited to the reception** for the*

*civil partnership of an **ex-colleague**. I **had not seen him for three or four years** and when I did he immediately invited me […] really lovely guy, [we] **used to chat in the staff room** when we worked together […] [we contact] infrequently, only if I bump into him"* {Lauren, diary, 002GS}.

4.2.3.2. Gift giving to "social" receivers to signal group membership

Participants also reported that givers often gave gifts to "social" receivers motivated by the sense of being part of the same group. In this case, interpersonal gift giving allowed givers to signal that the giver and receiver were part of a shared context. For example, Lucy gave a gift to two different members of her research team, whose relationship is exclusively professional:

*[I wanted to give the gift] because **we are members of the same research team**. He is a **PhD student of my postdoc supervisor**. We are involved in similar but distinct so far research projects [….] **our relationship is strictly professional** […] starting September, we will share the same office"* {Lucy, diary, 022GS}.

*"[I wanted to give the gift] because **we are members of the same research team**. He is a **PhD student of my postdoc supervisor** […] he had his **private thesis defence** […] I wanted to say hi and **congratulate him in person**, and I spontaneously thought it would fit to also give him a bottle of raki [Greek traditional drink] […] **our relationship is professional**"* {Lucy, diary, 023GS}.

In fact, Lucy describes her relationship with the receivers as "strictly professional" and she refers to her colleagues as "*they are not my friends, I don't love them. I*

don't want to express my love or something [when I give them a gift]. It's more like… I don't know" {Lucy, interview}. Despite the lack of attachment signs with her colleagues, Lucy seems motivated by the sense of being part of the same team. Being part of a group itself has a protective function for the individuals that comprise the group. This is in line with the existence of an affiliation basic behavioural system that leads individuals to seek proximity to people of the same group, even with those to whom they are not bonded (Ainsworth, 1991). At the same time, the fact that in her interview Lucy culminates by saying that she does not know the reason why she wanted to give the gift to this colleague suggests that she may be unaware of the reasons that led her to buy the gift in the first place.

Sally normally gives a gift to her clarinet teacher for Christmas:

> *"I also give a **gift to my clarinet teacher** at Christmas and at the end of the year […] he is outside the family, but **he didn't charge me very much** and we **have a good laugh when we have our lessons**, so I usually give him a bottle of red wine"* {Sally, interview}.

In this report, Sally appears motivated by the good interaction they had during the clarinet lessons. People with whom a person has a pleasant interaction are dyadic relationships but very few are attachment relationships because pleasant interaction is not enough for those bonds to exist (Ainsworth, 1989).

4.2.3.3. Motivations for gift giving to "social" receivers

In the context of "social" gift receivers motivational triggers, drivers and roles allowed givers to signal that they are part of the same social context. We discuss

how these motivations allowed givers to pursue the goal of signalling group membership.

Motivational triggers: signal group membership by maintaining social norms

As with personal gift receivers, givers indicated that "social norms" and "responding to givers' actions" were the two main reasons that made them think about giving a gift to "social" gift receivers. Lauren and Rose illustrate the notion of responding to receivers' actions:

> *"I bought some 'health bars' for **a colleague who has been very kind helping me with some work** […] I **sit near her**. she is a very kind and generous person who has been **helping me with some work**"* {Lauren, diary, 046GS}.

> *"[I wanted to give this gift because] I have **worked closely** with them [the receivers] this year and **they also got me a present** […] [we see each other] **every work day** […] **I let the present on her desk** so she would have something nice when **she came into work.**"* {Rose, diary, 011G}.

Social occasions and responses to receivers' actions seem to stimulate the givers' goal of signalling and reinforcing their membership in the context that the giver and receiver share. In fact, Lauren and Rose emphasise different aspects of this environment.

Motivational drivers: signal group membership by feeling the obligation to give

Almost all givers revealed that gifts for "social" receivers were motivated by "obligation" as a motivational driver. The obligation seems to respond to a lack of

bonds with the receiver and the uncertainty of the giver-receiver relationship. For example, Amy gives gifts to colleagues who are not important to her but they are in the office, so she wants to give them a gift because she feels she cannot avoid it:

> *"**People from the office** that sometimes you **have to do all these [gift-giving] collections** […] I **don't really take any pleasure on it** […] it's just an **obligation** because **I can't say no, basically** […] **they're just in the office**. I **never spoke to them literally**. I just say **hello and good morning and bye** at the end of the day, and so **it doesn't mean anything**; it just means **£10 less in my pocket**"* {Amy, interview}.

Motivational roles: Signal group membership by acknowledging social receivers

Finally, gifts to "social" receivers typically expressed the role of the acknowledger by giving gifts with no personal involvement and aimed simply to recognise that a relationship exists. The expression of this role is in line with Otnes et al., (1993), who suggest that the role of the acknowledger shows that the giver–receiver relationship is superficial. Carol described her experience of buying her neighbour a Christmas gift that seems to reflect how she adopted the role of the acknowledger. Carol reports that she does not make a big effort in buying a gift for her neighbour, so the gifts are quite impersonal:

> *"I think you've more an attachment to your family than your, your neighbour […] we buy our neighbour a gift at Christmas […] I don't normally spend as much time thinking about what I'm gonna buy […] I'll get them a box of*

*biscuits. You know **something that's not really, it's not too personal**"* {Carol, interview}.

Another example of this is Martha, who could give gifts to people out of her "gift giving circle" but those gifts would be free from any personal investment, thus, she would enact the role of the acknowledger:

> *"It will happen very, very rarely that somebody I'm sort of close to but **not really in my gift giving circle**, something extraordinary happens, something really special, I **might actually at that point do something**, but I would be extremely cautious as to the value of the gift and as to the type of gift. I might give somebody a bunch of flowers or a box of chocolates. But something that's **entirely devoid of any personal investment so it's a gesture** […] the gift is **more a kind of reaction I think to a specific occurrence** […] It **could potentially be quite a thoughtless gift** so okay everybody likes chocolate, everybody likes flowers, but it doesn't have to be added "I've really thought about you" like some of the other gifts […] **I feel quite ambiguous about it**"* {Martha, interview}.

As it was with "sacred" and "personal" gift receivers triggers, emotions reflecting givers' state of mind and the roles expressed by the giver happened within the same experience in order to achieve the goal of forming relationships with the recipient.

4.3. INTER-LINKED GIFT GIVING VIA A MEDIATOR: EMPHASIS ON A GIVER'S SPECIAL OTHER

A total of 50 gift-giving experiences described by participants were coded as *inter-linked* gift giving, a new gift giving form. In contrast with the *direct* form, our informants' reports indicated that the focus of the giver is not the gift receiver but, rather, another person who is very important to the giver and who connects the relationship between giver and recipient. We will refer to this figure as *mediator*.

Consistently, when reporting their motivations to give, givers were more concerned about the mediators' wellbeing than about the receivers', showing that this is the central element of *inter-linked* gift giving as we will discuss below.

4.3.1. Mediated gift receivers as an extension of a giver's special other

Inter-linked gift giving reflects that the majority of givers incorporate in their gift giving list "mediated" receivers. These receivers are extensions of a *mediator*, who is an individual who is very important to the giver and serves as a connection between the giver and the receiver.

We coded as "mediated" gift receivers those relationships where the giver mentioned the gift receiver in relation to another person who was very close to the giver. For example, Ruth bought a gift for the child of a friend who is very important:

> *"I thought it would be nice to give him a gift […]* ***the gift receiver is the child of a very important friend,*** *so* ***he is important to us all.*** *He* ***doesn't know me***

> ***very well*** *as we don't see him that often, but he is happy and welcoming to see us"* {Ruth, diary, 024G}.

Ruth indicates that her relationship with the receiver is not close, as he does not know her well and they do not see each other often. However, he is important because he is the son of a very important friend to Ruth.

In a similar way, James reports giving a gift to the husband of a very close friend:

> *"This is* ***only the fourth or fifth gift I am buying for him*** *[my long standing friend's husband], and I still do not really know him […] The girl [my friend] is a long-time friend (since high-school!) and* ***we are extremely close: she can tell me a-n-y-t-h-i-n-g that troubles her or that she is really happy about, and that holds true for me as well*** *(although that is a privilege I do not make much use of!).* ***Her guy is not my friend*** *in the traditional sense (only met him properly […] after the wedding)"* {James, diary, 029GS}.

Although James does not know the receiver well and James does not consider this individual to be a friend, he is important to James because he is the husband of someone very close to James.

Additionally, participants mentioned experiences involving multiple mediators connecting the relationship between the giver and the receiver. For example, Mary always gives a gift to the half-brother of her friend's daughter, Emily. In this case, Mary's friend (Fiona) and her friend's daughter (Emily) mediate the relationship with the receiver:

> *"I always give him [the **half-brother of my friend's daughter**] a gift of some description […] Jake is the half-brother of our friend Emily. **We have known her all her life** and we know Jake's dad, who is Emily's dad […] we have **sporadic contact maybe 3 times a year**, but we know what he gets up to through Fiona, Emily's mum and **our long-time friend**"* {Mary, diary, 061G}.

Mary does not describe her relationship with Jake as close, and she does not contact him often. Fiona and her daughter mediate the relationship between Mary and Jake, although Fiona is the main mediator because of the close relationship that she shares with the giver:

> *"Fiona is very a **nurturing person** […] she is a very empowering, **enabling, giving, caring person**. If you **were stuck and you wanted comfort, you will go to Fiona**"* {Mary, interview}.

It seems that Fiona is a source of comfort to Mary as evidenced when Mary highlights how nurturing, caring and comforting a person Fiona is. The existence of more than one mediator appears to be an indicator of the strength of the attachment bonds between Mary and her friend as gifts extend to a second level beyond Fiona's daughter.

4.3.2. Interlinked gifts to keep close to a giver's special other

Our data show that in interlinked dyadic gift giving, givers are motivated to give to mediated gift receivers with the relationship goal of remaining close to the mediator, who is a giver's significant other, different from the recipient. Givers expressed three main relationship goals, which are: (1) Maintain receivers' support

to the mediator; (2) maintain receivers' support to the relationships between the giver and the mediator; and, (3) recognise the importance of the receiver for a special other.

Maintain receivers' support to the mediator

Givers reported giving gifts to mediated relationships in order to maintain the support of the receiver to the mediator. For example, Joan indicates that she gives a gift to her son's teachers because of the care they provided to her son for the last few years:

> *"[I gave the gift] because they were the staff and* ***teacher at my 4 years olds nursery*** *and we were* ***happy with their attention*** *[…] [they will]* ***keep it [the gift] as a reminder of my son*** *[…] they are* ***important in my son's life*** *as they are the people* ***who took care of him during the day*** *for the past years* {Joan, diary, 039GS}.

Joan seems to be motivated to give a gift to her son's teachers as a way to maintain the connection of her son with his teachers because they are important to him. By promoting her son's closeness with the teachers, Joan can facilitate his learning and school performance and, therefore, giving this gift appears to be a way to take care of her son by nurturing the child's bonds with his educators. Promoting children's closeness with teachers can assist children's learning (Birch and Ladd, 1997). Although this gift rewards the care that Joan's son has received for the last few years, it seems that she still wants to keep her son's emotional connection with his teachers by giving them a gift that acts as a reminder of him.

Martha reported another example when she bought an expensive gift for her daughter's best friend, who was almost part of the family. Martha feels that spending more is justified because the girl is very close to her nine-year-old daughter:

> *"The gift recipient is **my daughter's best friend** […] this is on the expensive side for a birthday gift for a child, but **the girl concerned is really close to my daughter so I feel justified** and right in **spending a bit more** to give an extra good present […] I know her very well and have done since she was three, **we live close to each other, see her in school each day, play out of school,** so while she isn't like my third child, she may as well be!!!!"* {Martha, diary, 070G}.

In another diary report, Martha highlights the importance of the interactions between her daughter and her daughter's best friend, again, when describing a trip to a theme park:

> *"To have **my daughter's best friend as part of that experience** [trip to Twin Lakes] that meant **she was even more likely to enjoy it** because she could **spend time with her friend outside school**"* {Martha, interview}.
>
> *"She [my daughter] also **enjoyed spending time with her best friend**, […] the **two girls were chattering with each other**"* {Martha, diary, 003G}.

Martha's daughter seems to rely on her best friend as a companion. By giving her daughter's best friend a more expensive gift, Martha's relationship goal is to support the two girls in their desire to spend time together and to assist her

daughter in the development of attachment bonds with her best friend. In fact, the responsiveness of a caregiver facilitates a child's attachment formation with peers (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

Maintain receivers' support to the relationships between the giver and the mediator

In some cases, givers pursue the goal of maintaining the support of the receiver in order to keep their relationship with the mediator. A good example of this is Lesley, who buys gifts for her mother in-law, whose relationship is very distant and they feel uncertain about each other. Lesley indicates that buying gifts is a way to avoid upsetting her husband's family:

> *"My **mother in law**, she is very… **she's not sure of me** even though I've known her for a long time and **I'm not sure of her so she keep this kind of polite distance** […] I feel like **I'm always I'm the daughter in law and I always have to fit that role** […] **I don't want to upset them** so I always [buy gifts] […] I **always try to do his family first** […] so **they are sorted so I don't feel like I've offended anybody** [laughs]"* {Lesley, interview}.

Lesley appears to give to her mother in-law to achieve the goal of remaining close to her husband and to avoid the possibility that the difficulties with her mother in law affect her relationship with her husband. As Lesley indicates in another diary entry, her husband is very important to her: *"We [my husband and I] have a really good relationship and I would say we are best friends and respect each other. He is very important to me and the first person I turn to for anything"* (Lesley, diary, 090G).

The goal of seeking support for a relationship was also illustrated by Emma. Her boyfriend suggested to her that she send a gift to his grandmother, someone who Emma did not know well. Emma did so and afterwards reported a positive reaction from her boyfriend's mother:

> *"I've **met his [my boyfriend's] grandma a couple of times** but my boyfriend **told me she really likes receiving post** and that and **I should maybe send her a Christmas card so I did** but I also like knitted her a tree decoration as well just because I thought it'd be nice for her to get some post"* {Emma, interview}.

Emma continues in her diary explaining the reaction to the gift of her boyfriend's mother:

> *"I **don't know this lady very well** [boyfriend's grandma] (we have only met a couple of times) […] **my boyfriend's mum text me saying that she loved it [the gift] and thank you for thinking of her**. His **mum really appreciated** that someone was thinking of her mum given that the past year has been difficult for her"* {Emma, diary, 013G}.

Emma's gift to her boyfriend's grandmother is a manifestation of Emma's bonds with her boyfriend, who is "very important" (Emma, diary, 097G) and who she cares about, as Emma reports in her interview "*I like to put more effort and excitement for people I care about […] like with my boyfriend*" (Emma, interview). This suggests that givers extend their attachment to a partner to other relationships, who would receive gifts because of the positive influence that this could have, as in Emma's

relationship with her boyfriend. In fact, Emma indicated that the receiver was not close to her and she emphasised how pleased her boyfriend's mother was with the gesture. This is because the perceived support, or opposition, of a partner's friends and parents, affects the relationships of the dyad (Spretcher and Femlee, 1992) which seems to be relevant for Lesley and Emma's relationships with their partners' relatives. Again, in this case, the *mediator* becomes the main focus of the gift, rather than the gift receiver, which is one of the main characteristics of interlinked dyadic gift giving.

Recognise the importance of the receiver for a special other

Finally, we identified that givers were motivated to give to mediated gift receivers by the goal of recognising the significance of the receiver for a significant other. This can be illustrated briefly by Rose, who always gives her sister's best friend a gift:

> *"[I bought a] Dove gift set […] [I wanted to give the gift because] She is my* ***sister's best friend*** *and I have known her for over 20 years* ***[…] I do not see her very often*** *but* ***we always try to give one another a present each year****"* {Rose, diary, 020G}.
>
> *"I do not see them [my sister's best friend and her parents] very often but have known them for years and* ***now my sister and her best friend see each other less and less*** *I* ***have less and less to do with them*** *[…] [we* ***have met] once or twice over the past eight years****"* {Rose, diary, 024RC}.

Rose does not spontaneously report any signs of closeness with her sister's best friend and her parents, and they have not seen each other very often, only a couple of times in eight years. However, Rose wants to please her sister's friend because she is important to her sister. As the relationship seems to be fading away because Rose's sister and her best friend see each other less regularly, Rose recognises that she has less to do with the receiver. This indicates the influence of the mediator in the giver's relationship goals, which are directed towards the mediator.

4.3.3. Motivations for gift giving to "mediated" receivers

In order to achieve the relationship goals associated with mediators, givers reported "social norms", "obligation" and their desire to "acknowledge" the relationship with the receiver in the eyes of the mediator. Although the way in which the goals are achieved is similar to that of direct "social receivers", the relationship goals that the giver wants to achieve are different as we reported earlier. These relationship goals involve: (1) Maintain receivers' support to the mediator; (2) maintain receivers' support to the relationship between the giver and the mediator; and, (3) recognise the importance of the receiver for an special other (the mediator).

Furthermore, a new feature of roles that emerged from our data was the notion that givers simultaneously express two roles in order to assist the mediator. This was manifested by the giver's desire to "socialise" the receiver, while adopting the role of the "pleaser" to another person who was close to both the giver and the receiver. For instance, by giving a set of headphones to his brother-in-law, James

appears to adopt, simultaneously, the role of the socialiser with his sister's husband, and the role of the pleaser with his sister:

> *"My **brother-in-law loves movies with explosions,** (read: loud) [i.e. very noisy] and action games on his console! Now that he became a father he will not have much time for [it] either, but! When he can spare some, **those headphones will allow him to enjoy a game or the occasional movie whilst keeping the house whisper-quiet** […] **for this gift to succeed in my mind, it had to have the 'nod of approval' from my sister**, the lady of the house!!"* {James, diary, 025GS}.

James seems to be motivated to socialise his sister's husband by giving a gift that allows him to enjoy loud movies and video games but in a way that keeps the house quiet, probably for the new-born child. At the same time, this report suggests that James' motivation is to please his sister, as she is the one who will confirm whether the gift is the right one, and whose positive reaction will make the gift successful for James.

In interlinked dyadic gift giving, we also found evidence of multiple motivations occurring simultaneously within the same gift event, as givers were motivated by "social norms", "obligation" and the expression of the role of the "acknowledger" to achieve their desired relationship goals with the mediator. Eve illustrates this when giving a gift to her children's teachers at Christmas:

> *"[At] Christmas […] [It is an] **obligation** […] to give a gift to a teacher. [I] **didn't want my son to be the only child who didn't** […] [giving the gift is]*

significant regarding my son's life at school *[…] [I bought] chocolate Utopia [because] is one of my favourite shops in Nottingham"* {Eve, diary, 057G}.

*"**I really resent it**, buying presents buying small chocolates for the children to give to their teachers because other people did"* (Eve, interview).

These gifts seem to be expected each year for the social norm of giving gifts at Christmas and Eve clearly indicates that she feels obliged to give this gift to her children's teachers. However, the fact that these gifts are important to her offspring suggests that Eve's main relationship goal in this event was to recognise the importance of the teacher to her son. When she decided to give the gift, Eve adopted the role of the acknowledger towards the gift receiver by buying chocolates which are small tokens aimed to recognise that a relationship exists between the giver and the receiver (Otnes et al., 1993).

4.4. INDIRECT GIFT GIVING VIA A PROXY: EMPHASIS ON THE GIFT EXPERIENCE

Only ten experiences fit within the definition of *indirect* dyadic gift giving, where the relationships are direct and the action of giving is intermediated by a proxy figure. All these events occurred within the context of "sacred" relationships, involving a giver's own children, parents and romantic partners, and the *indirect* act of giving is what makes the gift giving experience special.

In contrast with *direct* and *interlinked* dyadic gift giving, where the giver handed a gift directly to a passive receiver, *indirect* dyadic gift giving emphasises the importance of the gift experience where the receiver and a proxy figure play an active role in the creation of the gift experience. This is because the actual giver does not take credit for the gift, which is handed to the receiver on behalf of the *proxy figure* (e.g., Tooth Fairy, Father Christmas, a child, a pet), who acts as giver in the eyes of the recipient. By engaging in *indirect* dyadic gift giving, the experience allows the giver to enhance the close relationship between the giver, the receiver and, in some cases, also the proxy figure.

4.4.1. Gift receivers and proxy figures as co-creators of the gift experience

As with *direct* gift giving, the relationship between the giver and receiver is direct because the giver does not need any intervening individual connecting the relationship with the receiver. Specifically, the relationship between the giver and the receiver represented strong bonds consistent with the characteristics "sacred" gift receivers (i.e., unique, responsive and based on support).

An important feature of the relationships involved in *indirect* gift giving is that givers, receivers and proxy figures play an active role in the creation of the experience, which becomes special for all of them. This contrasts with the role of gift receivers and mediators as targets of the givers' relationship objectives as it happened in the direct and inter-linked forms of dyadic gift giving. Informants revealed two types of proxy figures, involving fictional characters significant to the receiver (e.g., Father Christmas) and special others who cannot buy a gift by themselves (e.g., children, a dog, a deceased person).

Penny, who bought gifts for her family on behalf of Father Christmas and the "Greek Santa" that comes after New Year, illustrates the indirect form of dyadic gift giving:

> *"We had organised […] my husband and me like* ***a little Santa [Father Christmas] thing,*** *so everybody was in the house, like my family and his family and some, some other relatives. We had get them all like a little present and, you know, it wasn't so much the present we bought.* ***But it was more like the fun we had*** *[…] because some of them were like funny presents […]* ***it was just the experience****. I think that was* ***quite, quite fun*** *[…] and then after 12 o'clock when the* ***Greek Santa*** *comes after the New Year, then we had a second person [who] gave more presents"* {Penny, interview}.

In this experience, Penny is the actual gift giver who buys the gifts with the help of her husband and she organised those to be delivered by Father Christmas and the Greek Santa Claus, who are proxy figures acting as the giver in the eyes of Penny's

family (the gift receivers). Therefore, Penny gives her family gifts indirectly to her kin members via a proxy figure (Father Christmas).

Apart from fictional figures, proxy figures were often important individuals to the giver and receiver, and their presence made the experience more special for all three. For example, Joan illustrates this when she gave a gift on Father's Day to her husband from their children to acknowledge that he is a good dad:

> *"This gift was to celebrate Father's Day, so* ***I wanted to recognise what a great father my husband is****, something that I don't mention on a daily basis"* {Joan, diary, 040GS}.

Joan emphasises in her interview that *"the most important [relationships] are [with] my children"* who, in this case, act as proxy figures. The fact that Joan said that she wanted to recognise that her husband is a "great father" by giving a gift on behalf of her children, suggests that the importance that Joan places on her husband is a manifestation of parental bonding (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013) between the couple and the benefits that this can bring to their children.

4.4.2. The gift experience brings the giver, receiver and proxy figure together

In the context of *indirect* gift giving via a proxy figure, givers pursued one of four main relationship goals to be achieved by gift giving. These goals are: (1) Taking care of the receiver by enhancing the receiver's gift experience; (2) remaining close to the receiver by alleviating tensions between giver and receiver; (3) taking care of the proxy figure by socialisation and; (4) keeping alive the memory of a giver's significant other.

Taking care of the receiver by enhancing the receiver's experience

In this case, the giver wants to make the giving experience more exciting for the receiver by using proxy figures that include fictional characters that the receiver finds exciting, for example, when parents give their children gifts from Santa Claus [Father Christmas] or from the Christmas Tree, as reported by Ruth:

> *"My daughter for example I can buy her gifts till…* ***oh every day I could buy her gifts because she is so little still*** *[…] I* ***also like buying my younger sisters presents*** *[…] Christmas, I guess there is more a ritual involved in it especially with Santa Claus.* ***Am I allowed to talk about Santa Claus not being real*** *[…] because obviously we have Santa Claus for my daughter. And even for my brother and sisters still so there is a whole ritual involved in that and* ***it wasn't from Mum and Dad it was from Santa*** *still even though they're teenagers […] my Dad also does a present* ***from the Christmas tree*** *as a present* ***from the tree****, and there is always an extra present that you open maybe on Boxing Day or New Year's Eve. It is a present* ***from the Christmas tree****, which he [my father] always buys, so* ***it's just a present from him****"* {Ruth, interview}.

Gifts from Santa Claus and the Christmas Tree seem to be a way for parents to take care of their children or younger siblings while providing security and protection in response to their attachment. In fact, Ruth highlights that she could buy gifts for her daughter every day because she is "little", which suggests that Ruth perceives her daughter as needing help and in her diary she also indicates "*my daughter is the most important person in my life and I love her enormously*" {Ruth, diary, 076G}.

Gifts pursuing the goal of taking care of the gift receiver or proxy figure by enhancing the receiver's experiences, seemed to be triggered by the social norms of giving, for example, at Christmas. Furthermore, givers seem to use proxy figures (e.g., Father Christmas, Santa Claus, Christmas Tree) as a way to make the receiver feel special. In these experiences aiming to enhance giving experiences as a way to take care of the receiver, children were the preferred receivers. Ruth's gifts to her daughter and younger sisters seem driven by emotional rewards, as Ruth clearly states that she really likes buying gifts for them. This finding responds to Weinberger and Wallendorf's (2012) query about giving more attention to "masked giving" or giving from mythological figures such as the Tooth Fairy.

Another case of indirect dyadic gift giving that enhances the receiver's experience occurs when the target receiver becomes a proxy figure who wants the giver to give to another person. For example, in order to celebrate his wife's birthday, Paul involved her in the selection of the gift and bought a gift focused on his daughter, because this was what his wife wanted:

> *"One of the special ones [gifts], that was a treat was* ***for one of my wife's birthdays*** *we went to Disneyland, Paris when my daughter was younger, when she was about 10 […]* ***It was my wife's birthday gift*** *but* ***it was my daughter's treat.*** *That was really quite special […]* ***my wife and I had organised it****"* {Paul, interview}.

In this gift experience Paul acted as the giver while his wife became a proxy figure when she decided that her birthday gift was a treat for their daughter, who was the final receiver. This suggests that Paul pursues the goal of taking care of his wife and

daughter by enhancing the experience of Paul's wife, who was the initial target of the gift. In this case, Paul's wife seems to be a giver (by deciding to give to her daughter), a proxy figure (giving to her daughter the gift that her husband was planning for her) and a receiver (Paul's wife receives her birthday gift) at the same time.

Paul's gift experience was triggered by the social norm of giving for a birthday, and for Paul the goal of care for his wife and daughter seems to be achieved by adopting the role of the sharer, which is what his wife wants. Paul knew that his wife preferred her birthday gift to be focused on their daughter and, in this way, all three could share some time and an experience together. One of the characteristics of experiential gifts (e.g., a trip) is that the donor can participate in the activity, which encourages deeper bonding in the relationship (Clarke, 2008).

Remaining close to the receiver by alleviating tensions

Alleviating tensions in a close but strained relationship between the giver and receiver can be another goal of the giver achieved by indirect dyadic gifts. This was the case of a mother giving a present to her son on behalf of a dog, which is considered a family member:

> *"This is a [Christmas**] tradition with my mum**. She doesn't have a partner. She usually **lives with Alsatian bitches and so** the **dog will be sort of elevated to a higher level** in the family **as a family member** and so we [my sister and I] will often get a paw print and a Happy Christmas from Jess or Happy Christmas from Ella or Happy Christmas from Holly. She [my mother]*

has been doing that for quite a few years […] ***we all love the dogs, so it is quite nice to get a present of someone you love*** *[…] We [****my mother and I] have lots of arguments****"* {Peter, interview}.

"She's [the gift giver] a dog, ***happ[il]y she knew I love chocolates and [I] have been wanting a big box for years*** *[as a Christmas gift] […]* ***I like the dog more than my mother****"* {Peter, diary, 034RC}.

Peter reported having a strained relationship with his mother and because of this relationship it is, for him, very stressful to receive a gift from her. However, when he receives a gift from the proxy figure of his mother's dog that is close to both him and his mother, the gift experience is pleasurable. Even though Peter's relationship with his mother is fraught with tension, he wants to maintain it, which is a natural human tendency (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Using a pet as a proxy figure reduces tensions between him and his mother, since pets are often attachment figures for humans (Kurdek 2008). In fact, all members of this family love the dogs.

In this case, the desire to give the gift seems triggered by the "social norm" of giving gifts at Christmas, and it seems that the giver adopts the role of "pleaser" by giving Peter a large box of chocolates as a gift via the dog—something he had wanted for years.

Taking care of the proxy figure by socialisation

Indirect dyadic gift giving can help parents to socialise children, who can adopt the role of proxy figures to learn the social norms of giving that, in turn, is a way for

parents to take care of their offspring. An example of this is a mother who buys a gift to be handed by a daughter to her Dad to celebrate Father's day:

> *"[I want to give a gift] because it was Father's Day and wanted to give something to my husband**, he's a great dad!** […] I **managed my daughter to participate with something** as well […] he's the **most important person in my life beside my daughter** and we have a great, loving relationship […] it **made me very happy** […] it was **lovely to get my daughter involved as well**"* {Amy, diary, 004GS}.

This excerpt suggests that the goal that Amy strives to achieve is to keep her husband as a supporting parent via gift giving. The fact that Amy makes an effort to involve her daughter in the gift experience seems to be a reminder for him about the importance of his support as a father. The role of the mother is important as the father's behaviour is strongly influenced by the expectations of the child's mother and a responsive mother should support the development of the father-child bond (Doherty et al., 1998).

The goal of keeping a partner's parental support seemed to be pursued by the activation of the giver's gift giving thoughts by the "social norm" of giving to celebrate Father's Day. At the same time, Amy's thought of giving a gift appears to be driven by the "emotional reward" of giving a gift and involving her daughter, which is a way to "socialise" her. In this case, the child is exposed to consumer culture via gift giving (Belk 1987). This is a way for parents to assist their children in the adoption of the values within their particular social context (Grusec, 2011).

Keep alive the memory of a giver's significant other

Finally, indirect dyadic gifts can serve to keep alive the memory of a significant other to the giver. For example, Sally recalls giving a gift to her children on behalf of her dying father who she wants to be remembered:

> *"My father died in 2000 […] six years before that, my brother had got divorced and **my father gave him £5,000** in case he had any expenses, and it was obvious that he was going to go into a home. He [my father] couldn't look after himself any more—**just before he died** […] my brother hadn't used this money, so we thought **"It's our inheritance"**. So **my brothers and I decided we would have it between us** […] my brother gave me £1000 in £50 notes, which was my share of the £5000 […] I put it in my handbag, and we went to another brother's house where my daughter and son were [to give them the money] […] I said, "there you are there. **That's yours from your grandfather"**. And **I gave £500 to each of them** because we didn't need the money, but they were just starting out in life […] my daughter bought a coffee table to **remind her of her grandfather** because he died a couple of months after that […] **that was a wonderful thing for me**"* {Sally, interview}.

This gift experience is another example of an indirect dyadic gift giving form where Sally gives a gift to her children on behalf of their dying grandfather, who acts as the proxy figure. In this case, Sally appears to be ultimately motivated to support her offspring while keeping her dying father's memory alive in her children's minds. Sally's expectation that her children will remember their grandfather appears to act as an emotional reward, driving Sally to give the gift to her children. In fact, she

reported how well she felt when her daughter bought a table as a reminder of her grandfather with the money she had received. At the same time, Sally adopted the motivational role of the provider, by giving money to her children who are starting their lives and are in need of cash. The table seems to be a reminder for Sally's daughter, but for Sally it was a way to sustain a continuing bond with her father. In fact, gifts can sustain a continuing bond with a deceased person (Turley and O'Donohoe, 2012).

In the case of direct and interlinked dyadic gift giving, relationship goals are pursued through the activation of gift giving thoughts (i.e., social norms), emotional rewards and the expression of the roles of the pleaser, provider and socialiser as in the context of sacred gift receivers. However, the giver's ultimate goal in indirect dyadic gift giving is to bring together the giver, receiver and proxy figure by emphasising the gift experience.

4.5. CONCLUSION

After looking at the structural components defining dyadic gift giving needed to understand gift giving, we identified that it is important to consider the focus of givers' attention, the importance of the giver's relationship with the receiver, the role of intermediaries intervening in the gift experience and the givers' motivations to give the gift. Because of this approach, three new forms of dyadic gift giving emerged from the data, namely *direct*, *inter-linked* and i*ndirect* gift giving.

In *direct* gift giving, the main focus of the giver is the gift receiver. In fact, gifts are given directly from the giver to the receiver without any intermediary. At the same

time, the giver-receiver relationship is direct, which means that this dyad is not dependent on the relationship with any other person. Therefore, in direct gift giving the action of giving and the relationship between the giver and the receiver are both direct. Using insights from Attachment Theory, we identified four new types of direct gift receivers reflecting different levels of relationship importance to the giver and implying distinct relationship goals that the giver wants to achieve by giving a gift. This novel characterisation of gift receivers involves sacred, surrogate, personal, and social gift receivers and the motivations associated to those are summarised in table 4.1 where we highlight that givers concentrate on the gift receiver, without the need of any intermediary intervening between the giver and receiver, thus reflecting a direct relationship.

Table 4.1: Direct Dyadic Gift Giving

GIFT GIVING FOCUS	Gift receiver			
GIFT GIVING ACTION	Direct: from the giver straight to the gift receiver			
INTERMEDIARIES	None			
DIRECT GIFT RECEIVERS	**Sacred** receivers:	**Personal** receivers	**Social** receivers	Surrogate receivers
Givers' characterisation of gift receivers	Unique Reliable Based on support	Shared common interests Frequent interactions	Part of a common social context	Substitutes of a missing sacred relationship
GIVERS' RELATIONSHIP GOALS	**Cherish** the relationship with the receiver	**Develop** the relationship with the receiver	**Signal** the relationship with the receiver	Remain close to the receiver
	- Show the receiver that givers feel cared for - Show care for the receiver - Maintain strong bonds with dysfunctional relationships	-Gifts to promote pleasant interactions -Gifts to avoid relationship conflict	-Gifts to signal group membership	
GIVERS' MOTIVATIONS				
(1) Gift giving triggers	-Social occasions -Need identification -Relationship reminders	-Restricted to social occasions -Response to receiver actions	-Restricted to some social occasions	
(2) Feelings driving gift giving	-Emotional rewards	-Gratitude	-Obligation	
(3) Expression of roles	-Pleaser -Provider -Socialiser	-Pleaser -Sharer	-Acknowledge the receiver	

First, givers described sacred receivers as unique, responsive and their relationships were based on support. As a result of these characterisations and the strength of the relationship bonds, givers wanted to cherish the relationship with sacred gift receivers in order to show that they felt cared for, that they cared for the receiver or in order to deal with strong but conflicting relationships. In order to pursue the goal of cherish the relationship with sacred receivers, gift giving was triggered not only by "social norms" (e.g., birthday), but also by "need identification" and "relationship reminders". At the same time, givers reported feeling motivated mostly by the "emotional reward" of giving and making the recipient happy, something that could be done mostly by "pleasing" the receiver and, in some cases, "socialising" and "providing" for the recipient. These roles agree with Otnes et al (1993). The occurrence of these different motives within the same event relates to

different functions attributed to those motivations involving gift-giving triggers, feelings driving the desire to give and the desire to transmit a specific message by giving a specific gift. As a result, they fulfil the goal of cherish the relationship with sacred gift receivers and explain the occurrence of different motives at the same time in the same gift giving experience. Relationship goals can be activated by social stimuli (e.g., social norms) that result in the pursuit of the corresponding goals (Gillath et al., 2006) that could be achieved by gift giving. Surrogate receivers were substitutes of a missing sacred receiver, thus, they were treated as if they were sacred.

Second, personal gift receivers were characterised by the interests that they shared with the gift giver and the frequent interactions between giver and receiver. In fact, givers revealed that they wanted to foster the relationship with recipients by giving gifts that enhanced pleasant interactions and avoided conflicts. These relationship goals were triggered almost exclusively by "social occasions" and as a "response to receivers' actions" (e.g., giving the giver a gift first), a trigger exclusive of personal relationships. "Gratitude" was the most typical emotion underlying gifts to personal receivers and the main roles that givers wanted to express were pleasing the receiver and sharing. The new role of the "sharer" could be achieved by giving experiential gifts or tangible gifts that could be consumed together (e.g., chocolates or alcohol).

Third, social receivers were characterised because they were part of a social context in which the giver was also immersed. As table 4.1 shows, the main motivations to give to these receivers was to be part of this context. These gifts

were triggered only by “social occasions” and they occurred sporadically. This is probably the reason why givers felt “obliged” and only wanted to “acknowledge” the relationship.

Inter-linked dyadic gifts involve a direct giving action from the giver to the receiver, although the relationship between them is mediated by a direct relationship significant to the giver. We use the denomination mediator to name this individual connecting the giver and the receiver. As table 4.2 shows, within the context of inter-linked dyadic gift giving the ultimate goal of givers is to maintain a receiver’s support for the special other, for the giver-mediator relationship or to recognise the importance of the relationship for a significant other. Therefore, the giver’s ultimate goals are directed towards the mediator. Inter-linked gifts were triggered almost exclusively by “social norms” (e.g., Christmas), the feelings that motivated the giver to give the gift were mostly based on “obligation” and the message that the donor wanted to communicate by giving a particular gift was twofold: The giver wanted to “socialise” or “acknowledge” the relationship with the receiver in order to “please” the mediator. The main difference between interlinked dyadic gift giving and social receivers is that the goals that the giver wanted to achieve by giving the gift target the mediator, who is a giver’s special other, rather than the gift receiver.

Table 4.2: Inter-linked Dyadic Gift Giving

GIFT GIVING FOCUS	Mediator (givers' special other connecting the giver and receiver)
GIFT GIVING ACTION	Direct: from the giver straight to the gift receiver
INTERMEDIARIES	Mediator (one or multiple)
DIRECT GIFT RECEIVERS	Mediated receivers
Givers' characterisation of gift receivers	Extensions of existing sacred relationships
GIVERS' RELATIONSHIP GOALS	Remain close to a mediator -Maintain receivers' support to the mediator -Maintain receivers' support to the relationship between the giver and the mediator -Recognise the importance of the receiver for a special other (mediator)
GIVERS' MOTIVATIONS	
(2) Gift giving triggers	-Restricted to social occasions
(3) Feelings driving gift giving	-Obligation
(4) Expression of roles	-Acknowledge or socialise (the receiver) -Please (the mediator)

Indirect dyadic gifts involved an indirect giving action from the giver to the receiver via a proxy figure acting as the giver in the eyes of the gift receiver. In this case, the giver-receiver relationship is direct and normally very close involving sacred gift receivers. The main emphasis in indirect dyadic gift giving is the gift experience that enhances the relationship among the giver, receiver and proxy figure. In this context the ultimate goal of the gift giver can be either directed towards the proxy figure (e.g., when a mother wants to take care of her son by teaching him gift giving social norms), towards the gift receiver (e.g., a mother giving her son a gift on behalf of Father Christmas), towards the two of them (e.g., a mother buying a gift for her husband on behalf of the child to take care of the child and keep the husband as a supportive partner), or to keep alive the memory of a giver's significant other. As the relationships involved are sacred, the motivations that

helped givers to achieve their relationship goals were basically the same as those that helped givers to achieve relationship goals in direct dyadic gift giving. In fact, the desire to give a gift was activated by “social norms”, “need identification” and relationship reminders”. Givers also indicated that their motivation was driven by “emotional rewards” and expressing the roles of “pleaser”, “provider” and “socialiser”. In this case, the giver’s relationship goal of bringing together the gift giver, receiver and proxy figure was achieved by this set of motives happening at the same time.

As table 4.3 shows, in indirect dyadic gift giving, the gift experience is the main focus of the giver, the receiver and the proxy figure. By giving the gift via a proxy figure, the giver pursues the goal of bringing together giver, receiver and proxy figure.

Table 4.3: Indirect Dyadic Gift Giving

GIFT GIVING FOCUS	Gift experience
GIFT GIVING ACTION	Indirect: from the giver to the receiver via a proxy figure
INTERMEDIARIES	**Proxy figure** (acting as giver in the eyes of the receiver)
DIRECT GIFT RECEIVERS	Sacred receivers
Givers' characterisation of gift receivers	Active role creating the gift experience
GIVERS' RELATIONSHIP GOALS	Bring the giver, receiver and proxy figure together
	-Take care of receiver by enhancing gift experience -Remain close to the receiver by alleviating tensions -Take care of the receiver by socialisation -Keep alive the memory of a givers' significant other
GIVERS' MOTIVATIONS	
(1) Gift giving triggers	-Restricted to social occasions
(2) Feelings driving gift giving	-Emotional reward
(3) Expression of roles	-Pleaser -Provider -Socialiser

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we presented the analysis and main findings observed in the empirical work conducted. These findings strongly suggest that dyadic gift giving helps givers to deal with their relationships with gift receivers. This focus on relationships is consistent with the human tendency to form bonds with other individuals, which is one of the main tenets of Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969).

In the present chapter, we will look together at our findings in light of Attachment Theory and Evolutionary Psychology, with the main aim of illuminating dyadic gift giving. For this, we will refer back to the literature on gift giving, in order to answer the research questions stated at the end of the literature review.

We will revisit the main themes reported in our findings chapter with an integrative approach in mind. After this brief introduction, the first part of this chapter differentiates dyadic gift giving forms by examining their constituent elements and showing that, in order to understand dyadic gift giving, we need to look at more than a single gift-giving dimension, as implicit in the original literature. The second part of this chapter is concerned with the issue of how givers relate to gift recipients. By looking at how givers describe their bonds with recipients, we identify different types of receivers beyond the traditional relationship-type labels (e.g., mother, friend, spouse). Third, we discuss givers' relationship goals and the motives that allow givers to achieve those goals. This discussion shows how relationships precede gift-giving motivations and solves the puzzle of multiple motivations

occurring within the same gift event. We conclude with an overview of dyadic gift giving integrating the findings of the three subchapters and showing how they contribute to gift giving research.

5.2. WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIMENSIONS EXPLAINING DYADIC GIFT GIVING? DIRECT, INTER-LINKED AND INDIRECT FORMS

The first underlying research question of this thesis sought to identify the forms that explain dyadic gift giving. When we refer to dimensions, we refer to the structural and motivational components of gift giving. In order to understand this consumption context, we adopt a holistic perspective (Sherry, 1983) considering that gift giving is a multidimensional phenomenon (Goodwin et al., 1990).

Dyadic gift giving, as we observed here, is defined by *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving forms. The differentiation of these three different dimensions of dyadic gift giving draws on features of Attachment Theory and uncovers that givers' focus of attention is not always on the gift receiver. This helps to explain gift-giving situations that do not fit within the previous framework (e.g., gifts to in-laws, gifts on behalf of fictional characters, gifts from children). We discuss the new *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* dyadic gift-giving forms next.

5.2.1. Direct gift giving

Most of the gift events observed in our data were concerned with *direct dyadic gift giving*, which we identified is a particular gift-giving dimension characterised by a particular combination of structural elements.

The givers' focus on the gift receiver is emphasised by the direct action of giving the gift from the giver directly to the gift receiver, and by the structural elements that characterise the *direct* gift giving form. These structural elements involve lack of intermediaries, the direct bonds linking the giver with the receiver, and the givers' relationship goals targeting the gift recipient.

We observed that in *direct gift giving* the bonds tying the giver and receiver are direct. This means that givers have a connection with the gift receiver with no one in between because givers do not need any individual tying them emotionally with the recipient. Direct receivers represent bonds of different strength to the giver. This suggests that direct receivers are classified around givers' attachment needs. The details of the givers' classification of direct receivers will be discussed in chapter 5.3, where we look at how givers relate to gift receivers.

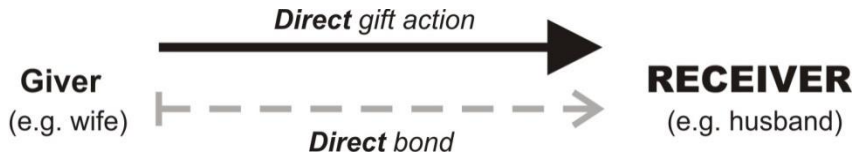
The unmediated character of direct receivers explains the lack of intermediaries in *direct gift giving*, where none of the givers mentioned another individual emotionally connecting them with the recipient or taking credit for their gift (e.g., Father Christmas). We identified two cases where the givers asked someone to deliver the gift for them. However, the only purpose of this individual was to deliver the gift, thus, acting exclusively as a messenger and playing a minor role in the gift experience. In fact, givers described the nuances of their gift experiences around the central figure of the recipient. The following excerpt from our data reflects a typical *direct gift giving* form where the giver concentrates his attention on the receiver:

> *"**My father** is 89 so I like to **visit him** and **take him** for a drink [on Father's Day] because I know **he likes** this […] I know **my father** doesn't expect me to spend money **on him**, but **he does like** to show me off to his friends. So, I take time to **take him** out on special occasions and **make him** happy […] **my** father is important to me […] it feels nice to be doing something simple that **my father appreciates**"* {Paul, diary, 032GS}.

We also established that the goals that givers pursue in the *direct* form of gift giving aim to cherish, develop or form bonds with gift receivers. The special importance that givers grant to the management of their bonds with the recipient is in agreement with Baskin et al. (2014) who indicate that the receiver is the objective of the giver's relationship goals (Baskin et al., 2014). Similarly, our findings are consistent with the traditional conception of dyadic gifts, which are targeted from the giver to the receiver to maintain or deepen their relationship (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012), thus highlighting the relational aspects within the giver-receiver dyad (Davies et al., 2010).

The direct form of dyadic gift giving is depicted in figure 5.1. In this diagram, the direct action of giving from the giver straight to the receiver is reflected in a continuous black arrow and the direct bonds tying the giver and receiver are represented by the grey dashed arrow that goes from giver to receiver.

Figure 5.1: Direct dyadic gift giving* (focus on the gift receiver)



**Empirically derived gift giving form*

Although the influence of gifts on relationships with recipients is what distinguishes dyadic gifting from other types of giving (Davies et al., 2010), we suggest that this is not the only dimension of dyadic gift giving, as we discuss next.

5.2.2. Inter-linked gift giving

Inter-linked gift giving via a *mediator* is one of the most important and novel findings that emerged from the data. This new gift-giving dimension is characterised by the *mediator* as the giver's focus of attention and a key factor that stimulates gift-giving behaviour. A *mediator* is a significant person to the giver in terms of emotional support and/or pleasant interaction, and serves as an intermediary connecting the giver-receiver relationship. At the same time, the gift giving action is direct from the giver to the gift receiver.

One of the main characteristics defining *inter-linked* dyadic gift giving is the figure of the mediator, who connects the giver and a distant receiver emotionally and implies a new set of givers' relationship goals orientated towards the mediator figure. These goals relate to the givers' desire to be close to the mediator and this is the main reason why givers included a "mediated" receiver in their gift list (e.g., son's friend). In fact, we observed that *inter-linked* gifting reports only involved

mediators (e.g., son) who were very close to the giver. This is consistent with the idea that givers aim to maintain satisfactory relationships with highly valued relationships by integrating new recipients into the giver's gift network via those valued individuals (Lowrey et al. 2004). A typical example of *inter-linked* gift giving is illustrated below, where the giver emphasises the importance of the mediator over the significance of the receiver:

> *"She [**my friend's** daughter] has only just turned one so I am not sure she will really appreciate the gifts just yet! I know **her parents**, however, will be thankful as **they really wanted** clothes she could grow into […] we are close with **her parents** but **do not see them as much as we would like**"* {Rose, diary, 044G}. [Emphasis added].

Underlying the gift experiences resultant from the strong bonds tying the giver with a mediator different from the receiver, *inter-linked* gift giving emerged as a new dyadic gift giving form. Further to the main focus of the giver on the mediator, this novel form of gifting is restricted to "mediated" gift receivers, whose relationship is dependent on the givers' relationship with another person. The presence of a mediator is essential for gift giving to happen. The main goal of the giver is keeping close to the mediator. We will discuss the relationship goals in depth in section 5.4.

The role of the mediator, who is the focus of the givers' attention, and the direct action of giving a gift from the giver straight to the gift receiver, explain how other individuals different from the receiver can stimulate and redefine dyadic gift giving at a structural level. This extends the work of Lowrey et al. (2004) who only studied

the social influences of third parties on gift giving without considering how those influences affect dyadic gift giving at a structural level.

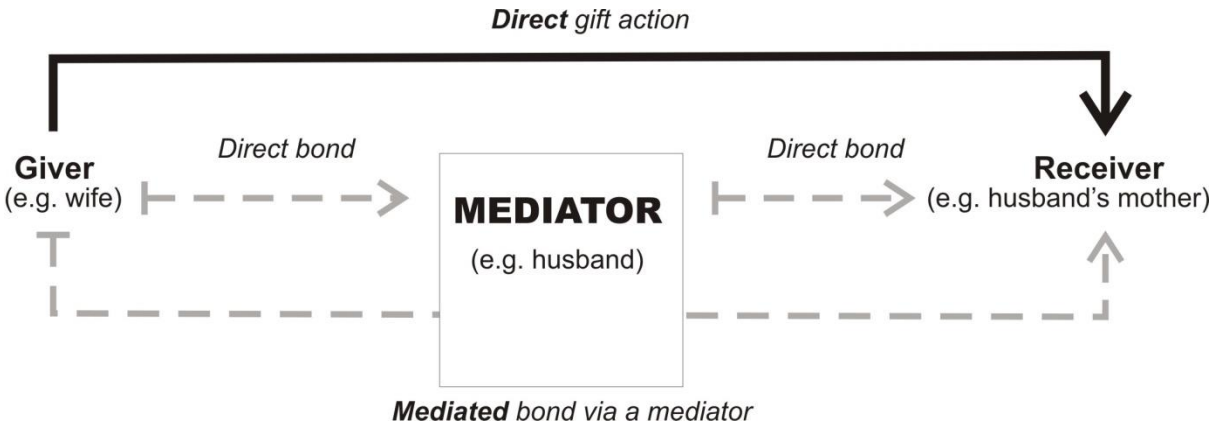
Furthermore, the inter-linked dyadic gift giving dimension sets a new framework to explain gifts. Researchers have typically approached dyadic gift giving situations as direct gift giving when, in fact, they are not. For example, in cases of divorce a giver eliminates most of the relatives of an ex-spouse or ex-partner from the gift list and, after remarriage the giver assimilates new relatives associated with the new partner (Otnes et al., 1994). By identifying *inter-linked* gift giving as a specific gift-giving form, we shed light on gift-giving contexts like this, where the role of a close mediator connecting the giver with the receiver (e.g., spouse mediates the relationship between the giver and spouse's relatives) allows an understanding of the basis used by givers to include a distant receiver in their gift list.

The identification of *inter-linked* gift giving emphasises the central role of the mediator. This contrasts with most dyadic gift giving research suggesting that givers concentrate on the receiver as we discussed in the previous section (e.g., Sherry, 1983; Belk, 2010). By identifying "mediated" receivers, the existence of mediators as intermediaries (connecting givers and receivers) and targets for the givers' relationship goals, the *inter-linked* form of dyadic gift giving verifies that looking only at the giver-receiver dyad is insufficient to understand gift giving (Giesler, 2006). At the same time, *inter-linked* gift giving explains gifting behaviour beyond the giver-receiver dyad within the realm of dyadic gift giving. This approach extends recent research which addresses the over-reliance on the giver-receiver dyad by proposing non-dyadic gift giving forms. This is the case of intracommunity gift

giving, where the locus of gifting are the members of a community group (Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012) and rhizomatic networks, where the locus of gift giving is a virtual network of dyads sharing files on the internet (Giesler, 2006).

Figure 5.2 represents the inter-linked form of dyadic gift giving, depicting the direct act of giving by a straight black arrow from the giver to the receiver. The mediated bond connecting the giver with the receiver is represented by the long grey dashed arrow. This line goes across the figure of the mediator, who serves as a connection between the giver-receiver dyad. The bonds of the giver with the mediator are direct as well as the bonds of the mediator with the gift receiver, as illustrated below.

Figure 5.2: Inter-linked dyadic gift giving* (focus on the mediator)



**Empirically derived gift giving form*

5.2.3. Indirect gift giving

The identification of the *indirect* dimension of gift giving became apparent from the data when we observed some gift experiences where the giver's action of giving a gift to a special recipient was indirect via a *proxy figure*, acting as the giver in the

eyes of the gift receiver. The identification of proxy figures extends the idea of surrogate givers, which is restricted to individuals who act as intermediaries between the giver and receiver handing a gift (Lowrey et al., 2004), thus, acting simply as messengers. Although surrogate givers can claim that the gift is from them in some exceptional cases (Lowrey et al., 2004), we observed that proxy figures are always the giver in the eyes of the gift receiver. This is an essential feature characterising *indirect* dyadic gift giving.

One of the main characteristics of the *indirect* dyadic gift giving form is the emphasis on the gift giving ritual, which is the centre of the interaction between the giver, receiver and proxy figure. All three play an active role in the gift experience as the following transcription illustrates:

> *"We have a tradition here, a winter tradition called Saint Nicholas […] in the morning when they [people] go to their shoes* ***they can find gifts in them [from Old Nicholas]*** *and it's a tradition that has been kept for generations and* ***we [my partner and I] do it for each other*** *[…] What I did, I recreated a like a little forest […] and* ***I hid a present*** *[for my partner] […] it was a very* ***lovely reaction****. She [my partner] loved it and I think she still remembers it to this day"* {Robert, interview}.

While the giver initiates the gift experience and prepares the ritual without his partner's knowledge, Saint Nicholas (proxy figure) is the one performing the role of the giver in the eyes of the receiver. At the same time, the receiver contributes to the experience by setting expectations and displaying reactions that make the event special for those involved. The special character of gift experiences involving

fictional characters partially agrees with Belk (2010) who suggests that gifts in the name of mythical figures such as the Easter Bunny or the Tooth Fairy distinguish special gift giving from normal everyday sharing. We found that indirect gift giving is more than this, by representing a new form of giving different from the traditional one. Our findings corroborate Weinberger and Wallendorf's (2012) claim that gifts from parents to children through fictional characters may be a particular form of giving, which these authors labelled as "masked giving". At the same time, the identification of dyadic gift giving extends Weinberger and Wallendorf (2012), who did not explore masked gift giving in depth and suggested the need to look at the underlying characteristics and structural factors of this new form of giving.

Further to the role of mythical creatures such as Father Christmas in gift giving (Belk, 2010; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012), we identified the existence of other proxy figures different from fictional characters. These new proxy figures are givers' special others who cannot buy the gift by themselves, such as young children, pets or deceased people. For example, a father can give a gift to his wife on behalf of their child, making the experience very special to her. The identification of other proxy figures has implications for the givers' goals in *indirect* gift giving, as actual givers use proxy figures for different reasons. We identified that the relationship objectives that the giver tries to achieve by giving the gift are specific of *indirect dyadic gift giving*. Actual givers used other people (e.g., children) or pets as proxy figures with the main goal of reducing tensions with the receiver. This is consistent with actual givers recruiting other individuals to deliver a gift and,

exceptionally, claiming that the gift was theirs, with the sole intention of reducing tensions and risk of gift rejection (Lowrey et al., 2004: 552).

As a novel finding, givers also invoked deceased people (proxy figures) in the giving process in order to achieve the giver's goal of keeping their memory alive and, in the specific case of a child adopting the role a proxy figure, the gift experience can serve as a way of socialisation. For example, when a mother (giver) gives a gift to her husband (receiver) on behalf of their child (proxy figure) to celebrate Fathers' Day, the gift experience enables the giver to take care of the child by teaching him social norms associated with gift giving. At the same time, this gift giving experience encourages the receiver to provide his son with support. *Indirect* gift giving experiences allow the receiver to take care of the child by giving the gift and promoting positive interactions.

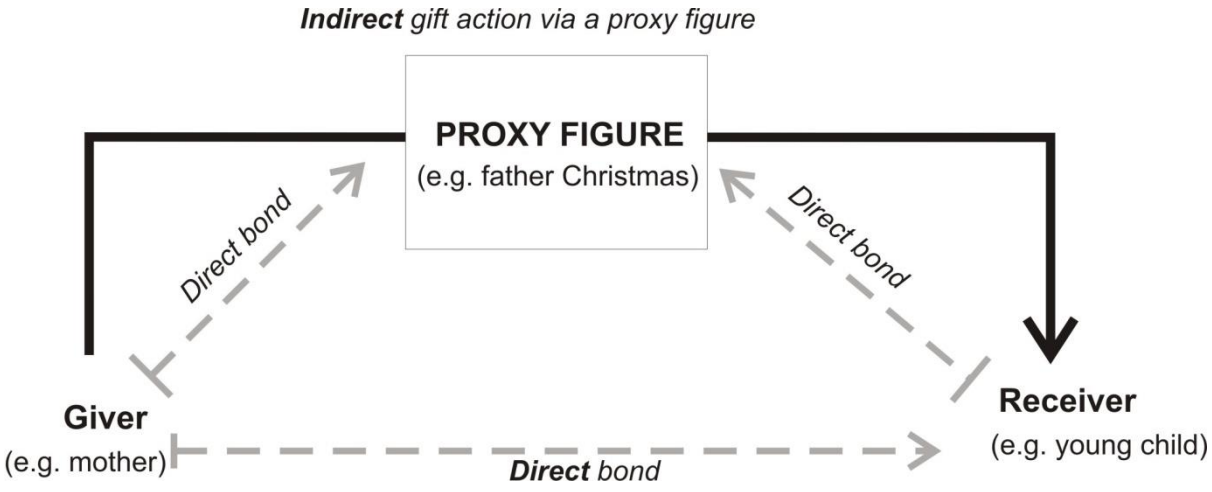
This finding extends the understanding of children's socialisation via gift giving, as in this type of gift giving situation children operate as proxy figures rather than actual givers. The experience, the actual gift giver and the child's role as proxy figure are the factors that allow the child to learn social norms. This finding explains the underlying structure of gifts from children by advancing the idea that, social occasions provide an opportunity to socialise children by prompting them to give gifts and celebrate others' special events rather than their own (Belk, 1997).

Finally, it is worth noting that, underlying the desire to enhance the giving experience to keep close to special others and to socialise them, it is the tendency of humans to maintain relationships with significant individuals (Bowlby, 1969). This

is manifested by the promotion of positive interactions and caring for special others (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), which corroborates Attachment Theory.

The indirect form of gift giving is portrayed in figure 5.3. In this case, the act of giving a gift is indirect via a proxy figure and is represented in the diagram by the black arrow that goes from the actual giver to the receiver via a proxy figure, who acts as the giver in the eyes of the receiver. The bonds of the giver with the receiver, the giver with the proxy figure and the receiver with the proxy figure are direct and represented by each grey dashed arrow.

Figure 5.1: Indirect dyadic gift giving* (focus on the gift experience)



**Empirically derived gift giving form*

5.2.4. Summary of dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving

In the present study, we discovered *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving forms as different dimensions that explain the concept of dyadic gift giving as a whole. These new forms add novel insights to the conditions under which gift giving occurs and extend the concept of dyadic gifting, which we suggest requires more than a

single category to be explained. In fact, the definition of gift giving as "an aggregate of dyadic exchanges" (Giesler 2006) only concentrates on the gifting process and assumes reciprocity between the giver and receiver (Belk, 2009; Davies et al., 2010), which leaves unexplained much of what is involved in gift giving behaviour (e.g., role of mediators or proxy figures).

Furthermore, we identified that *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving forms differ in five different factors: (1) The focus of the giver (i.e., the centre of the giver's attention); (2) the presence of intermediaries between the giver and receiver; (3) givers' bonds with the recipients; (4) givers' relationship goals; and, (5) givers' motivations to achieve those goals. The identification of gift giving forms that differ according to different structural components adds to extant research, which has paid little attention to the way in which these structural units intertwine with each other to explain dyadic gift giving as a distinctive gift giving form. Although the literature has mentioned constituent gift-giving elements, such as the giver-receiver dyad, givers' motivations (Marcoux, 2006), relationship goals (e.g., Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012), the gift giving process (e.g., Banks, 1979; Sherry, 1983) and the locus of the gift (e.g., Belk, 2010; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012), the literature has barely considered the connections among these when explaining dyadic gift giving.

Finally, the *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving forms, contribute to marketing through differentiation, as each of these dimensions is structurally different and reflects a distinct aspect of dyadic gifting (i.e., emphasis on receiver, mediator, gift experience). Studies that contribute to marketing through differentiation

demonstrate how entities (i.e., direct, inter-linked and indirect gift giving) are different by revealing the underlying dimensions (e.g., focus of the giver, role of intermediaries) along which entities can be compared or by recognising their differing manifestations (MacInnis, 2011).

In the following table (Table 5.1), we summarise the *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving dimensions (columns) and the structural elements defining each dimension (rows). It should be noted that the details of the giver' bonds with gift recipients and the givers' relationship goals will be discussed in depth the next two sections (5.3 and 5.4 respectively).

Table 5.1: Dyadic gift giving dimensions

		DYADIC GIFT GIVING DIMENSIONS		
		DIRECT	**INTER-LINKED**	**INDIRECT**
STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS	**GIVERS' FOCUS**	Receiver	Mediator	Gift experience
	INTERMEDIARIES	None	Mediator	Proxy figure (acting as the giver in the eyes of the receiver)
	GIFT GIVING ACTION	Direct (from giver to receiver)	Direct (from giver to receiver)	Indirect (from giver-via proxy figure- to receiver)
	GIVERS' BONDS WITH RECIPIENTS	Direct (sacred, surrogate, personal and social)	Mediated (giver-receiver connected by a mediator)	Direct (Sacred)
	GIVERS' RELATIONSHIP GOALS	-Cherish receivers. -Develop bonds with receivers. -Form bonds with receivers.	-Remain close to the mediator	-Bring together the giver, receiver and proxy figure: -Take care of receiver and/or proxy figure. -Socialise proxy figure. -Reduce tension with receivers. -Keep alive the memory of a deceased person (proxy figure).

5.3. HOW DO GIVERS RELATE TO GIFT RECEIVERS? DIRECT, SURROGATE AND MEDIATED BONDS WITH GIFT RECEIVERS

The second research question of this thesis aimed to understand how givers relate to gift receivers. In order to answer this query, we focused on givers' descriptions of each individual to whom they gave gifts. Considering that "*those to whom we give differ from those to whom we do not give*" (Sherry, 1983: 158), we looked at the aspects that show how givers value some receivers more than others.

The overall findings of our research identified *direct*, *surrogate* and *mediated* gift receivers as three different ways in which givers relate to recipients. Taken together, these three types of gift receivers add to gift research by looking beyond the classic relationships labels (e.g., mother, friend, colleague) used by the literature, which do not fully contextualise relationship experiences in gift giving (Ruth et al., 1999). Thereafter, we will discuss how each of the *direct*, *surrogate* and *mediated receiver* categories fits with the existing knowledge on gift relationships.

5.3.1. *Direct* gift receivers signal givers' sources or targets of emotional security

Direct gift receivers are immediate targets or sources of emotional security for the giver and they represent the most common way in which givers relate to gift receivers. The giver's bond with the recipient is *direct*, which means that the connection between these two individuals does not depend on the bonds with any other person. In fact, when givers described relationships with direct receivers, these descriptions highlighted aspects that were specific of those individuals in

relation to the giver. This can be seen in the following quotation, where the giver describes what the receivers represent to him:

> *"I was very happy to buy them the gift […] this couple are both good friends* ***of mine*** *all the way back from my Greek Uni[versity] studies…* ***We*** *spent four very happy/funny/silly/interesting years* ***together****, so they represent a* ***big part of my life****!* {James, diary, 030GS}

Direct receivers are characterised by the emotional connection that ties the giver with the receiver without the need for any intermediaries. In fact, the giver-receiver connection is not dependent on the givers' bonds with any other individual and represents bonds of different strength that indicate the givers' perceived level of closeness. Our observations show that givers' notion of closeness stems from the emotional security that recipients conferred to the giver in terms of emotional support, shared experiences and by being part of the same context. This suggests that givers use attachment as a criterion to organise the receivers included in their gift-giving list. For example, givers' descriptions about emotional support are related to the concepts of secure base (allowing the attached person to explore the environment safely) and safe haven (providing comfort), while their shared experiences reflect a desire for proximity maintenance (e.g., Feeney and Noller, 1996).

The idea that direct receivers classify gift receivers in terms of emotional closeness accords with the traditional vision of relationships in gift giving, which assumes that givers relate to gift receivers based on their emotional closeness (Caplow, 1982). In

fact, the closeness of the giver-receiver relationship defines the appropriate role adopted by the giver towards the receiver (Wolfinbarger, 1990).

A novel finding within the broad category of *direct* receivers is the identification of a taxonomy of *direct* receivers involving “sacred”, “surrogate”, “personal” and “social" gift recipients. These categories are organised from the most to the least important to the giver in terms of the emotional security that recipients confer on them and reflecting the different strength of the bonds tying the giver with the receiver. Within these categories, we found evidence showing that they are not restricted to specific relationship types (e.g., mother, spouse) and their stereotypes. For example, not all mothers, siblings, friends or partners are close to the giver in the same way and a special friend can be closer than a family member. This finding corroborates the notion of attachment as an indicator of relationship closeness and intimacy in adulthood (Collins and Feeney, 2004) and provides evidence for Attachment Theory assisting the understanding of gift giving (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013; Mizco et al., 2002). We next discuss in depth “sacred”, “personal”, “social and “surrogate” *direct* receivers.

5.3.1.1. Sacred receivers represent strong attachment bonds

Most of the receivers described in our data were regarded as “sacred”, because of the special characteristics attributed to them by givers. We observed that “sacred” gift recipients represent the strongest connections with the giver by being *unique*, *responsive* and *supportive* receivers within the givers’ gift list, where “sacred” individuals are *permanent* members.

> *"[A close person to me] It's someone that **knows me a little bit more than others**, not a person that I only go out with for a coffee or tea. Someone that **knows more about my problems**, my joys like my happiest moments, my fears; that have shared some episodes with me or **someone that I can trust** to **have a deeper conversation** […] you can trust to have moments in life and invite them to go home to go to your place to have a meal or to go on holidays or **to give a call just because** or send an email"* {Sarah, interview}.

One of the most distinctive traits of "sacred" recipients refers to their *uniqueness* for the giver, as they were described as "the most important", "the closest" and different from everyone else. The notion of "sacred" recipients as unique accords with Belk (1989) who suggests that sacred persons are special, set apart from others and they become part of an individual's own identity who feels an emotional attachment to them. This is consistent with a gift giving dating context, where a person is singled out from other people in the world (Belk and Coon, 1993), although our findings are not restricted to a romantic context.

We found in our data many cases givers' relationships with parents, specific friends and own children were regarded as exclusive and different from those with any other gift recipient. The consideration of uniqueness as a trait defining "sacred" gift receivers extends current research.

As Attachment Theory would predict, the uniqueness of "sacred" gift receivers reflects the strong attachment bonds that the giver shares with special receivers who are never fully replaceable by any other person (Ainsworth, 1989). These special individuals are *different* from other people in their ability to satisfy needs for

security, which influences the well-being of the other member of the relationship (Collins and Feeney, 2004).

Whilst emphasising *uniqueness* as a key trait in "sacred" recipients, participants also highlighted the importance of emotional *support* from gift receivers, who were described as caring, loving and available sources of support. This agrees with the concept of safe haven, one of the features defining Attachment Theory, which reflects the comfort and support provided by attachment figures (Feeney and Noller, 1996). Surprisingly, the notion of support has not received much attention in the analysis of closer relationships in gift giving, with the exception of Joy (2001), who mentions that close friends are important sources of support to gift givers.

Although the most typical types of "sacred" recipients mentioned by givers were parents, long-term romantic partners and best friends, "sacred" receivers are not restricted to those relationship types.

For example, one of our participants considered that she could talk about anything with her stepmother, who was closer to the giver than her biological father:

> *"My step-mum asked for books so it was easy to know what type of gift to buy […] we are really close friends and* ***get on very well****. We* ***speak often*** *and I* ***treat her as a parent figure*** *and also a good friend"* {Ruth, diary, 028G}.

In another diary entry, Ruth indicates that her stepmother is closer to her than her father:

*"I am **very close to my stepmother**. We are good friends and **talk about all aspects of life**. **My father is less close to me**, but we still love each other very much"* {Ruth, diary, 041RC}.

The identification of attachment as a criterion to study close relationships in gift giving advances gift research because this criterion does not assume that particular relationships are, by definition, closer than others. This corroborates that the new configuration of families (e.g., stepparents, multiple step and half siblings) requires an approach beyond prototypical family considerations (Berscheid and Peplau, 1983). At the same time, this finding challenges Joy (2001), who assumes that family members are close by definition and, thus, those friend receivers and romantic partners described "like family" are considered to be close.

A final characteristic emerging from the data and broadening the understanding of "sacred" receivers refers to the givers' gift giving frequency for these individuals. Givers tend to include "sacred" gift receivers within their gift network by giving them gifts more regularly over a long period of time, which makes those receivers more *permanent* than other individuals in the giver's gift list. In fact, most givers reported that a limited group of recipients always received gifts from them and those individuals represented the strongest emotional bonds between the giver and receiver.

Furthermore, we observed that increases in physical distance between the giver and receiver and the evolution through the stages of their life cycle do not influence the gift behaviour towards "sacred" recipients in the same way as with other receivers with whom the relationship is not as strong. On the contrary, givers

overcome physical distance, time or money constraints (e.g., after having a baby) of these sacred receivers by giving them gifts.

The notion of “sacred” gift receivers as *permanent* members of the givers’ gift list adds a dynamic dimension to the givers’ connection with receivers by identifying that “sacred” receivers are less vulnerable to relationship change than other recipients (e.g., “social” relationships). This complements extant research claiming that givers’ gift list changes with the life cycle (e.g., Lowrey et al., 2004; Otnes et al., 1994) without considering that some relationships are more permanent than others within that list.

5.3.1.2. Personal gift receivers based on the interaction with the giver

We discovered another particular way in which givers relate to gift receivers by identifying the figure of “personal” recipients. The givers’ relationship with "personal” receivers is based on their frequent interaction, which involves socialising together, sharing activities that two of them enjoy and contacting each other regularly, mostly in person. Givers expressed their desire to spend time with “personal” receivers, although givers would not share with these recipients anything that was too personal. The following excerpt from the data illustrates the case of “personal” receivers to whom the giver is more likely to stop giving gifts if their interests diverge for some reason. As illustrated below this contrasts with “sacred” receivers such as the giver’s family:

> *“[the priorities in my gift list are] my partner first and then my Mum and then my sister […] I’ve **not got friends** that I’ve known all my life **the way I’ve***

> ***known my Mum and my sister*** *[…] [With close friends you] click, you* ***think and enjoy the same things*** *[…] I've got a friend and we were really, really close and then* ***we just sort of drifted apart for no apparent reason.*** *We just sort of* ***lost that connection*** *[…] if you've* ***lost that connection*** *you* ***don't really know where they are*** *you tend to go for something a little* ***more ordinary*** *I guess because you are not quite sure what they would like anymore" {Lauren, interview}.*

"Personal" receivers are characterised by their regular interaction with the giver mainly socialising together without sharing anything that is too personal (e.g., going for drinks together but not talking about any private concerns). Interaction involves regular and mutual communication and pleasant activities of common interest such as going for drinks together. The relevance of interaction in defining "personal" receivers corroborates the theory of attachment, which indicates that individuals relate to a variety of people, from acquaintances, with whom the interaction is pleasant; congenial companions, who share activities of mutual interest or close intimate relationship, with whom the individual seeks contact intermittently (Ainsworth, 1989). Although the context of "personal" receivers is not characterised by strong ties between the giver and receiver, interactions with the same people are more satisfactory than with a changing sequence of individuals (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Furthermore, repeated contact with another individual could lead to the formation of strong attachment bonds (Trinke and Bartholomew 1997).

The relevance of interaction as a key factor defining givers' "personal" relationships with receivers extends previous research. Despite the importance of interaction

between the giver and receiver in gift giving (e.g. Belk, 1979; Belk and Coon, 1993; Cheal, 1987; Giesler, 2006; Joy, 2001; Wolfinbarger and Yale 1993), the literature emphasises interaction only in relation to gift reciprocity (e.g. Sherry, 1983) while interaction is not restricted to the exchange of gifts. This approach neglects the role of interaction with "personal" receivers for the survival of the giver-receiver relationship, which affects the occurrence of gift giving and the inclusion of receivers in the givers' gift list.

We also found that "personal" gift receivers are the most prone to change within the giver's network because the giver's bonds with personal recipients are not as established as those with "sacred" receivers. For example, a "personal" receiver to whom the giver only gives when they see each other may disappear from the list or occupy a more important place in this list as the relationship progresses, for example because the giver and the receiver interact more often and the receiver becomes more important to the giver. These findings suggest that the flow of gifts from givers to "personal" gift receivers is more likely to cease, decrease or increase due to changes in the life cycle of givers or receivers and other situational variables, than the flow of gifts to *permanent* gift receivers.

The variability of the givers' gift network was observed in previous research, suggesting that an individual's social network contracts and expands (Sherry, 1983) and, considering that, gift exchanges are not necessarily stable over time (Otnes et al., 1994b). When studying these changes in the givers' gift list, the literature has considered the transitional status of specific relationships such as distant friends who can become close friends, and new romantic partners who can become family

members (Joy, 2001). Although it is possible for many gift relationships to change because of events such as remarriage, divorce (Otnes et al., 1994b) and variations in the life cycle (Lowrey et al., 2004), our data emphasises that these changes do not affect all gift categories of receivers in the same way.

The observation that "personal" gift receivers are more prone to change than "sacred" relationships endows the givers' list with dynamism. This is because we identified that "personal" receivers" are more likely to move from one category to another and change their status in terms of emotional closeness within the givers' gift list. This contributes to the understanding of how givers relate to gift recipients.

5.3.1.3. Social receivers based on a shared context with the giver

Further to "sacred" and "personal" receivers, we identified "social" receivers as another category of gift recipients showing a third way in which the giver relates to gift receivers. Givers and "social" recipients are related by being part of the same social context, where they undertake a similar activity or simply share the same physical space (e.g., neighbourhood, workplace). We did not observe any reports where givers mentioned signs of closeness to "social" receivers. As a result, givers indicated that gifts for these recipients would be sporadic. The following participants' reports illustrate the characterisation of "social" recipients:

> *"There are sort of **one-off relationships** where, because of a **social situation** a **context**, a gift is required, but I don't think that would be one where gifts go back and forth"* {Martha, interview}.

> *"My neighbour she, she was 60 and we bought her some flowers […] I saw another friend of my neighbour and myself, and she said, "Oh, it's, her birthday's coming up and she's 60, like, she'll be 60" […] I got a bouquet of flowers for her [my neighbour], but* ***I wouldn't normally [buy her a gift]****"* {Carol, interview}.

The lack of strong emotional bonds with social receivers partially supports the idea that strong attachment bonds are rarely formed with distant friends (Joy, 2001). However, in our data nobody referred to distant receivers as friends, which contrasts with Joy (2001), who suggests that all those individuals who are not family are friends representing different categories of closeness from close to 'hi-bye' friends. Givers described friends at least as "personal" relationships with whom the giver wanted to share time.

The attachment behavioural system develops to ensure that individuals satisfy their need for security by being involved in social relationships (Hazan and Shaver, 1987), for example by giving a gift to a colleague with whom the giver shares the same workplace. In fact, attachments in the workplace can provide an individual with support and protection (Nelson and Quick, 1991).

The idea of "social" gift receivers advances the understanding of distant relationships in gift giving by emphasising the importance of a shared social context enabling the giver to be an active part of the context they share. The literature refers to them simply as distant relationships (e.g., Ruth et al., 1999; Ward and Broniarzyk, 2011), acquaintances (e.g. Komter and Vollenbergh, 1997; Sherry, 1983)

or hi-bye friends with whom the giver does not share any emotional bonds (Joy, 2001), overlooking the importance of the context in which they interact.

At the same time, “social” recipients are only sporadically included in the givers’ gift list because they are part of a social context where the giver and receiver have little interaction. The sporadic character of gift giving to “social” receivers adds another dimension to the givers’ gift list as the gifts seem to occur only when a social situation requires it within their shared context.

5.3.1.4. Surrogate receivers assert the replacement of a missing special other

One important result in the study of givers’ relationships with recipients is the identification of “surrogate” receivers, who fill the void of a specific unavailable special other by replacing bonds with this important individual. In this case, gifts are often a way to assert the replacement of a particular family member who was supposed to be a source or target of support to the giver.

The concept of “surrogate” receivers supports Attachment Theory where a particular person replaces the emotional bonds of a significant other who is not responsive or available (Ainsworth, 1989; Cicirelli, 2010). Individuals who have lost a special other look for a relationship of the same type as an effective way to cope with the loss (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Gifts to surrogate receivers are special and they reflect the importance of the missing attachment figure, the missing attachment is projected on the new “surrogate” receiver, who meets the giver’s

attachment needs. Therefore, “surrogate” recipients is a special case of *direct* receivers, as they share strong attachment bonds with the giver.

The identification of “surrogate” receivers sheds light on the classifications of gift receivers where some friends are included as family members without being genetically related (e.g., Joy, 2001). This helps to organise receivers in a context where assuming that family is closely related is misleading, mostly due to new family structures (Berscheid and Peplau, 1983). In fact, the consideration of surrogates explains important gift receivers who are not blood related to be included within the family domain when they fulfil a family role. This idea is illustrated in the report below where a stepfather is considered like a biological father:

> “I **always give my Dad** DVDs as he loves watching and collecting films […] **my stepfather** is very close to me and **has been like a real dad to me** for most of my life. As we lived together **we soon became close** and **very comfortable** with each other” {Ruth, diary, 079G}.

Furthermore, we suggest that the figure of “surrogate” receivers explains a new dimension of family relationships different from the traditional conceptualisation of family, which relies on genetic relatedness (Saad and Gill, 2003). Although Joy (2001) indicates that close friends and romantic partners could become “like family”, she used this term to indicate closeness. This is different from our observations of surrogate receivers, who assert the replacement of a specific individual who used to be an important member of the family.

The theme of "surrogate" gift receivers is almost missing from the gift giving literature. As exceptions, Klein, et al. (2015) describe gifts as a way to recreate a sense of family when givers have been deprived of a family unit (e.g., prisoners in a concentration camp), and Yang (1994) acknowledges that non-kin individuals can be brought to the family as fictional kinship ties to compensate for the lack of kinship bonds.

At the same time, our findings indicate that gifts for "surrogate" receivers (e.g., surrogate sister replacing a deceased sister or a niece replacing a daughter) can signal special others who are missing and play a key role for the giver in terms of emotional significance (e.g., deceased sister or a desired but non-existent daughter), thus, they need to be replaced. Gifts for surrogate receivers support the idea that particular forms of consumption can be employed to negotiate a nexus of personal relationships between living and dead, and living and living (O'Donohoe and Turley, 2005).

We only found "surrogate" gift receivers within the context of kin, for example, a friend substituting a deceased sister (surrogate sister), a stepparent replacing a father who was not responsive to his daughter's needs (surrogate father), or a niece occupying the role of a daughter that the giver never had (surrogate daughter). However, we recognise that others could exist.

5.3.2. Mediated receivers are an extension of the bonds of a giver's special other

Beyond the idea of *direct* gift receivers (i.e., sacred, personal, social and surrogate), a novel finding from the present research is the identification of "mediated" gift

receivers, who represent a new dimension of gift relationships. Mediated receivers (e.g., a partner's mother) are included in the giver's gift list because they are an extension of an important and close person to the giver (e.g., partner). This important individual is different from the receiver and acts as a *mediator* between the giver-receiver dyad. The following excerpt illustrates this idea by showing that the giver refers to his partner (mediator) each time he mention the receivers, who are his partner's niece and nephews (mediated receivers):

> *"These gifts are for my **partner's** niece and nephew […] they are very important because they are **my partner's** [niece and nephew] […] the niece, the daughter of **my partner's** brother, I see [her] once a year. The nephew, the son of **my partner's** sister I see [him] between one and three times a year"* {Robert, diary, 014GS}.

> *"**My partner** which is you know, [she is] part of my life, **my everyday life** and to whom I have the **most wonderful and close relationship**. She'll **come first**"* {Robert, interview}.

By identifying the existence of "mediated" relationships and the role of *mediators*, we shed light on the connection between givers and receivers beyond the giver-receiver dyad. In fact, our data suggests that givers' attachment bonds with the *mediator* are so strong that givers are willing to give a gift to a mediated gift receiver, who is not described as close to the giver. In fact, when giving gifts for "mediated" receivers, we found that *mediator*s were "sacred" relationships to the giver in the majority of cases, with the exception of three gift reports where the mediator had a "personal" relationship to the giver. These cases involved gifts for

the child of a friend (receiver), a friend (mediator) being an individual with whom the giver shared common interests. At the same time, givers did not allude to any elements of closeness when they described the recipients of such gifts.

The involvement of *mediators* in gift giving partially corroborates Lowrey et al. (2004), who suggest that givers incorporate in their gift list new receivers because they are associated with an important relationship to the giver. Similarly, Otnes et al. (1994b) mention that in cases of divorce and re-marriage givers remove or add partners' relatives to the givers' gift giving list.

Further to these ideas, we define "mediated" receivers as a different category of recipients, who are generally not close to the giver. The identification of "mediated" gift receivers and the key role of *mediators* as the underlying connection tying givers with rather distant receivers provide an alternative way to explain gift relationships inside and outside the family realm (e.g., gifts to friend's children). As Belk (1988) points out, people can be part of the extended-self as other individuals can represent attachment and be missed when not present. This seems to happen in a similar way as Attachment Theory, which suggests that an individual tends to miss an attachment figure upon separation (Bowlby, 1969). This challenges the notion of emotional closeness presented by Caplow (1984: 1313), who suggests that "the spouse of a married close relative should be valued as much as the linking relative". Rather than represent emotional closeness, this seems to attend to social expectations.

However, givers often describe "mediated" receivers as important because they are tied to one or more mediators. This extends Lowrey et al. (2004) who focus on

the social influence of third parties bringing new receivers to the givers' gift giving network without explaining how those "mediated" receivers are defined.

Further to friends, parents, children, siblings and spouses, the literature suggests that parents-in-law, children-in-law and siblings-in-law are the most common gift receivers (Belk, 1979). By identifying that in gift giving most in-laws are "mediated" gift receivers who are tied to the giver by a family member or a partner, we add to the understanding of these types of relationships, which are often treated as if they were direct relationships. The connection of the mediator extends the understanding of changes in the givers' gift list prompted by changes in marital status (Otnes et al. 1994b).

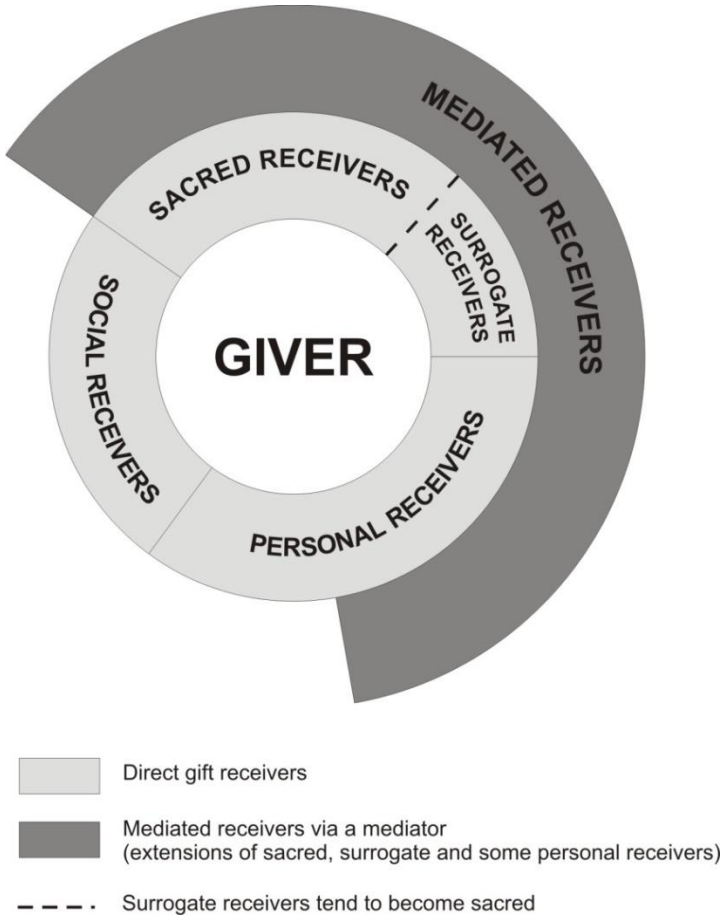
Building on the idea that givers and receivers hold together because it is beneficial for the *mediator*, new insights emerged from the data contributing to the normative dimension of Attachment Theory. In fact, we found that individuals extend their relationship with attachment figures (i.e., sources of comfort and protection) to other individuals who are not important because of the benefits to the attachment figure. We named this new category *mediated attachment*, as a person is connected to another because of the role of an attachment figure acting as a mediator. This seems to agree with the case of unhappily married couples, who remain together or delay divorce for the well-being of their children (Cooney et al., 1995), who mediate the relationship between them. Most research in attachment focuses exclusively on attachment styles, reflecting individual differences and this derives into lack of a basic understanding of normative implications of attachment (Fraley and Davies, 1997; Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

5.3.3. Summary of how givers relate to gift receivers

We observed a variety of gift relationships that givers categorised as *direct* (involving "sacred", "surrogate", "personal", "social" recipients) and "mediated" gift receivers. These groups emerged from the data by identifying aspects that indicate these categories of receivers relate to Attachment Theory. Specifically, from the perspective of the giver "direct" and "surrogated" receivers show signs of secure base, safe haven and proximity maintenance (Hazan and Shaver, 1994), while "mediated" recipients represent extensions from the givers' bonds with the mediator. Therefore, Attachment Theory provides a criterion to classify relationships based on the emotional security that giving to these individuals confers to the giver.

We portrayed the givers' list of receivers as a large circle (figure 5.4) where the giver is located at the core, surrounded by two concentric circles. The first layer in light grey represents the givers' direct bonds to recipients, which can include sacred, surrogate, personal and social receivers. The line between the sacred and surrogate receivers is discontinuous because surrogates tend to become sacred. The second layer, in dark grey, is an extension of givers' bonds with the individuals in the first concentric circle, and it portrays mediated recipients connected to the giver via a mediator. We only found evidence for receivers mediated by sacred, surrogate and some personal individuals and none by social ones. Hence, the second circle is incomplete.

Figure 5.4: Taxonomy of gift receivers* (from the perspective of the giver)



**Empirically derived gift giving form*

The alternative classification of gift receivers proposed, here, does not assume closeness for specific relationship labels (e.g., mother). Thus, this new classification addresses the limitation of over-relying on these labels, which do not fully contextualise relationship experiences in gift giving (Ruth et al., 1999).

First, we identified that "sacred" gift receivers portray the most important individuals to the giver, as they are *unique*, *responsive*, *supportive* and they have received gifts regularly for a long time, thus they are *permanent* members of the givers gift list. These traits agree with those defining attachment figures as unique

sources of comfort that allow the attached figure to explore the environment safely because they provide security (Bowlby, 1988). At the same time, this result advances gift research by identifying the characteristics that indicate how givers relate to their closest relationships and providing an alternative criterion to look at close relationships, which is not restricted to the family context (e.g., Caplow, 1982) or specific relationship types.

Second, "personal" receivers represent those individuals whose relationship with the giver is based upon their interaction and shared interests. Our data showed that changes in this interaction tend to affect the relationship and, thus, gift giving.

Third, "social" receivers are important to the extent that they share a common context with the giver, which makes it necessary for them to give gifts sporadically in certain situations. The importance of "social" receivers allowing givers to be part of a group complements current research, which assumes that these relationships are simply distant.

Fourth, "surrogate" receivers are a new type of *direct* receiver who asserts the replacement of a missing special other. The qualities attributed to this missing figure are transferred to "surrogate" individuals, which make "surrogate" recipients to be considered as "sacred". This notion contributes to the understanding of how givers associated with receivers as surrogate receivers have received little attention in gift research.

An important finding in the way we understand how givers relate to recipients is the identification of "mediated" receivers. We offered evidence showing that,

"mediated" gift receivers are not close to the giver. However, they are important recipients because they represent extensions of the mediator, who is a significant relationship to the giver and serves as a connection between the giver and the receiver. The typical example about "mediated" relationships in our data included gifts to in-laws. The importance of both the mediator to the giver and the receiver to the mediator illuminates extant classifications by explaining why in-laws are among the most popular receivers including parents (and parents-in-law), children (and children-in-law) and siblings (and siblings-in-law). At the same time, these findings contribute to the understanding of distant relationships in gift giving, which traditionally have considered in-laws, neighbours, and colleagues as the same (e.g. Belk, 1976), when the types of bonds tying them are different.

Finally, we identified that: (1) "Sacred" and "surrogate" receivers are the most permanent within the givers' gift list; while (2) "personal" recipients are prone to change; (3) "social" receivers receive gifts occasionally; and (4) "mediated" recipients are conditioned by the role of the mediator. This extends extant research by highlighting that changes in the givers' gift list depend not only on their life cycle (e.g., Lowrey et al., 2004; Otnes et al., 1994) but also on the givers' perception of particular relationship categories.

Overall, we identified that *direct* (sacred, personal and social), *surrogate* and *mediated* gift receivers are important because they reflect different ways in which the giver relates to gift receivers, thus contributing to gift giving and attachment research. This new taxonomy advances the understanding of how givers describe their relationships with gift receivers beyond the over-reliance on relationship

labels (e.g., sibling, father) used by research to date (e.g. Caplow, 1982). As Ruth et al. (1999) assert, these relationship tags do not fully contextualise gift experiences. Marketing complex applications requires more than an exhaustive list of traits of interpersonal characteristics, thus, it is more useful to organise traits into meaningful categories (Cohen, 1967).

In the next section, we explain that the way in which givers relate to receivers precedes gift-giving motivations.

5.4. HOW DO RELATIONSHIPS OPERATE AS ANTECEDENTS OF GIFT GIVING MOTIVATIONS?

The third research question in this study sought to determine whether and how relationships act as antecedents of gift motives because, despite the strong association between relationships and gift-giving motives (e.g. Lutz, 1979; Larsen and Watson, 2001), the question about how relationships affect gift-giving motivations remains unanswered.

In the following sections we will discuss, in detail, gift giving motivations. To begin with, and providing evidence for the idea that attachment is an ultimate motivation to give (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013), we will reflect on the connection between different types of gift receivers and the givers' ultimate relationship goals. Ultimate explanations examine why a particular behaviour exists (Scott-Phillips et al., 2011) and they are related to survival challenges such as taking care of family or retaining a mate (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013).

Second, we look at how givers achieve these relationship goals through gift giving motives, which is consistent with the notion of proximate motivations and contributes to the understanding of how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations. Proximate motivations explain the mechanisms of how a particular behaviour works (Scott-Phillips et al., 2011).

Finally in this chapter, we discuss multiple gift giving motivations occurring within the same gift experience, an unexpected finding solving the puzzle of conflicting

motivations in gift research, and conclude with a summary of the key points indicating how relationships precede gift-giving motivations.

5.4.1. Givers' relationship goals: an ultimate explanation for gift giving

In this section, we discuss in-depth how relationships function as antecedents of gift giving motivations by explaining the relationship goals that givers want to achieve with particular receivers through gift giving. We observed that this happened across all three dyadic gift-giving dimensions discussed at the beginning of this chapter (i.e., direct, inter-linked and indirect). Relationship goals are cognitive representations of a desire point, which impact evaluations, emotions and behaviours (Fishbach and Ferguson, 2007).

In some cases, we observed that givers were not conscious of the relationship goals that they were pursuing. For example, in one of the experiences, the giver simply responded that she wanted to give the gift because the receivers were her colleagues. When we inquired of her in the interview, she ended up discarding other options and saying "I don't know". Although goal pursuit normally concentrates on conscious aspects, a growing body of research suggests that goal pursuit can be activated out of the awareness realm by situational cues until the goal has been achieved (Chartrand et al., 2008).

From the data emerged four main relationship goals that givers aim to achieve in relation to particular gift receivers. These goals are: (1) Cherish the relationship with "sacred" gift receivers; (2) develop bonds with "personal" receivers; (3) signal group membership by giving to "social" receivers; and, (4) *remain close* to

mediators (i.e., special others different from the receiver) by giving to "mediated" gift receivers. We discuss each of the abovementioned relationship goals in relation to the givers' relationship with the gift receiver.

5.4.1.1. Relationship goal 1: Cherish the relationship with sacred receivers

The majority of givers' reports showed that one of their main goals was to cherish the relationship with "sacred" and "surrogate" gift receivers, with whom they have strong attachment bonds. In relation to this goal, the givers indicated that at least one of the following was involved: taking care of the receiver, showing the receiver that the giver feels cared for and keeping alive the memory of the deceased.

To begin with, givers cherished relationships with "sacred" receivers by taking care of them. This is illustrated in the following report from our data where the receiver asks for assistance from her nephew, who responds with a gift that helps him to take care of his aunt:

> *"[I wanted to give this gift]…because **I care and want** to help! She [my aunt] **asked me to do a bit of research** on food supplements[…] after LOTS of research, I […] bought three months' worth of supplies […] she **needs it, but cannot afford it, so I turned it into a gift** […] [my aunt is] **very important** in my life"* {James, diary, 028GS}.

This result accords with the idea that the attachment behavioural system is complemented by a caregiving system in the attachment figure, who is motivated to protect the attached person and ensures that his/her needs are met (Bell and Richard, 2000). At the same time, the notion of care as a complement to

attachment accords with the evolutionary psychology literature, which indicates that, gifts to descendants aim to take care of close family members as an investment to promote their reproductive success (Saad, 2007), and gifts to a romantic partner show care in order to retain a mate (Buss, 1988). This suggests attachment as an ultimate motivation to give, which offers survival benefits for the giver (i.e., take care of family and retain a mate) (Saad, 2007).

The goal of taking care of the gift receiver through gift giving is in line with previous studies. In fact, givers use gifts as a way of taking care of descendants, elderly parents (Bradford, 2009), and romantic partners (Belk and Coon, 1993; Otnes, Ruth and Milbourne, 1994a). Therefore, our findings support the claim that caring about the receiver is one of the most common relationship goals (Baskin et al., 2014). The notion of care was especially emphasised in the context of couples with children, where it is important that the couple nurture their existing attachment relationship because it is good for their offspring (Alexander et al., 2001).

A new way in which givers aimed to cherish the relationship with "sacred" receivers via gift giving was by showing them that the givers feel cared for by the target recipient. The excerpts below illustrate this idea:

> *"I would always make sure that **I go out of my way** to make sure that **I get her [my friend] something special** [a gift] […] because **I know that she really cares [about me]**"* {Lesley, interview}.

> *"I guess the **only way to stop gifting** is if someone **shows that they don't care about you** […] **if someone stops caring about** me, I mean it's like adios [**goodbye**]"* {James, interview}.

The idea that individuals show that they feel cared for by another person agrees with the idea of attachment functioning as a self-protection ultimate motivation. In this case, the individual sustains social bonds because of the survival benefits (Baumeister and Leary, 1995) that these bonds confer to the giver. We identify the importance of givers using gifts to signal the need for emotional support from specific attachment figures that, Bowlby (1977) indicates, are perceived as stronger and wiser. This advances extant gift giving literature, which has mainly focused on the goal of showing care for significant gift receivers (e.g., Belk and Coon, 1993; Joy, 2001) as we discussed earlier. The gift literature has mentioned that receivers often feel "cared for" when they receive a gift (Ruth et al., 1999). However, the givers' goal of cherish the receiver by showing that givers feel cared for has not been considered by extant research.

Finally, givers cherished their relationships with "sacred" gift receivers with the main goal of keeping alive the memory of a deceased special other. This is the case of a mother, who gave the inheritance money from her father directly to her daughter, who bought a table as a memento of her deceased grandfather. This new relationship goal supports the idea that gifts can sustain a continuing bond with a deceased person (Turley and O'Donohoe, 2012) and is consistent with the notion that people can be attached to the deceased and use memories to satisfy needs for comfort and security (Cicirelli, 2010). At the same time, this finding adds a new

relationship goal for givers, as the gift giving reasons involving the deceased have received little attention in the gift literature.

5.4.1.2. Relationship goal 2: Develop bonds with personal receivers

An important finding of this research is that givers used gifts to promote interaction with "personal" gift receivers with the main goal of developing emotional bonds with them. Because bonds with personal receivers are not strong, givers make a great effort to select a good gift and avoid disappointment in personal recipients. This is because givers considered that a negative experience might affect the development of emotional ties with the recipient. This is evidenced in the case of an individual who indicates that forgetting the birthday of one of her friends would be terrible. This result emphasises the importance of physical proximity for the development of attachment bonds. As the theory of attachment postulates, physical proximity helps in the development of attachment bonds (Shaver and Mikulincer, 2010). During the early phases of "pre-attachment" and "attachment making", conflicts tend to reduce the extent to which one partner seeks proximity with the other (Feeney, 2004).

The relationship goal of developing bonds with "personal" receivers by promoting pleasant interactions supports and extends gift research at the same time. The idea that givers give to promote interactions with the receiver supports Belk (1979) who suggests that gifts facilitate interactions. Our results emphasise that the interactions promoted by those gifts enhance the development of bonds between the giver and "personal" receivers. This is especially important at the beginning of

the relationship when gifts can help to develop bonds between the new couple (Belk and Coon, 1991).

5.4.1.3. Relationship goal 3: Signal group membership by giving to "social" gift receivers

The main relationship goal that we found in the data related to "social" receivers, was the giver's desire to signal group membership by giving these recipients a gift. We observed this in the case of givers who want to give a gift to a new colleague for Christmas as a way of recognising that they are part of the work environment. This is congruent with the human need for affiliation, which motivates people to seek proximity with individuals of the same group (Ainsworth, 1989) responding to peoples' inclination to form social relationships, as these emerge quite easily without the existence of any ulterior motives (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). This also accords with the role of gift giving facilitating the creation of social connections (Klein et al., 2015).

This finding adds to the research on gift giving by identifying that givers' relationship goals with "social" receivers respond to a natural tendency of individuals to get together with people from the same group and this is manifested when givers are immersed in specific contexts (e.g. gym, University). This is in agreement with the idea of group attachment where an individual wants to be close to a group and use it as a source of support and identity (Smith et al., 1999). At the same time, we provide empirical evidence for the claim that humans engage in behaviours such as gift giving in order to show that they are members of the same group (Saad, 2007). This finding contributes to the understanding of

relationship goals with distant receivers, with whom gifts are normally described as a product of obligation (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1990) or to avoid losing face (Joy, 2001; Yan, 1996). Restricting the analysis of motivations to obligation and face-loss limits the understanding of how "social" receivers operate as antecedents of gift motivations.

5.4.1.4. Relationship goal 4: Remain close to special others different from the receiver

Further to the abovementioned relationship goals directed towards gift receivers, a number of reports suggested that givers give to "mediated" gift receivers in order to: Maintain the receivers' support for the giver's relationship with the mediator and as a way to take care of the mediator, who is a giver's special other. A typical example that givers reported several times in our data referred to gifts for a partner's family member, whose support is essential for the giver's relationship with a partner. This finding is consistent with the understanding that intrusive in-laws can be a source of conflict in romantic relationships (Shackelford et al., 2005) and that their support is important to keep the relationship.

In a similar way, givers wanted to give gifts to "mediated" recipients with the objective of taking care of a special other, for example by giving a gift to a child's teacher in order to gain the support of the receiver to a giver's special other (mediator). This supports the role of a caregiver as facilitator of the attachment of the mediator with other people. For example, by giving a gift to a child's teacher, a parent can enhance the learning of the child (Birch and Ladd, 1997). Similarly, a

mother giving a gift to her child's friend can facilitate her child's attachment formation by encouraging interactions between them (Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

The relationship goal of maintaining bonds with special others different from the receiver supports the idea that gift giving to the recipients for whom the giver cares little can be motivated by the maintenance of relationships with other, more valuable relationships (Lowrey et al., 2004). Beyond this, we discovered that maintaining bonds with receivers involves at least one of the following: Maintaining the support of the receiver for the giver-mediator relationship, maintaining the receivers' support for the mediator and promoting the formation of bonds between the gift receiver and mediator.

5.4.2. Givers' motivations to achieve relationship goals: a proximate explanation for gift giving

Following the identification of the givers' relationship goals, one of the most salient characteristics that we observed in this study is that givers are encouraged to give by multiple gift giving motivations that assist them in the ultimate goal to cherish, develop, and form relationships with gift receivers, or retain bonds with special others different from the recipient. We will consider motivation as an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates an individual's behaviour to achieve a specific goal (Murray, 1964). From the data, we discovered that motivations can be grouped into *motivational triggers*, *drivers* and *roles*, which are organised around the purpose they serve. We suggest that these three categories are proximate explanations indicating how givers achieve their relationship goals with different

gift recipients. Proximate motivations underpin a particular behaviour contributing to the explanation of how it works (Scott-Phillips et al., 2011).

We identified that multiple motivations exist within the same experience and they serve different functions in order to achieve givers' relationship goals. At the same time, this result allows the integration of new motives emerging from the data (e.g., emotional rewards) and existing ones such as obligation (Goodwin, 1990; Sherry, 1983), altruism (e.g., Banks, 1979; Sherry, 1983; Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993) and social norms (Wolfinbarger, 1990), which are some of the most explored motivations to give. Most of these motives assume a social exchange framework, they have been classified into motivation taxonomies and researchers have related these motives to relationship maintenance (e.g., Otnes et al., 1993). However, in previous research, we did not observe any association between gift giving motivations, their different purposes or any attempt to integrate them. We discuss, next, how *motivational triggers*, *driver*s and *roles* help givers to achieve their relationship goals with specific gift receivers and we explain the occurrence of multiple motivations occurring at the same time.

5.4.2.1. Motivational triggers activate relationship goals

Following the analysis of how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations, we found that a number of participants felt motivated by specific events that made them think about giving a gift to a particular individual, thus triggering gift giving behaviour (e.g., birthday). Givers were not necessarily conscious about their relationship goals with specific recipients. In fact, we identified those goals by comparing data from diaries and interviews, rather than

by receiving a straight answer from givers. This corroborates that relationship goals can be activated as reminders of goal pursuit (Sha and Kruglansi, 2003), where a situation triggers the relationship goal consciously or unconsciously (Chartrand and Bargh, 1996) and givers' thoughts and motivations can be genuinely opaque to researchers and participants until revealed when they are questioned indirectly (Park, 1998).

We identified that social occasions involving Christmas, birthdays, Father's Day or returning from a trip were the most common reason that made them think about selecting a gift for "sacred", "surrogate", "personal", "social" and "mediated" gift recipients. According to informants' reports, social occasions functioned as a trigger activating relationship goals such as taking care of the receiver. In the context of "social" and "mediated" recipients, whose bonds with the giver are not strong or dependent on the bonds with a mediator, we observed that social norms were the only trigger that stimulated the pursuit of relationship goals.

> "I always give gifts to [my parents and close friends] **every year**, **every birthday**, **every Christmas** […] my **parents**, I see them every day and **they do a lot for me**, obviously, so I've got more occasion[s] to give them gifts" {Agnes, interview}.

The role of social occasions as a major trigger agrees with extant literature, suggesting that the gift giving process starts with a "stimulus", which is often an occasion (Davies et al., 2010: 415), or with a "precipitating condition", such as Christmas or a peace offering in a marital dispute (Sherry, 1983: 164). At the same time, we suggest that what this trigger activates are the givers' relationship goals

that will be achieved through gift giving. This explains the role of *motivational triggers* providing the giver with an opportunity to reinforce the bonds with the gift receiver (Arnould et al., 2004; McGrath, 1995) and acting as a motivation that stimulates gift giving (Hill and Romm, 1996). It is noteworthy that some participants recognised social occasions gave them the chance to give gifts in situations where gift giving was appropriate. This finding contrasts with the notion of social occasions as a synonym of obligation (Goodwin et al, 1990; Sherry, 1983) as some givers looked at social occasions as an opportunity to develop bonds with "social" receivers or to get closer to a mediator.

A novel contribution to the literature on motivations is the existence of other motivational triggers different from *social occasions*. These involve *responses to receivers' actions*, *need identification* and *relationship reminders*.

First, we observed several reports where *responses to receivers' actions* appeared as a motivational trigger. This new trigger reflects a specific situation where the receiver conferred some benefits to the giver that stimulated the desire to reciprocate a gift or an act of kindness. This result accords with the idea that receiving gifts often implies the responsibility to reciprocate them (Belk, 2010; Goodwin et al., 1990; Wolfinbager and Yale, 1993) and failing to do so can mean loss of face and harm to the relationship (Joy, 2001). However, the literature did not consider the notion of reciprocity as a motivational trigger.

Furthermore, the *identification of a need in the receiver* also served as a trigger for the giver to achieve specific relationship goals with "sacred" receivers by giving them a gift. A typical example is a young boy who needed some personal care

products and when his mother realised, she bought these products for him as a gift. The identification of this need acted as a trigger for her to buy toiletries as a gift for her child, who was very special to her and received much of her care through gift giving. This trigger accords with Attachment Theory, as being attentive to the needs of special others can strengthen bonds (Mikulincer et al., 2005). The identification of givers' needs as a trigger complements extant literature, which alludes to the practical character of gifts as a way to express the role of the provider (Otnes et al., 1993).

A final event that emerged from the data was the stimulation of the thought of giving a gift by seeing something (e.g., object, experience) that made the giver think of the gift receiver. We labelled this trigger *relationship reminders* and we observed that they occurred mostly in the case of "sacred" gift receivers. As the theory of attachment suggests, the psychological presence of the other member of a relationship can unconsciously trigger the pursuit of relationship goals, and these goals tend to be different for different types of relationships (Fitzsimons and Bargh, 2003; Gillath et al., 2006).

Taken together, the identification of new motivational triggers complements the understanding of spontaneous situations activating the thought of giving a gift, which was restricted to social norms (Belk, 1996), as mentioned earlier.

Finally, we identified that *motivational triggers* provide a proximate explanation for relationship maintenance with the gift receiver or the mediator. This provides empirical evidence for the claim that events such as an anniversary trigger the giver's desire to retain a partner (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013). Proximate

explanations indicate how a particular behaviour works once it exists (Garcia and Saad, 2008), in this case gift giving to cherish, develop, signal or maintain existing connections with special others different from the receiver, which identifies insights from evolutionary psychology in gift giving occasions.

5.4.2.2. Motivational drivers energise the thought of giving a gift

In the study of how relationships precede gift-giving motivations, our results show that it is important to understand not only givers' relationship goals and motivational triggers, but also *motivational drivers*. *Motivational drivers* refer to the factors that energise, direct and sustain behaviour in the individual (Wong et al., 2008). In the following excerpt, the motivational trigger is a response to a receiver's action, who looked after the giver's house, and it is followed by gratitude, which acts as a *motivational driver* sustaining the thought of giving a gift.

> *"If **someone's done something** and you want to **show your appreciation for that** […] […] if it's just a box of chocolates because they've **looked after your house** […] I think it's just **thank you"*** {Carol, interview}.

The notion of motivational drivers partially corroborates that the initial "precipitating condition" that initiates gift giving permits the expression of some motivational state (Sherry, 1983: 164). However, we extend this idea by indicating that givers not always express their motivational state as Sherry (1983) suggests. For example, a giver driven by the obligation to give after receiving a gift from a distant individual will rarely express this feeling to the recipient.

In our data, we observed that an important factor explaining *motivational drivers* is their emotional content. Emotions are a feeling state that motivates actions that respond to the environment because these are good for the individual in some way (Izard, 1992). We identified three types of motivational drivers, including *emotional rewards*, *gratitude* and *obligation*, reflecting different givers' states of mind about giving a gift that helped givers to achieve their relationship goals. Motivational drivers changed depending on the givers' bonds with the gift receiver.

Emotional rewards

The majority of gifts given to "sacred" receivers were motivated by the emotional reward of giving them a gift in order to cherish special gift recipients. As an illustration, a giver reported buying an extra gift to her daughter for Christmas motivated by the happiness experienced when thinking about the excitement her daughter would feel when receiving an unexpected gift.

We found that emotional rewards, mostly involving happiness, joy and love reflect a new gift-giving motivational driver, which shows how positive emotions experienced by the giver serve as a motivation (Izard, 1992). Emotional rewards as a motivation to give agree with Attachment Theory, suggesting that individuals behaving in a way that brings benefits for another person tend to feel well about their actions, which promotes the welfare and quality of the relationship between the two individuals (Mikulincer et al., 2005).

This result adds to the gift literature by capturing the importance of emotional rewards motivating gift giving and helping givers to nurture their relationships with

"sacred" receivers. The notion of emotional rewards explains the love, eagerness and strong emotions experienced by a giver when buying a gift that brings happiness to a receiver who is special to the giver. This occurs even if the giver needs to make a sacrifice, thus capturing the idea of Agapic love, where sacrifices contradict the instrumental exchange models of gift giving and concentrate on expressive considerations (Belk and Coon, 1993). At the same time, emotional rewards as a motivation to give encapsulate the idea of altruism. In psychology, the emotional reward of completing an intention (Lichtenberg et al., 2011) serves as a motivation for the giver to behave altruistically (Trivers, 1972).

Gratitude

Gratitude emerged from the data as a typical motivational driver that helped the giver to develop bonds with those receivers who were important to them. This *motivational driver* was especially salient in the context of "personal" or "social" receivers, whose bonds with the giver were not fully developed or non-existent respectively.

The consideration of gratitude as a gift giving motivation provides an alternative approach to the understanding of gratitude in gift giving literature. Gratitude was associated with "thank you" gifts as a way to reciprocate and repay a debt (Rucker et al., 1994) and as an emotion to express via gift giving (Anton et al., 2014). At the same time, our findings emphasise the importance of gratitude as an emotion that promotes relationship maintenance, indicating levels of responsiveness to receivers' needs (Kubacka et al., 2011; Gordon et al., 2012; Visser, 2008) and a

socially adaptive emotion that helps to cultivate interpersonal relationships (Chan et al., 2014b).

Obligation

Almost all gifts given to "social" and "mediated" gift receivers involved obligation as the giver's main emotional state motivating gift giving, which agrees with the idea of obligation as a major motivational driver reflecting givers' states of mind (Rugimbana et al., 2002). The result that gifts are almost exclusive of "social" and "mediated" receivers, with whom the giver did not share any significant emotional bonds, is consistent with the typical feeling of obligation when giving to distant recipients (e.g., Joy, 2001; Ruth et al. 1999). However, we extend this notion by identifying that obligation helps the giver to achieve different relationship goals. In fact, it is different giving to retain the support of the receiver for the giver-mediator relationship than to signal that the giver and the receiver are part of the same context.

Furthermore, we found that obligation as a motivational driver helps the giver by signalling that "social" receivers and the giver share the same context, and remaining close to mediators by giving gifts to "mediated" receivers. This finding highlights the positive effects of giving out of obligation, which enable the giver to achieve specific relationship goals. Therefore, giving with the motivational driver of obligation has positive benefits for the giver, even though the giver is not always aware of such goals at a conscious level. We identified them by comparing givers' reports about the same event from different data sources. This approach complements extant research whose focus is on the negative aspects of obligation

such as repayment of a debt (e.g., Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993), anxiety and tension (e.g., Wooten, 2000).

5.4.2.3. Motivational roles enable the giver to express a message via gift giving

The idea of social roles as a way to communicate with the receiver via a specific gift corroborates the definition of Otnes et al. (1993), who suggest that social roles are sets of behaviours created in response to interaction with others. When asked about their reasons to give a gift, several givers responded that they felt motivated by the specific message that they wanted to express to a gift receiver by giving a gift in particular. The idea of motivational roles as a gift-giving category of motivation agrees with Otnes et al. (1994b), who claim that roles operate as motivations to give and manage relationships with the receiver.

We identified that givers want to transmit a specific message to the receiver by giving a gift in five distinct ways depending on the giver's bonds with the gift recipient.

Several reports indicated that givers want to make receivers happy by giving a gift that they thought the receiver would like. This corroborates the role of the *pleaser* suggested by Otnes et al. (1993). Givers expressed this role almost exclusively to "sacred" gift receivers and this would help the giver to cherish the relationship with them. We also identified that givers wanted to provide assistance to the receiver by giving a particular gift. This agrees with the givers' belief that the receiver needs a specific item (Otnes et al., 1993). We observed that givers expressed the

motivational role of the provider only to “sacred” gift receivers. This is the case of a giver giving dollars to her sister for Christmas because she needs the money in this currency. This gift allows the giver to take care of her younger sibling.

A few respondents reported giving gifts motivated by the desire to encourage a particular type of behaviour in the gift receiver, who was normally a “sacred” receiver. A clear case of this is the situation where the giver gave a mug to his younger sister as a gift in order to stop her using the giver’s favourite cup. This finding is consistent with the role of the socialiser proposed by Otnes et al. (1993), where the giver wants to transmit some values to the gift receiver via gift giving. As an exception, we also found several reports where the giver wanted to socialise a “mediated” receiver, for example, by giving a partners’ nephew a book to encourage him to learn a new language.

Furthermore, our findings show that some informants used gift giving to socialise children by using them as proxy figures (who act as the giver in the eyes of the recipient) and to encourage them to engage in the gift experience, which allows them to learn social norms. This is evident in the situation where a parent buys a gift to be handed over by the child to the gift receiver and this event serves as a way to teach gift giving conventions to the child. This extends the literature addressing gifts as a way to socialise children by shaping their tastes, controlling them (Schwartz, 1967) or by making children adopt the role of gift givers (Belk, 1997). Although these researchers mentioned socialisation, they do not explain how it happens. An exception to this is Richins and Chaplin (2015) who indicate that material possessions (e.g., gifts) are used as rewards to shape children’s behaviour.

We also found that the role of the socialiser is not restricted to children, as adults can aim to socialise each other via gift giving. For example, a giver handed a set of pinecones from Amnesty International to a friend in order to transmit ethical values. This complements existing research, which mostly emphasises socialisation as a role to be transmitted to children (e.g., Belk, 1979; Saad, 2007; Schwartz, 1967),

An important finding from our research is the emergence of the role of the *sharer*. Givers felt motivated to select gifts that expressed their desire to share with gift receivers. Givers gave experiences, drinks or food to be consumed together by the giver, the receiver and any special others in the context of "personal" relationships where the giver wanted to develop the bonds with the gift receiver. This suggests the role of the *sharer* as a new motivational role. Roles are sets of behaviours in response to interaction with others and they represent a form of communication in a social situation (Otnes et al., 1993). A clear example of this novel role of the sharer is a giver buying tickets for a friend in order to go to the theatre together. In this case, the ticket is the receiver's property, one of the characteristics defining a gift (Belk, 2010) and the giver aims to express the role of the sharer and to be included in the experience by buying another ticket for herself, which will allow the two of them to spend time together. This finding accords with the idea that by participating in the gift experience, the giver encourages deeper bonding (Clarke, 2008) and emphasises the importance of interaction in the development of attachment bonds (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). We found that the majority of givers enacted the role of the sharer with "personal" recipients, whose bonds with the

giver are not strong. The role of the sharer is different from "sharing" as a particular consumption behaviour. Enacting the role of the *sharer*, where the giver selects a gift that the giver and the receiver may consume jointly and that could promote interaction, such as giving a bottle of wine that the recipient might or might not share with the giver, or cinema tickets, differs from sharing as a form of consumption. This is because "sharing" refers to joint possessions such as the typical Sunday lunch at home, the food in the fridge, or the sofa, which are possessions that do not require invitation, do not generate debt and typically happen in the family context (Belk, 2010).

Finally, a novel insight derived from this study is that the giver can express more than one role through the same gift and within the same gift experience. In fact, givers mentioned that they had adopted different roles towards the receiver and the mediator, who connects the giver and the receiver emotionally. The majority of these involve enacting the role of the pleaser towards the mediator while expressing a different role to the receiver, normally the acknowledgement of the relationship. For example, a giver bought a set of headphones for his sister's husband in order to allow him to listen to loud music while keeping the house quiet (i.e., role of socialiser to his brother-in-law). At the same time, this gift was given to please the giver's sister, who had just had a baby and who was annoyed by her husband listening to loud music (i.e., role of pleaser to his sister).

Our data shows that the expression of multiple motivational roles in gift giving occurs when there are intermediaries involved such as mediators or proxy figures, which suggests that the expression of multiple roles is a characteristic of *inter-*

linked and *indirect* dyadic gift giving. The idea that givers can transmit different roles to different receivers by giving the same gift extends Otnes et al (1993) who assert that one gift expresses only one role because it is very difficult to express more than one role at the same time. This idea has been unchallenged in subsequent gift research using motivational roles, such as the case of Tuten and Kiecker (2009) who assume the same rule of "one gift, one role" (Otnes et al., 1993: 236). In order to please a different person from the receiver, givers often considered the views of the mediator about the gift that they should select for the receiver. Although asking for approval to buy a gift agrees with the social influence of "gatekeepers" (Lowrey et al., 2004), this idea has not been related to the expression of any motivational role.

5.4.3. Towards an understanding of multiple gift-giving motivations within the same gift experience: Integration of ultimate and proximate explanations

An unexpected result from this research is that the study of relationships as antecedents of gift giving motivations uncovered an underlying explanation for multiple gift giving motivations occurring in the same gift event. In fact, we identified that *motivational triggers*, *drivers* and *roles* serve different functions that complement each other and assist the giver in the achievement of their relationship goals via gift giving. The following experience from Lesley's diary illustrates the occurrence of different motivations at the same time, as she aims to develop emotional bonds with this new friend (relationship goal: developing bonds with the receiver), stimulated by the knowledge that the receiver will give a gift to her (motivational trigger: response to receiver actions). This trigger makes Lesley feel

obliged to give a gift (motivational driver: obligation) and she responds by giving a gift that is not very inspired (motivational role: acknowledger):

> *"She is a friend and **I know she will give a gift to me** […] sometimes Xmas [Christmas] presents are given just as its expected and do it **becomes an obligation** […] we have only **become friends in the last 6 months** but we **click quite well** - I think I **will put more effort in getting her a present next year** […] she will like it [the gift] but **I don't think it was very inspired**"* {Lesley, diary, 016G}.

The complementary character of these motivational groups assists the giver in the pursuit of relationship goals. The idea of multiple motivations agrees with the idea that givers are likely to have more than one motivation to give a gift (Davies, 2011) and motivations for interpersonal gift giving tend to exist in combination with other motives (Rugimbana, 2002).

At the same time, providing an explanation for each of those motivational categories sheds light on extant research that recognises the occurrence of different motivations at the same time (e.g., Goodwin et al., 1990; Rugimbana, 2002; Sherry, 1983; Wolfinbarger, 1990) without offering a reason. This differentiation also brings clarity to the conflict faced by the literature when they identify opposite motivations occurring at the same time. For example, Beatty et al. (1991), found that self-respect givers, who wanted to feel good about themselves and relationship givers, who focused on interpersonal relationships were two overlapping motivations to give. In fact, one of these motivations refers to the emotional reward of giving as a motivational driver and the other refers to the

giver's desire to maintain a relationship with a special other, which seems to indicate attachment needs as an ultimate motivation. Another example is Babin et al. (2007) who found that reciprocity and agapic love were two opposed motivations occurring simultaneously. Agapic love (Belk and Coon, 1993), which we showed earlier is part of the emotional reward motivational driver, reflects the givers' emotional state that directs the behaviour instead of triggering it. Therefore, these two motivations serve different functions and they do not contradict each other.

Furthermore, this is the first study (to the best of our knowledge) that identifies gift giving ultimate and proximate motivations. The combination of these two approaches reflects the evolutionary origins of Attachment Theory and provides an integrative approach to study consumer behaviour by drawing on literature from multiple disciplines (i.e., Social Exchange, Psychology and Evolutionary Psychology). This overcomes the limitation identified by Tadajewski and Saren (2008) that the vast majority of gift giving studies have ignored biological accounts and, instead, focus on proximate explanations, such as gift rituals across cultures (Saad, 2007). The approach of this study, using attachment as a guide but being open to other explanations from the data, enabled the connection between social exchange theories and Evolutionary Psychology. As Saad (2013) emphasises, most scholars are unaware of these two complementary levels of explanation, which are needed for a more complete and accurate understanding of consumption phenomena explaining they "why" and "how" of a particular behaviour. This study contributes to consumer research by providing empirical data for the claim that ultimate and

proximate motivations do not compete, instead they complement each other (Griskevicious et al., 2015; Saad, 2013).

This integrative approach responds to the editors of the Journal of Consumer Research, who claim that, in order to understand phenomena of interest across consumer research, researchers need to integrate and combine different models working together rather than using them in competition (Peracchio, Luce and McGill, 2014). The need for an integrative approach was also an issue highlighted by MacInnis (2011) who suggests that to contribute to marketing research, researchers need to accommodate previous findings and solve existing puzzles.

5.4.4. Summary of gift giving goals and motivations

We identified that givers' bonds with receivers act as antecedents of gift giving motivations in three ways.

First, "direct" (sacred, surrogate, personal, social) are the target of the givers' relationship goals while gifts for "mediated" receivers aim to keep close the mediator who ties the giver and the receiver These goals reflect the givers' need to be close to particular others, which agrees with Attachment Theory and suggests that attachment is an ultimate motivation to give. We identified attachment as an ultimate motivation to give by contrasting information from diaries and interviews for the same gift event and by analysing other giver's interactions with the same gift receiver, rather than by receiving a straight answer to the question of why givers wanted to give the gift to a particular person.

This suggests that attachment, as an ultimate motivation to give, happens at an unconscious level for the giver. Givers reported that they wanted to give because the receiver was a particular person, and when they described their relationship with receivers, givers indicated signs of attachment. The unconsciousness of gift giving motives is consistent with Evolutionary Theory indicating that humans are likely to be unaware of the ultimate functions of the goals they pursue (Buss, 1991; Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013).

Second, each relationship goal implies a particular set of motivations, which include motivational *triggers* (e.g., giving for a social occasion), *drivers* (e.g., giving out of obligation) and *roles* (e.g., giving a gift that the receiver would like) that serve different functions that help the giver to achieve the pursued relationship goals and, thus, they reflect proximate motivations to give. This suggests that proximate motivations are in the conscious realm of gift givers as participants could verbalise their motives when we asked them. In fact, studies using givers' self-reports identified proximate motivations such as social norms, obligation or the motivation to give a practical gift in order to provide for the receiver.

These findings advance how a giver's relationship with gift receivers precede gift giving motivations in light of Attachment Theory, which suggests ultimate and proximate explanations as two complementary dimensions of gift giving motivations. This approach extends the understanding of gift giving motives in marketing, which assume a social exchange framework where gifts are an exchange of goods (Homans, 1958) that flow while there is a valued return (Emerson, 1976). Researchers adopting a social exchange perspective argue that gift exchange is a

way for givers to foster interpersonal relationships with receivers (e.g., Aknin and Human, 2015; Beatty et al., 1991; Belk, 1979; Rugimbana et al., 2002; Sherry, 1983; Sherry et al., 1993; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012).

Table 5.2 summarises the ways in which relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations, as different types of relationships (left column) imply a distinct set of relationship goals, motivational triggers, drivers and roles (reflected in the columns from 2 to 5).

Table 5.2: Summary of relationship goals and motivations: Ultimate and proximate explanations

RELATIONSHIPS	ULTIMATE MOTIVATIONS	PROXIMATE MOTIVATIONS		
	RELATIONSHIP GOALS (Attachment as a ultimate motivation)	**MOTIVATIONAL TRIGGERS** (Activate relationship goals**)**	**MOTIVATIONAL DRIVERS** (Emotional states of mind)	**MOTIVATIONAL ROLES** (Symbolic communication)
Sacred/Surrogate	Cherish the receiver: -Show that giver feels cared for. -Show care for the receiver. -Remain close to a receiver whose bonds are strong but distant -Keep alive the memory of the deceased	-Social norms -Relationship reminders -Need identification	-Emotional rewards	-Pleaser -Provider - Socialiser
Personal	Develop bonds with personal receivers	-Social norms	-Gratitude	-Sharer -Pleaser
Social	Signal group membership (show that the giver and receiver are part of the same social context)	-Social norms -Responses to receivers' actions	-Obligation	-Acknowledger
Mediated	Remain close to a givers' special other (mediator)	-Social norms	-Obligation	-Acknowledger / socialiser (to the receiver) -Pleaser (to the mediator)

5.5. CONCLUSION

This discussion chapter aimed to give a comprehensive understanding of dyadic gift giving dimensions, relationships and gift giving motivations in light of Attachment Theory. Drawing on the findings from the diaries and follow-up interviews, our observations from the content analysis and on the literature published on gift-giving, we attempted to achieve a broader understanding of the dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving, how givers relate to gift receivers and how relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations. We found that the defining elements suggesting different dimensions in dyadic gift giving, givers' bonds with gift receivers and special others (different from the receiver) and givers' motivations with particular receivers are in close agreement with Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969). Our findings expand upon the body of gift giving research by conceptualising a new way to understand dyadic gift giving and they try to answer the three research questions that introduced this chapter: (1) What are the dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving? (2) How do givers relate to gift receivers? (3) How do relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations?

First, we identified *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* forms as three dimensions defining dyadic gift giving by reflecting that the giver concentrates on different aspects of the gift experience (i.e., focus on the gift receiver, mediator and gift experience respectively). This focus is translated into the structural elements of gifting involving the presence of intermediaries, the bonds tying the giver and receiver, the relationship goals that givers pursue and how these goals are achieved.

Second, we uncovered *direct* (i.e., sacred, surrogate, personal, social) and *mediated* gift receivers as different ways in which the giver relates to gift receivers are associated with specific relationship goals that givers pursue by giving the gift (e.g., take care of the receiver, maintain the receiver's support to a special other).

Finally, our data suggests that givers' relationships with gift receivers act as antecedents of gift motivations by identifying that the relationship goals that givers pursue with specific receivers respond to attachment as an ultimate gift giving motivation to keep close to those individuals who confer emotional security to the giver. In this way, attachment may help givers to solve survival challenges such as taking care of kin or retaining a partner (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013). In fact, Attachment Theory suggests that a desire to form and maintain social bonds has survival and reproductive benefits (Ainsworth, 1989; Baumeister and Leary, 1995).

At the same time, this study identifies how givers achieve such relationship goals by identifying motivational triggers, drivers and roles, which suggest *proximate motivations* concerned with the mechanisms that underpin a particular behaviour contributing to the explanation of how it works (Scott-Phillips et al., 2011). This approach elucidates the occurrence of simultaneous, different gift motivations. Therefore, we provide an integrated perspective on how relationships act as antecedents of gift giving motivations by bringing together our findings with the extant research and drawing on literature from multiple disciplines (i.e., Marketing, Psychology and Evolutionary Psychology).

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to expand our understanding of dyadic gift giving. To achieve this goal we sought to comprehend the key dimensions that explain dyadic gift giving, the ways in which the giver relates to gift receivers and the role of relationships preceding gift-giving motivations.

In the literature review (Section II), we referred to the main elements defining dyadic gift giving and we examined the importance of relationships, gift-giving motives, occasions, the symbolic meaning of gifts and the emotions in a dyadic gift-giving context. We also discussed the normative dimension of Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), which posits the human tendency to form relationships conferring important survival benefits for individuals, and we considered the potential of the theory of attachment to explain dyadic gift giving in consumer research. The literature review focused our attention on the need to develop the understanding of this consumption context in three main areas, involving: (1) The dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving; (2) how givers relate to gift receivers; and, (3) how givers' relationships with recipients operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations.

As argued in Section III, in order to address these theoretical gaps, we used an interpretative and inductive approach to study gift giving from the perspective of the giver. This is because most gift giving studies have adopted an interpretivist perspective and qualitative methods (Davies et al., 2010), as these methods are

appropriate to access the complexities involved in gift giving (Baskin et al., 2014). The empirical work conducted consisted of two data collection stages, the first at Christmas (a major gift giving season) and the second over summer, to cover a different time of year and avoid the findings being restricted to Christmas. The research process involved an initial background questionnaire completed in total by 48 individuals of whom 28 agreed to take part in the research process. They maintained a gift-giving diary over a four-week period, enabling informants to report their gift giving experiences with little intrusion. Then, from those, 27 diarists accepted the invitation to be involved in a follow-up interview. This approach allowed us to fill gaps from the diaries and gave informants the opportunity to add further insights into their behaviour, including new gift events. The data was content-analysed by using an interpretative approach (Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy, 1988), whereby we inspected inductively different sources of information to obtain a broader picture of gift giving behaviour.

In this chapter, after reflecting on the research experience of the researcher, we introduce the concluding observations of this investigation. We begin by presenting the overall key findings examining the main dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving, the ways in which givers relate to gift receivers and how these relationships are associated with gift giving motivations. Next, we outline practical implications and reflect upon the limitations of the study to conclude by suggesting avenues for further research on gift giving.

6.2. REFLECTIONS FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE

In this section, I[5] offer a brief reflective account of my journey through my PhD. My experiences throughout the process have shaped the way in which I approach and conduct research. I strongly believe that those should be accounted for here.

When I started my PhD research, I began with a strong quantitative mind-set. As an economist, I had only used a quantitative research methods and I had never had to justify fully my philosophical position. When I decided to use qualitative research methods to develop the hypothesis for my experiments, I faced one of the main challenges and revelations during my degree. Complementing my way of looking at the world, I discovered another way of thinking. From this point, I realised that I was embracing a complex yet rewarding learning trip.

One of the first learning outcomes from my decision of using qualitative methods is the awareness of the fact that initial ideas are likely to change as research develops. In my case, the original research design consisted of a sequential mix-methods approach, comprising a brief exploratory study followed by an experimental design. After collecting qualitative data from diaries and semi-structured interviews, the research design was adapted to a new situation where the completion of the experimental stage seemed no longer necessary to complete my doctoral degree. The richness of the qualitative data, the fresh insights from my initial data analysis, the word limit for the PhD document and the directions from the faculty assessors in my PhD annual review at the University of Nottingham led to this interpretivist piece of work.

[5] In this section the first person point-of-view is used because these reflections are personal and represent the thoughts of the person writing them.

My understanding about how to conduct research has developed throughout the PhD process. I started the data analysis by using quantitative content analysis. Some of the interesting aspects that I had grasped reading throughout the data were difficult to capture by using a quantitative content analysis following the suggestions of Kassarjian (1977) and Neuendorf (2005). When I approached the analysis with an interpretivist approach, new themes emerged from the data. Novel insights from the data could have probably been overlooked had I not chose to use an interpretivist approach to data analysis.

Through this journey, my way of looking at the world moved from a positivist to a scientific realist approach to research. My experience shows how a researcher with a scientific realist philosophical stance deals with qualitative methodology and effectively uses an interpretivist approach to analysis. As academic researchers, I think we should keep an open mind to research and use methods and approaches that allow us better to understand the reality.

6.3. KEY FINDINGS

The scholarly contribution of this study lies in extending research by listening to different participants' lived gift giving experiences and by drawing on insights from Attachment Theory. This approach enabled us to address the limitations that we identified in the literature and it allows further understanding on gift giving behaviour. In the following, we will emphasise our main findings reported in Section IV and discussed in Section V, whilst aiming to provide an integrated perspective for this consumption phenomenon. By identifying *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* gift giving forms as distinct gift giving dimensions and by discovering

direct, *surrogate* and *mediated* receivers as different ways in which givers relate to gift receivers, our results contribute to marketing *differentiation*. Furthermore, the integration of gift giving *relationship goals* with gift *motivational triggers*, *drivers* and *roles* for particular types of recipients, advances marketing research by *integration*. Differentiation and integration are in accord with the framework of conceptual contributions to marketing proposed by MacInnis (2011).

We summarise our research questions, research gaps, type of marketing and theoretical contributions in table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Summary of research questions and theoretical contributions

	DYADIC GIFT GIVING		
WHAT WAS RESEARCHED	**DIMENSIONS**	**RELATIONSHIPS**	**MOTIVATIONS**
QUESTIONS ASKED Call for research	**What are the main dimensions explaining dyadic gift giving**?	**How do givers relate to gift receivers?**	**How do relationships operate as antecedents of gift giving motivations?**
GAPS IN DYADIC GIFT GIVING RESEARCH	(1) Few studies examining constituent elements of dyadic gift giving (2) Assumption that the focus of dyadic gift is on the giver and receiver, thus neglecting intermediaries (3) Neglecting relationship goals beyond that of relationship maintenance with the receiver	(1) Over-reliance on giver-receiver dyad when studying giving relationships (2) Lack of criteria to study relationship closeness. Assumptions of closeness associated with relationship labels (i.e., mother) (3) Static way of classifying gift giving relationships	(1) Variety of unconnected gift motives assuming relationship maintenance (2) Weak connection with relationships preceding gift motivations (3) Lack of explanation for conflicting motivations in the same gift event
TYPE OF MARKETING CONTRIBUTION (MacInnis, 2011)	Differentiation of direct, inter-linked and indirect dimensions in dyadic gift giving	Differentiation of direct (i.e., sacred, personal, social), surrogate and mediated gift receivers	Integration of relationship goals (ultimate explanation) and motivational triggers, drivers and roles (proximate explanation) specific for different types of receiver categories
THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS	**Taxonomic framework** differentiating three dyadic gift giving dimensions instead of one: (1) Support the current form of dyadic gift giving relying on the giver-receiver dyad (2) Propose inter-linked and indirect dimensions as new categories involving intermediaries (3) Identify the emphasis of the giver (on the recipient, the mediator or the gift experience) which is related to relationship goals and how they can be attained by proximate motivations	**Taxonomic categorisation** differentiating gift receivers in terms of their role within the giver's gift list: (1) Direct receivers as targets of emotional security (2) Mediated recipients as extensions of givers' special others (requiring the presence of a mediator connecting giver and receiver) (3) Surrogate recipients asserting the replacement of a missing special other	**Integrative framework** identifying ultimate and proximate explanations for gift giving motivations: (1) Accommodating existing gift giving motives (2) Connecting Social Exchange Theory and Evolutionary Psychology through Attachment Theory (3) Explaining multiple gift giving motives within the same event and (4) Revealing new motivations to give

Dyadic gift giving encompasses different dimensions

Our results suggest that one of the most striking findings contributing to the understanding of gift giving is the existence of *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* forms. These three different dimensions define dyadic gift giving as a whole by reflecting a distinct givers' focus of attention, a particular role of intermediaries and different relationship goals. This differentiation evinces that dyadic gift giving involves more than a single entity, thus extending the unidimensionality assumption adopted by previous research (e.g., Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012). By adopting a holistic approach, we observed that the constituent elements of each of these dimensions explain gift giving within the giver-receiver dyad and beyond.

All participants reported experiences where givers focused primarily on the gift receiver, which suggests a *direct gift-giving* dimension underpinned by a giver's sense of emotional closeness with the gift receiver. This was clearly seen in most gift events when we observed the lack of intermediaries, the direct nature of the relationship requiring only a giver and a receiver, and the givers' relationship goals targeting solely gift recipients, for example, to take care of the receiver. These observations undoubtedly show that the giver concentrates on the receiver. At the same time, we observed that the existence of a variety of receivers and their key role in gift giving made it important for the giver to distinguish different levels of closeness with recipients. In fact, closeness influences the givers' relationship goals. For example, the majority of informants portrayed closer receivers as targets for the givers' care via gift giving, while receivers whose relationships were based only on interaction were targets for bond development. At the same time, new

relationships represented bonds that were yet to be formed with the assistance of gifts. The *direct* dimension of gifting confirms the extensive work on dyadic gift giving to date, which relies on the giver's relationship with the receiver (e.g., Baskin et al., 2015). Although this approach certainly explains much gift giving behaviour, we need to be aware that it only reflects one side of this consumption phenomenon.

The analysis of the dimensions of gift giving further suggests that, in some cases, givers' concentrate their attention on an individual who is not the gift receiver. This focus responds to the giver's emotional bonds with this individual, who acts as a mediator bringing together the giver and the recipient. In fact, the mediator is an important person for both the giver and receiver. One can conclude that this suggests a new dimension capturing *inter-linked* gift giving via a mediator. In contrast with the *direct* dimension, the role of the mediator as an intermediary in *inter-linked* gift giving is crucial to understand many gift-giving contexts. As an illustration, a husband mediates the relationship between his wife and mother when the former gives a gift for the latter. Extant research approached situations like the one in the example as a prototypical giver-receiver scenario when, in fact, it is not. We realised that givers translated the special importance of the mediator to their relationship goals by targeting a mediator who would benefit from the support of the receiver. This support is what the giver wants to encourage by giving a gift. The classic approach to gift giving ignores the role of mediators as very special individuals (e.g., spouse), who glue the relationship between the giver and the receiver and determine much of the gift giving behaviour. For example, gifts for

children's friends are usually considered as being made to distant and unimportant recipients. This perspective does not capture the relationship context that these gifts represent by being important for a giver's child.

We have also observed that in dyadic gift giving, givers often emphasise the gift experience which, in our data, became the centre of some givers' reports. Throughout the research we noticed that in this situation the experience was co-created by three individuals: The giver, initiating the gifting process; the proxy figure, acting as an intermediary and playing the role of the giver in the eyes of the receiver; and the receiver, whose expected reactions determined the inclusion of a proxy figure in the event. The active role of all the participants in the gift experience and the indirect nature of the gifting action (giver-proxy figure-receiver) suggest that *indirect gift giving* reflects the special value of the gift experience for those involved. This is not evident in *direct* and *inter-linked* gifting. Consistent with the emphasis of givers in the gift experience as a salient feature of the *indirect* gift giving dimension, givers' relationship goals focus either on the giver, receiver, or proxy figure or all three (i.e., everybody). Among the goals that emerged from the data, we found that givers could keep the memory of a deceased person or socialise a child by the use of proxy figures. At the same time, givers gave gifts to special receivers on behalf of pets or children, in order to reduce the tensions of the relationship by promoting a pleasant gift experience. One of the most common relationship goals in the indirect gift dimension was to take care of the receiver (e.g., a young daughter) by giving a gift from a fictional character (e.g., Father Christmas) who could make the gift experience memorable for the giver and the

receiver, bringing them closer. By adopting an integrated approach to look at dyadic gift giving, we explain the role of fictional characters in gift giving (Belk, 2010; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012) by establishing that they act as proxy figures and we also reveal that not only fictional characters but, also, pets, deceased people, and special others can adopt this new role.

Although our inspection of the data showed that in the *indirect* dimension of gift giving, the relationship between the giver and receiver is close and direct, we believe that *indirect* gift giving can also involve mediated relationships, where the giver and receiver require a special other connecting them. For example, it would be possible that a giver buys a gift for her husband's mother to be given on behalf of the givers' daughter. The issue, here, is whether this reflects an *indirect* dyadic gift giving dimension or if the mediated character of the giver-receiver relationship (mediated by the givers' child and husband) requires the introduction of a new dimension to explain this context.

Overall, the study of the dimensions of dyadic gift giving indicates that unlike previous research (e.g., Weinberger and Wallenforf, 2012), gift giving needs more than a single dimension to be explained. The identification of the *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* forms and their particular characteristics proposes a taxonomic framework that will be able to assist further studies and avoid errors in reasoning derived from the assumption that in all gift experiences, givers focus on the gift receiver when, in reality, they do not.

Gift receivers share different types of bonds with givers

Throughout the three different gift-giving dimensions, this research repeatedly draws attention to the different bonds that tie the giver and receiver, explaining distinct ways in which givers relate to gift receivers directly or indirectly. It became clear in our analysis that understanding how givers connect with recipients requires an open frame of mind to look at givers' descriptions of their relationships with recipients. Unlike most research undertaken (e.g., Caplow, 1982; Joy, 2001), our analysis does not assume that gift receivers who are under the same relationship label (e.g., friend) represent a specific level of closeness. In fact, we found cases where different friends were described as close, although when looking in depth at what made them close, givers reported them very differently. For example, a close friend could be a great source of emotional support, or be close simply because the giver and receiver socialise together, thus representing two different levels of closeness as indicated by Attachment Theory. Furthermore, relationships not typically considered to be close, such as a relationship with a stepmother, were supportive and important for the giver.

By observing givers' descriptions of their connection with gift recipients, we identified features suggesting that givers' attachment needs to be related to particular gift recipients underlying the ways in which givers relate to the receiver. We observed three main types of gift recipients in the data that informants classified as *direct*, *surrogate* and *mediated*.

The majority of reports in our data described givers' perceptions of *direct* gift recipients, which is in line with the prototypical vision of relationships in all gift

research conducted to date concentrating on the giver-receiver dyad (e.g. Joy, 2001). The greater number of *direct* receivers is logical because these recipients represent direct sources or targets of emotional security for the giver, thus the giver and receiver did not need any other individual connecting them emotionally. An important observation in this study is that participants showed, in their reports, different ways in which *direct* recipients conferred emotional security depending on the intensity of the givers' bonds, tying them with direct receivers and suggesting the differentiation among *sacred*, *personal* and *social* gift recipients.

The *sacred* category included instances about the uniqueness of the relationship referring to those recipients as "the most important" and highlighting aspects that made them different from any other person. These observations reflect the notion of sacred individuals as singular, special (Belk, 1989) and unique, features also attributed to attachment figures (Ainsworth, 1989). Responsiveness, evidenced by givers' perception that they can count on the receiver; and support, manifested by the idea that the receiver is a source of emotional comfort; are features associated exclusively with *sacred* recipients, which agree with the basic elements of attachment (i.e., secure base, safe haven). Unlike previous research, sacred receivers are not restricted to specific relationship types. Furthermore, we found that *sacred* recipients are permanent members of the giver's gift list, as they have received gifts from this giver regularly for a long time and the relationship tends to remain stable. Although we indicate that *sacred* recipients are "permanent", we do not mean that the status of these recipients cannot change at some point. We simply note that informants describe them as the most secure and long-lasting

receivers within the givers' gift list, as givers tend to overcome changes in physical distance or givers' life cycle minimising the influence of those factors on gifts to *sacred* recipients.

Several participants' reports included gifts for *personal* gift receivers, whose main characteristics were the interaction and shared interests with the giver. These aspects made receivers worthy of gifts and givers' targets for proximity maintenance. The idea that the giver relates to the receiver only by a set of satisfactory repeated interactions, such as having drinks together, suggests that *personal* recipients are transient within the givers' gift list. When those interactions are interrupted, for example when the giver moves to another city, individuals recognise that this affects gift giving, which will tend to decrease or even cease. In a similar manner, growth in interaction for a relatively long time might turn a *personal* recipient into a supportive, responsive and unique individual, thus changing the status to become a *sacred* gift recipient. The malleability of these relationships is one the main reasons why we suggest that *personal* gift receivers represent the greatest dynamism in the givers' gift network. The lack of strong bonds with the giver and the dependence of the relationship, based solely on interaction, indicate that givers will be prone to adjust their gift giving behaviour, by giving more gifts, stop buying gifts, depending on how the bonds that tie them with receivers evolve.

Givers also reported giving gifts sporadically for *social* recipients, who relate to givers by being part of the same context, as evidenced in the emphasis of the environment they share (e.g., University, workplace, music-school) and the lack of

expressions suggesting emotional connection. *Social* receivers are considered distant. These receivers have often been labelled in the literature as acquaintances (e.g., Komter and Vollenbergh, 1997) and they received little attention in gift research, probably because of their 'occasional receivers' status in the givers' gift list. However, we suggest that although givers do not consider social recipients close, and there is no frequent interaction with them out of the specified context, they enable givers to be part of a group. At the same time, *social* receivers provide the giver with a sense of felt security and, thus, they are worthy of attention. Further to this, we speculate that givers may see *social* recipients as potential collaborators, who could cooperate with the giver in the future. Sporadic gifts could serve as insurance for givers to form bonds that could develop in the future, in case the relationship with a *social* recipient becomes more *personal*.

Further to the identification of *direct* gift receivers, one of the most significant results to emerge from this study is the observation of *surrogate* gift receivers which, together with direct recipients, are characteristic of the *direct* dimension of dyadic gift giving. In a few gift events, givers highlighted the figure of *surrogate* recipients. We suggest that surrogate recipients are a particular type of *direct sacred* receiver representing strong emotional bonds and with the particularity that they substitute a givers' special other who is missing. Givers seem to cope with the loss of special others (e.g., death) or the lack of particular bonds (e.g., not having children) by including *surrogate* recipients in the gift list. This is a way to mark the replacement of a significant, although unavailable, individual. Givers assign the identity of the unavailable special other to the surrogate receiver, for example, by

saying that the receiver is “like a sister to me”. Another example of this is carrying out activities that the giver would typically execute in the presence of the unavailable individual, such as taking a niece on a shopping spree as though she was a daughter. Although we observed that givers’ descriptions were consistent with those of *sacred* recipients, who represent sources of support, the fact that they assert the replacement of a missing special other means that *surrogate* recipients deserve particular attention as a new category of how givers relate to gift recipients.

We further suggest that givers’ need for emotional security is also manifested by gift giving to *mediated* receivers, who are important to the giver to the extent that they are extensions of a significant person to the giver. This person acts as a mediator connecting the giver and the receiver. Givers always referred to *mediated* recipients in relation to the mediator, for example, “my daughter’s husband” and “my sister’s best friend”. In the vast majority of events, givers described mediators as a *sacred* or a *surrogate* relationship for them. We identified few cases of gifts for *mediated* recipients where the mediator represented a *personal* relationship, which is based only on interaction. These experiences were restricted to small gifts for friends’ children. We did not identify any receiver whose relationship was mediated by a *social* relationship, which we believe is because *social* receivers are limited to a specific social context where they do the same activity as the giver or share the same physical space. Mediated gift receivers are characteristic of the *inter-linked* dimension of dyadic gift giving.

Additionally, we observed the existence of multiple mediators, where a main mediator requires more than one connection with the gift receiver (e.g., gift for the brother of a sister's husband). In gift giving, multiple mediation seems to reinforce the importance of the givers' bonds with the main mediator (e.g., sister) as the gift is extended two levels to beyond a giver's special other (e.g., sister's husband and that husband's brother). Although Caplow (1992) mentions first and second tier family members he does not identify the significance of special individuals connecting giver and receiver.

Taken together, *sacred*, *personal*, *social*, *surrogate* and *mediated* gift recipients (see figure 6.1) comprise a taxonomic framework reflecting distinct ways in which the giver relates to gift receivers. This taxonomy does not restrict the classification of recipients to existing categories (e.g., Joy, 2001). Our data suggests that by including specific gift individuals in their gift list, givers choose the receivers who can directly or indirectly satisfy an underlying need for emotional security. Because of the differences in the intensity of the provision of security, we identified that *sacred* and *surrogate* recipients are the most permanent, *personal* recipients are the most transient, *social* are sporadic in the giver's gift list and *mediated* depend on the role of the mediator. The tendency of particular receivers to have different levels of permanence within the givers gift list, and their ability to move from one category to another, endows the gift list with dynamism. For example, personal receivers can become sacred or social recipients. The dynamism of the givers' gift list is an aspect overlooked by previous studies, where researchers place an

emphasis on the givers' life cycle and how this can affect the inclusion of receivers in the gift list (e.g., Otnes et al, 1994b).

Givers' connections with recipients and gift motivations: An integrative framework

Our findings suggest that probably one of the most distinctive theoretical implications of this study is that the underlying need of givers for emotional security manifests by the pursuit of specific relationship goals with particular recipients, which influences the motivations that help givers to achieve those goals via gift giving.

The current data highlight that a latent human need for security affects the ways in which givers connect with specific gift recipients (i.e., sacred, personal, social, surrogate and mediated) and determines the particular relationship goals that givers pursue by giving a gift. Specifically, we observed that attachment is an ultimate motivation to give related to givers' survival challenges such as retaining a partner. These challenges underlie the giver's goals of cherishing the relationship with sacred/surrogate recipients, fostering bonds with personal receivers, signalling group membership with social receivers and keeping close to mediators by giving to mediated recipients. For example, givers cherish sacred recipients by taking care of them, which is a way of taking care of family or retaining a mate, two survival challenges suggested in the literature (e.g., Saad, 2007). At the same time, givers could give a gift to a personal receiver in order to have someone to socialise with, thus following a goal of self-protection from external threats in the sense suggested by Griskevicious and Kenrick (2013).

The main contribution of these goals, underpinned by the biological function of Attachment Theory enhancing individuals' survival (Bowlby, 1969) is that we provide empirical evidence that corroborates givers' tendency to face the challenges of self-protection, taking care of family and retaining a mate via gift giving. Therefore, we identified attachment as an ultimate motivation in gift giving. Although in their theoretical paper, Griskevicious and Kenrick (2013) suggest the relevance of Attachment Theory to explain mate retention, their claim was restricted to a romantic context and did not provide any empirical data.

A key strength of the present study is that givers achieve relationship goals through a combination of proximate motives involving motivational triggers, drivers and roles, which lead to gift giving behaviour (see figure 6.1). These motives are consistent with the definition of motivation as an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates an individual's behaviour to achieve a specific goal (Murray, 1964). As opposed to the literature on gift motivations to date, which tends to focus on existing motivations (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1991) or look for alternative ones (e.g., Belk and Coon, 1993), we adopted an integrative approach. As a result, we observed that motivations inform us about different motivational categories, which serve distinct functions in order to attain a relationship goal.

Unlike previous research, which fails to define motivational triggers and restricts them to social occasions (e.g., Davies et al., 2010; Hill and Romm, 1996), we observed that motivational triggers are events stimulating the thought of giving a gift for a specific individual and activating a giver's relationship goals at a conscious or unconscious level. Our findings corroborate that social occasions such as

birthdays and Christmas are the most frequently cited events. They serve the function of triggering gift giving and goal achievement for most gift receivers and almost exclusively for *social* and *mediated* recipients. We further discovered alternative motivational triggers. In fact, *receivers' actions* triggered the goals of developing bonds with *personal* recipients and forming ties with *social* receivers. This emphasises the importance of reciprocity in the development of bonds within these two relationship contexts. Additionally, the identification of receiver's needs (e.g., a son's iPod has just broken) and seeing something that made the giver think about the recipient (e.g., seeing a Frappuccino machine that a father would love to own) emerged from the data as alternative triggers for gift giving with the goal of cherishing sacred and surrogate gift recipients.

We have also observed that the pursuit of specific relationship goals cannot be understood by simply looking at gift giving triggers. This is reinforced by the function of *motivational drivers*, which refer to the factors that direct and sustain the thought of giving a gift and help givers to achieve their relationship goals. Our research shows that motivational drivers are consistent with the notion of emotions motivating an action (Izard, 1992), as participants' descriptions emphasised feeling motivated to give based on their emotional status at the time of deciding on giving a gift. Only one previous study has associated gift giving motivational drivers as the representation of givers' states of mind (Rugimbana et al., 2002). However, this idea is not explained in depth and leaves the emotional side of motivational drivers unaccounted for. We found evidence suggesting that

gift giving motivational drivers comprise *emotional rewards*, feelings of *gratitude* and *obligation*.

The majority of incidents reporting emotional rewards indicate that givers feel well about giving a gift, experiencing gratifying emotions such as happiness and love that help the giver to cherish *sacred* and *surrogate* recipients. This supports the idea that feeling good about benefiting another person promotes the welfare of the relationship between them (Mikulincer et al., 2005). Although powerful positive emotions as a motivation have been the main trait associated with Agapic love (Belk and Coon, 1993) and an underlying factor promoting altruistic behaviour (e.g., Trivers, 1971), extant research has paid little attention to emotions operating as a reward that motivates gift giving.

In contrast with previous studies suggesting gratitude as a gift occasion (e.g., Minowa et al., 2011), we further observed that gratitude served the function of a motivational driver, reflecting the internal emotional state of the giver before deciding on giving the gift and thus, motivating gift giving behaviour. Felt *gratitude* motivating gift giving partially corroborates the idea of gratitude as way of promoting relationship maintenance (e.g., Gordon et al., 2012). This is because developing bonds with personal recipients, whose relationship was based on interaction and shared interests, was the main givers' goal that we observed in the data in relation to gratitude.

The presence of motivational drivers was also emphasised in the data when we observed some gift events where givers felt *obliged* to give after the thought of giving a gift was triggered, for example, by receiving a gift. The notion of *obligation*

supports extant research, which portrays obligation as a classic gift-giving motivation (e.g., Wolfinbarger, 1991) and a motivational driver associated with negative emotions (Rugimbana et al., 2002). Our findings further extend this view by suggesting that *obligation* has a positive side. This is evidenced by feelings of *obligation* helping givers to achieve their relationship goals of forming bonds with social recipients, simply because they are part of the same context. In the case of *mediated* gift receivers, with whom givers do not share strong bonds, they can provide support for the givers' relationship with a special other different from the recipient. In this context, givers seemed to be unaware of the benefits of *obligation* for their relationships, as we observed these goals by comparing diaries and interviews reporting about the same gift events involving the same people.

We further observed that givers adopted the motivational roles of the *pleaser, provider, socialiser, acknowledger* and *sharer*, in order to express a particular message by giving a specific gift. The identification of motivational roles in the data supports and extends the work of Otnes et al. (1993). While the roles of the *pleaser, provider, socialiser* (associated with sacred recipients) and *acknowledger* (associated mostly with social and mediated recipients) support the findings of Otnes et al., (1993), a new role emerged from the data, the role of the *sharer*. This role is especially important in the context of personal relationships encouraging the development of bonds with the receiver by the promotion of interaction between the giver and personal recipients. Furthermore, a major discovery from our study is that in the context of *inter-linked* and *indirec*t dyadic gift giving dimensions, givers can express two roles at the same time by giving a single gift. One of those roles is

expressed to the recipient and the other to the proxy figure or mediator. The expression of two roles helps givers to achieve their relationship goals. For example, the giver can please the mediator and acknowledge the gift receiver in order to encourage the receiver to support the mediator. These new insights highlight the idea that gift receivers are not necessarily the main focus of the giver and it is of great relevance to take into consideration how this manifests in gift giving.

Taken together, it became clear that *motivational triggers*, *drivers* and *roles* perform specific functions in the attainment of relationship goals through gift giving. This idea corroborates the definition of motivation as an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates an individual's behaviour to achieve a specific goal (Murray, 1964). At the same time, these three motivational dimensions extend the understanding of motivations in gift giving by explaining the occurrence of different gift giving motivations at the same time, a conflict faced by many gift researchers (e.g., Babin et al., 2007). In fact, we observed many gift giving reports where relationship goals had been triggered, driven and roles expressed in order to achieve those relationship goals. Although we could speculate that goals are achieved by following the sequence of motivational triggers, drivers and roles as a process (see figure 6.1), this suggestion should be taken with caution because we do not have evidence about the order of these elements. We mostly explain how receivers operate as antecedents of gift motivations.

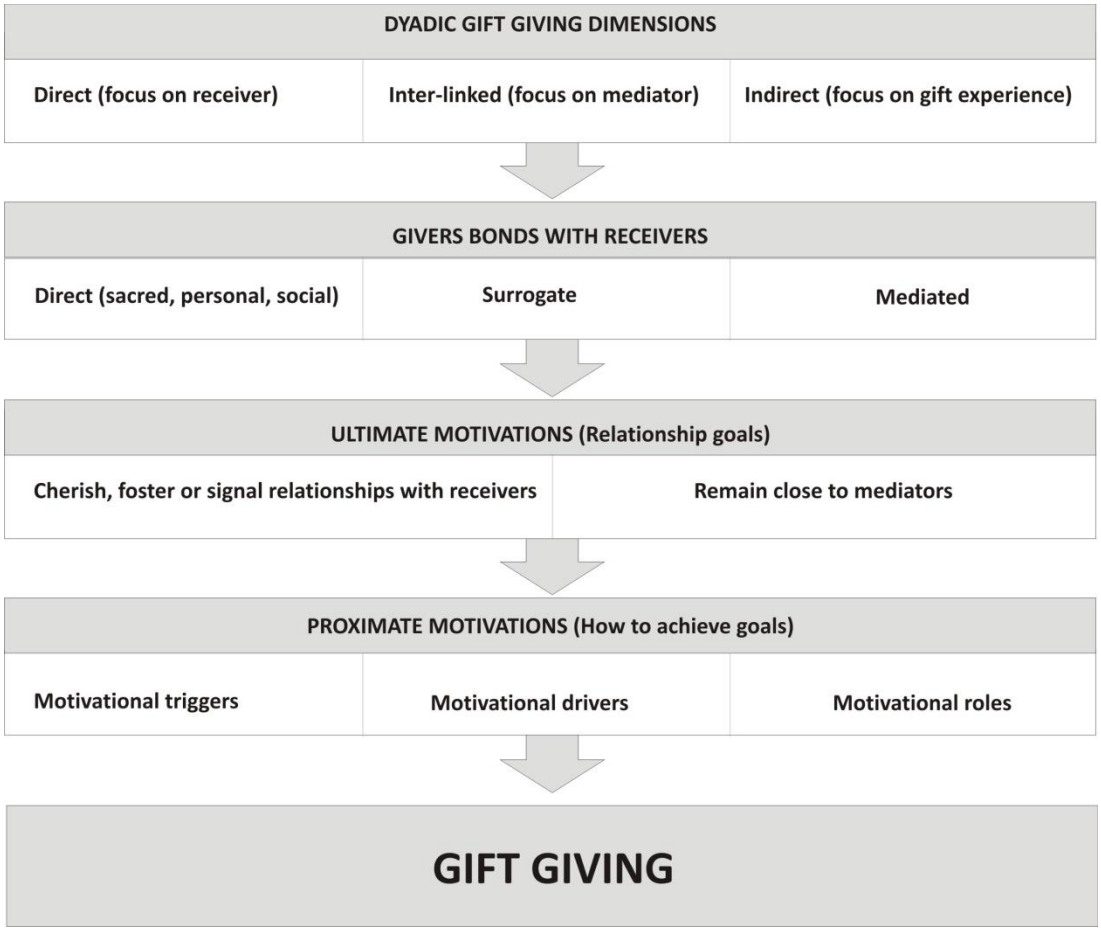
The systematic justifications for gift giving suggest that, through the observation that ultimate and proximate explanations illuminate two different dimensions of

the same behaviour, our data emphasises that social exchange theory, concerned with proximate explanations, and Evolutionary Psychology, focused on ultimate accounts of behaviour complement each other rather than being competing paradigms.

Our theoretical contribution can, therefore, be summarised as the identification of gift giving dimensions linked to givers' relationships with recipients and motivations. This is achieved by expanding the existing understanding on the different dimensions that define dyadic gift giving, and by acknowledging different ways in which givers relate to gift recipients, which affect givers' relationship goals as well as the multiple and complementary motivations leading to gift giving. As a result, we introduced an alternative conceptualisation for dyadic gift giving to that of reciprocal gift exchange (Davies et al., 2010; Sherry, 1983; Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012), and we offer an integrated perspective to study this consumption phenomenon. Drawing on the suggestion that Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) could enhance the understanding of gift giving (Griskevicious and Kenrick, 2013; Nguyen and Munch, 2011), we expanded the knowledge in this subject by emphasising the importance of an underlying human need for security which can be achieved through gift giving. We show that attachment influences the ways in which givers relate to gift recipients, affecting givers' relationship goals (ultimate explanation) and explaining how such goals are achieved (proximate motivations). We also provide empirical evidence for the suggestion that gift giving highlights how ultimate and proximate explanations can operate jointly to study a consumption phenomenon (Saad, 2006).

Figure 6.1 summarises the observed sequence, which begins with the gift giving dimensions (direct, inter-linked and indirect), reflecting the givers' focus of attention on the receiver, a relationship mediator or on the gift experience. These focal points are associated with distinct types of recipients, who represent different ways in which the giver relates to them comprising direct (i.e., sacred, personal, social), surrogate and mediated gift receivers. At the same time, such recipients are connected with specific relationship goals that givers aim to achieve by the experience of particular motivations, which serve different functions (i.e., trigger, drive or express a role) and show how recipients operate as antecedents of gift motivations.

FIGURE 6.1: Sequence leading to dyadic gift giving behaviour



We further believe that the integrative perspective adopted in the present research answers Sherry's (1983) call for a holistic approach to gift giving, while looking at gifting beyond an "aggregate of dyadic gift giving transactions", an assumption that limits the conceptualisation of gift giving (Giesler, 2006: 284). This research also calls for the attention of consumer researchers and marketers concerning the need to be aware of the givers' focus of attention and how this is translated to the structural elements (e.g., presence of intermediaries, relationship goals, motivations) that define dyadic gift giving dimensions.

It is somewhat surprising that despite the attention paid to the role of relationships in gift giving, research still over-relies on existing relationship labels (e.g., husband or sister) to study gift giving, even when these labels "do not fully contextualise relationship experiences" (Ruth et al., 1999: 386). Our research further highlights that givers relate to gift recipients by meeting attachment needs (e.g., recipients as sources/targets of support), which suggest a new way of identifying givers' different levels of closeness with gift recipients that are not restricted to any specific relationship type and consider other individuals beyond the giver-receiver dyad (e.g., mediators connecting them). Although it was not the focus of this research, we also contributed to Attachment Theory by identifying how attachment affects the behaviour of the attached person or the attachment figure towards other individuals, who are extensions of these attachment bonds.

To conclude, our research connects the ways in which givers relate to recipients and gift motivations. We integrate them by identifying givers' relationship goals and how such goals are attained by the experience of multiple motivations, which serve

different purposes and lead to gift giving. This extends the understanding of gift motivations in the literature, as extant research makes little attempt to integrate existing and new motives.

6.4. PRACTICAL RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Our findings confirm gift giving as one of the most prevalent rituals of consumption manifested by its economic significance and important practical implications (Saad and Gill, 2003). In fact, the findings of this study have a number of important recommendations that suggest several courses of action for retailers, marketers, brands, advertising agencies, individual consumers, government and also for educators and parents.

A key implication for marketers is that the identification of different dyadic gift giving dimensions with a different givers' focus of attention offers alternative approaches to the market of gifts. In fact, we discovered that givers can concentrate their attention on the receiver, the mediator or the gift experience. Marketers have focused almost exclusively on the receiver by orientating gifts for him, for her, for mothers or for children.

By identifying that in the *indirect dimension* of gift giving, givers also focus on the gift experience, we suggest that marketers could use marketing communications to encourage givers to select additional gifts to be given on behalf of proxy figures (e.g., a child or Father Christmas). Taking into consideration proxy figures entails additional emotional advantages for consumers and further commercial opportunities for business. For example, a father could buy the traditional

Christmas gift for his wife as direct gift giving and also involve their child by selecting an extra present on the child's behalf which is indirect gift giving. From the consumer perspective, this new indirect gift reflects the emphasis on the gift experience, which helps the giver to teach his child social norms and aims to make the experience more exciting for the giver's spouse. From the business point of view, rather than selecting a single gift at Christmas, the giver could buy multiple gifts for the same person, with clear advantages for brands and retailers.

Additionally, when givers focus on mediators, who connect their relationship with the gift receiver which we have termed the *inter-linked* dimension, practitioners need to be aware that the decision to buy a mediated dyadic gift involves another person, the mediator, who directly or indirectly influences the giver's decision. Considering that most givers look for gift ideas on the internet (Mintel, 2015), marketers could offer online software solutions that encourage givers to ask for advice from the mediators in their gifting who are the target of the givers' relationship objectives. These solutions would allow givers to share information about the proposed gift and interact with the mediator (e.g., partner), who would be involved in the gift selection and, thus, pleased with the givers' choice for a mediated gift recipient (e.g., partners' brother).

Furthermore, advertising appeals can make use of a greater understanding of receivers and the goals that givers pursue in a relationship. This can be done, for example, by depicting the support of a husband's mother for the spouses' relationship after receiving a gift from her daughter-in-law. This approach would make advertising more effective and more likely to influence and reinforce the

benefits of the relationship in the eyes of the receiver, thus strengthening the value of the gift (Parsons, 2002). The implications of *inter-linked* dyadic gift giving that we used here could be extended to customer relationship management. This is evident in the case of a hairdresser who could give a free haircut to a customer's daughter in order to retain the mother as a loyal customer.

Another important practical implication is that marketers can design segmentation strategies building on how givers categorise gift receivers according to their characterisation within the giver's gift list (i.e., sacred, personal, social, surrogate and mediated).

The tendency of particular receivers to represent different levels of permanence within the givers' gift list and their ability to move from one category to another could be used by retailers to retain customers. Gifts for sacred gift recipients, who are the most important and permanent members of the giver's gift list, can reflect the continuity of the relationship by offering gifts that build on previous acquisitions. For example, the brand of jewellery "Pandora" seems to use a version of this idea, by designing a type of basic bracelet that allows the receiver to collect different charms that the giver can give on different occasions. There are opportunities for retailers and brands to extend the idea of permanent receivers in a different way. For example, when buying a gift, retail staff could offer givers information about complementary products/brands that could be bought as gifts for the same person on the next gift occasion. Retailers could also help givers to keep track of past gifts, as this knowledge could be a good starting point for sales staff to give advice about gifts for a sacred recipient in the future. This approach

facilitates future gift selection for the giver because there are more giving opportunities for permanent gift receivers than for other recipients and this can lead to brand loyalty. For example, a giver who buys a handbag for her mother can be informed about other products (i.e., a scarf, a purse, a pair of shoes) that might be a nice complement to the handbag and a good gift idea for a future occasion for the same receiver.

By contrast, givers attempting to develop bonds with personal recipients could be targeted by being offered gifts that promote interaction between the giver and the receiver, such as giving experiential gifts or gifts to be shared. This could be applied to a business context by training sales staff to identify if the givers' target recipients are personal, thus based on interaction, and by directing customers towards gifts that facilitate interaction (e.g., gift experiences, cinema tickets, drinks or food to be shared).

Another important practical implication refers to the use of the motivations integrative framework for implementation purposes. Marketers, brands, retailers and businesses involved in the gift industry can use each of the different motivational categories separately (i.e., motivational triggers, drivers and roles) or in combination with each other. This research acknowledges that marketers are competently employing "social occasions" as gift-giving triggers. For example, marketers use Western social gift-giving occasions such as Valentine's Day in cultures where it was not a tradition to give in order to promote gift giving (Rugimbana et al., 2002), thus putting a lot of pressure on giving for calendrical occasions (Otnes, et al., 1994a). Businesses also stimulate the emergence of new

occasions from time to time, intended to promote gift purchases such as those for Grandparents' Day (Otnes and Beltramini, 1996) and Halloween in the UK (McKechnie and Tynan, 2008). Further to "social occasions", practitioners should use other triggers more efficiently such as "relationship reminders". Gift marketing communications could remind givers of the unique, responsive and supporting characteristics that define sacred recipients and, thus, stimulate an unplanned gift to cherish those recipients. Advertising appeals could also encourage givers to be attentive to the needs of sacred recipients, thus employing "need identification" as a trigger to take care of the recipient via gift giving (i.e., cherish a sacred receiver). A focus on the identification of sacred recipients' needs in mundane situations (e.g., replace a pair of worn-out slippers, recovering from a bad day) could stimulate and enhance gift giving greatly while also assisting givers in the achievement of their relationship goals. Although retailers such as Debenhams propose a gift list to recover from a divorce (Collins, 2010) and other marketers suggest gifts to recover after plastic surgery (Parker Center for Plastic Surgery, 2014), these seem to be restricted to life changing events.

Greater efforts are needed to ensure that after an event has been triggered it translates to the decision to give a gift. For a specific season when giving gifts is expected (e.g., Christmas as a trigger), retailers could use atmospherics to recreate on- and offline spaces that raise the giver's awareness of the relationship benefits that they gain by giving the gift. In some cases, the atmosphere of a place appealing to the five senses is more influential than the product in the purchase decision of the buyer (Kotler, 1973). The benefits of achieving relationship goals might reduce

the negative connotations associated with motivational drivers when giving gifts motivated by obligation. These gifts are typical for social and mediated recipients. For example, a Christmas gift for a neighbour out of obligation can make the giver feel better if the giver is made aware of the support that the relationship with the neighbour brings, for example, helping the giver when needed.

In a similar way, retailers can enhance other drivers such as emotional rewards, which is characteristic of sacred and surrogate receivers; or gratitude, which is common in personal recipients. Retailers could use relationship benefits as a promotional appeal including in store images and advertising that portray the positive benefits that givers gain from the relationships in which they are involved. These implications propose new practical applications for retailers, who according to Arnold and Reynolds (2003), need to understand the variety of gift giving motivations because they affect the way in which consumers evaluate atmospherics or marketing communications.

Finally, policy makers could use gift giving to promote social integration. The Social Integration Commission in the UK defines social integration as "*the extent to which people in Britain interact with others who are different to themselves in relation to age, social grade, ethnicity and age*" (Social Integration Commission, 2016a: 7). This organism emphasises that social integration is important because the population in the UK is becoming more diverse in terms of age, ethnicity and social grade (Social Integration Commission, 2016b). For example, 30% of pupils in state-funded primary schools are from minority ethnic groups (Office for National Statistics, 2015). Building on the idea of gift giving as a way to form relationships with "social"

receivers, policy makers could encourage schools, leisure centres and enterprises to provide gifting opportunities that enable people from different backgrounds to interact with each other within those contexts. For example, at the beginning of the school year, teaching institutions could organise gift exchange events within the school environment. In these events, each child could create a handmade gift to give to another child emphasising the importance of the gift giving ritual. This gift might be a first step that provides an opportunity for interaction for children who otherwise might be more reluctant to initiate contact to each other.

6.5. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The major limitation of this study is the limited sample size. Our attempt to recruit a diverse sample of participants and the high commitment required from them to complete the research (i.e., diaries completed over a four-week period followed by an interview) were translated into a small and reducing number of informants. A greater number of participants might further emphasise the understanding of surrogate recipients and the indirect dimension of gift giving. Furthermore, we might be able to provide strong evidence about the sequence of relationships and motivations as an organised process.

Regarding the time of data collection, some occasions are under-represented in our data because we gathered the data only at two different seasons of the year. Thus, we did not capture calendrical occasions such as Valentine's Day or Mother's Day, which might bring new insights to our research. We could overcome this by adding additional data collection stages in order to record the major gift giving seasons.

Another drawback of this research is that we did not investigate individual differences resulting from different attachment styles and we focused on normative attachment insights, so capturing only one dimension of Attachment Theory. This decision was the outcome of the results of our screening questionnaire and the need for further research in normative attachment. Future research could benefit from a combination of both normative attachment and individual differences.

Finally, another respect in which the study could be improved is to fully explore the influence of Attachment Theory on gift giving and prompt participants to describe their relationships and motivations in terms of attachment. We asked them to describe their experiences in their own terms. Although this approach aimed to avoid prompting and biasing participant responses, it may have caused us to overlook other ways in which Attachment Theory sheds light on gift giving. Therefore, future research could use projective techniques in order to get participants to describe relationships with gift receivers and motivations in attachment terms.

6.6. AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation.

Future research could usefully compare *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* dyadic gift giving dimensions. For example, we did not find any case of a giver giving a gift to a mediated relationship on behalf of another person, although this is theoretically possible. This could be the case of a giver buying a gift for her husband's grandmother (receiver), whose relationship is tied to the giver by her husband

(mediator) and this gift could be given on behalf of their child (proxy figure). In this situation, we might question the focus of the giver. Could this be a case of *inter-linked* gift giving emphasising the role of the mediator? Is it *indirect* as defined by the use of a proxy figure and, thus, enhancing the gift experience? Perhaps this a new gift-giving dimension defined differently. These questions concerning the boundaries of *direct*, *inter-linked* and *indirect* dyadic gift giving and the potential existence of other forms of giving warrant further comparative empirical research.

It is recommended that more research be undertaken to examine direct, inter-linked and indirect dimensions of dyadic gift giving from the perspective of the gift receiver. Do receivers mirror the structural elements of each of these dimensions in the same way as givers do? What are the differences and why should they occur?

Since the present study only found surrogate receivers substituting kin relationships, a future study could assess the existence of surrogate receivers within other contexts. For example, a patient could give gifts to a psychiatrist who is considered as a surrogate friend and a confidant to this individual who does not have any close friends. A pet could also replace the role of a friend and therefore be the target of the gift proclaiming its replacement of a missing special other.

It would be very interesting for a future study to investigate how givers integrate in their gift-giving list other emotionally significant receivers different from living people. For example, researchers could look at gift giving for the deceased, God or pets, which are often considered attachment figures and provide individuals with emotional security (Cicirelli, 2010). In fact, givers present gifts for the deceased (Bonsu and Belk, 2003), for God (Hyde, 1983) and for pets (Minowa et al., 2011;

Mintel, 2015; Ridgway et al., 2008). Despite special emotional connections, such as those between the living and the deceased, being reflected in other consumption contexts (O'Donohoe and Turley, 2005), the way in which givers relate to this type of important receiver has received little attention in the gift literature. Therefore, the existence of important receivers different from the ones we have included in this study would be a fruitful topic for further consumer research.

More research is required to develop a new measurement scale for gift giving motives integrating ultimate and proximate motivations for attachment as a motivation to give, motivational triggers, drivers and givers' roles. This is because the scales proposed by extant research are limited in several regards. Some appear to only measure motivational drivers, such as voluntary and obligatory (e.g., Goodwin et al., 1990). Others do measure a mixture of motivations but do so without considering the purpose that each motivation serves, such as the practicality of gifts and the experiential benefits of giving a gift (e.g., Wolfinbarger and Yale, 1993).

Finally, a natural progression of this work is to analyse quantitatively how the ways in which givers relate to gift receivers, in terms of their relationship goals, motivational triggers, drivers, and how role affects their gift giving motivations. This will facilitate the development and testing of a model to confirm the connections between givers' bonds with recipients and multiple motivations occurring in the same event. We believe that a set of experiments would be able to do this. For example, the researcher could recreate a real gift-giving situation by giving participants a budget with which to buy a gift. These participants would be exposed

to different categories of recipients in terms of: (1) The *receiver type*, involving sacred, personal, social receivers and (2) their *permanence in the givers'* gift list, comprising permanent, transient or sporadic recipients. Depending on the *receiver type* and *permanence in the givers' gift lis*t scenarios (independent variables), it would be possible to observe differences in givers' *ultimate and proximate motivations* (dependent variable). We could operationalise the "receiver type" and "receivers' permanence in the givers' list" variables by using the descriptions of the relationships observed in this thesis. For example, we could present sacred receivers as unique, supportive and responsive gift recipients. As Baskin et al. (2012: 179) point out, research looking for "a richer understanding of some of the complexities of gift giving" (e.g., interpretivist research), is complementary with an experimental approach. Furthermore, considering that most gift-giving research has used a qualitative perspective (Davies, 2010), the gift giving literature could benefit from an experimental design.

To conclude, this study identified new gaps concerning dyadic gift giving dimensions, types of receivers and further issues to be addressed using new methodologies of scaling and experimentation. Only by recognising challenges in the understanding of gift giving and proposing new directions for future research, we can begin to disentangle the complexities of dyadic gift giving in consumer behaviour.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Background questionnaire

To go to the live questionnaire embedded in the website click here:

https://sites.google.com/site/giftsresearch/selection-questionnaire

SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

* Required

We would like to know about your gifts..

GIFTS GIVEN *

You are GIVING gifts between 16th December and 15th January, to approximately how many people?

OCCASIONS *

Please, indicate as many occasions as you consider appropriate. If the occasion/s is not in the list, indicate it at the end.

- ☐ Christmas
- ☐ New Year
- ☐ Hanukak
- ☐ Birthday
- ☐ Wedding
- ☐ Anniversary
- ☐ Graduation
- ☐ New born
- ☐ Christening
- ☐ Thank you gift
- ☐ Apology gift
- ☐ Souvenir - return from a trip
- ☐ Bequest
- ☐ Bereavement
- ☐ Spontaneous

- ☐ Other:

GIFTS RECEIVED *

You expect to RECEIVE gifts between 16th December and 15th January, from approximately how many people?

How do you feel about the Christmas season? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I don't like it	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	I love it

How do you feel about Christmas gift exchange? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I don't like it	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	I love it

In order to understand your diary, we would like to know a little bit more about you...

Please, select your degree of agreement with the four statements below.

It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I sometimes worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others. *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Disagree	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Strongly Agree

GENDER *

AGE *

INCOME *

Salary per week before deductions

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS *

The next stage

WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THE NEXT STAGE? *

Remember it involves completing online diaries about your gift giving and receiving experiences followed by a short online chat

YOUR NAME (OR NICKNAME) *

If you wish to participate in the next stage, which name would you like me to use to communicate with you?

EMAIL ADDRESS *

If you want to take part in the next stage, I will need an email address to contact you. You can indicate me an existing email address you are happy for me to keep in touch with you OR you can create a new email account (instructions provided below).

How to create a new email address (Gmail)

1.- Copy the following URL and paste it in your browser: https://accounts.google.com/SignUp?continue=https%3A%2F%2Faccounts.google.com%2FManageAccount 2.- Complete the form asking for your name, the new email address you decide, password, previous email address and finally type the code you see in the screen. You do not need to provide a phone number and I will not be able to see your previous email address. Click next step. 3.- You have already created your account! 4.- At the top- left of the page you will see different options: Your name - Search- Images- Maps -Play - YouTube- News - GMAIL - Drive - Calendar - More 5.- Click in GMAIL and you will access your new email account. 6.- Remember your new email address and password!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

We will contact you soon.

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

APPENDIX 2: Gift giving diary entry

GIFT GIVING RECORD

* Required

EMAIL ADDRESS *

Please, indicate the same email address you provided when you completed the selection questionnaire

What is a gift?

Consider that a gift is the transfer of something without the expectation of payment. A gift can be bought, handmade, recycled, a family heirloom, an existing collection item, an experience...

Your gift giving experience

DATE *

The date you chose a gift for a particular person

TYPE OF GIFT *

What kind of gift are you giving?

COST OF GIFT *

How much did this gift cost in terms of money, time, effort...?

OCCASION *

Do you give the gift for a particular occasion?

- ☐ Christmas
- ☐ New Year
- ☐ Hanukak
- ☐ Birthday
- ☐ Wedding
- ☐ Anniversary
- ☐ Graduation
- ☐ New born
- ☐ Christening
- ☐ Thank you gift
- ☐ Apology gift
- ☐ Souvenir - return from a trip
- ☐ Bequest
- ☐ Bereavement
- ☐ Spontaneous
- ☐ Other: ____

WHY DO YOU WANT TO GIVE THIS GIFT TO THIS PERSON? *

YOUR FEELINGS *

How do you feel about GIVING this gift to this person? Select as many options as you need.

- ☐ Loving (Showing love)
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Grateful
- ☐ Proud
- ☐ Excited
- ☐ Surprised

- ☐ Fearful (from failure)
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Uneasy
- ☐ Embarrassed
- ☐ Disappointed
- ☐ Anxious
- ☐ Other: _____

GIFT RECEIVER'S FEELINGS *

How do you think the person receiving your gift will feel? Select as many options as you need.

- ☐ Loved
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Grateful
- ☐ Proud
- ☐ Excited
- ☐ Surprised
- ☐ Fearful
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Uneasy
- ☐ Embarrassed
- ☐ Disappointed
- ☐ Anxious
- ☐ Other: _____

*

Give more details about your feelings when GIVING this gift to this person and how you think this person will feel after receiving your gift



Your relationship with the gift receiver

TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP *

- ☐ Partner/ Husband/ Wife
- ☐ Father
- ☐ Mother
- ☐ Daughter
- ☐ Son
- ☐ Brother
- ☐ Sister
- ☐ Grandmother
- ☐ Grandfather
- ☐ Grandson
- ☐ Granddaughter
- ☐ Daughter's partner or spouse
- ☐ Son's partner or spouse
- ☐ Brother's partner or spouse
- ☐ Sister's partner or spouse
- ☐ Aunt
- ☐ Uncle
- ☐ Niece
- ☐ Nephew
- ☐ Cousin
- ☐ Godmother
- ☐ Godfather
- ☐ Friend (same gender)
- ☐ Friend (opposite gender)
- ☐ Colleague (same gender)
- ☐ Colleague (opposite gender)

- Doctor
- Teacher
- Spiritual counsellor (e.g. priest)
- Acquaintance
- Other:

KIND OF RELATIONSHIP *

How would you describe your relationship with the gift receiver and how important is this person in your life?

DISTANCE FROM YOU *

How far from you does this person live?

FREQUENCY OF CONTACT *

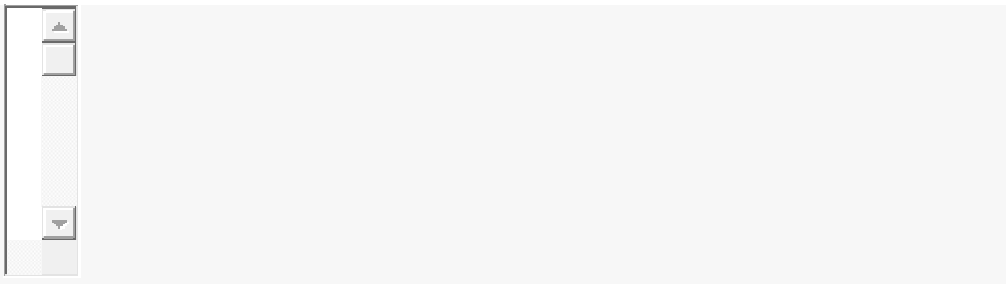
How often do you normally contact each other?

AMOUNT OF TIME YOU HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER *

You have known this person, for how many years?

YOUR EXPERIENCE *

Please, describe in detail your gift giving experience



IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE PICTURES OF THE GIFT AND WRAPPING (IF THE GIFT IS WRAPPED) AND SEND THEM TO ME BY EMAIL

inesbranco.giftresearch@gmail.com

THANK YOU!

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

APPENDIX 3: Selection of incentives questionnaire

Select your incentive

* Required

EMAIL ADDRESS *

Please, indicate the email address you provided at the beginning of the study.

How do you want to use your 30 pounds gift? *

- Amazon gift voucher
- Donation to charity

If you prefer to donate your 30 pounds gift to a charity...

Please, select the charity you wish to support with your 30 pounds gift

- Children in need
- McMillan (Cancer support)
- National Trust (Historic building's protection)
- Nottinghamshire Wild Life Trust (Environment protection)
- Impact Nottingham (Education experience research)
- Impact Nottingham (Health and wellbeing research)
- Impact Nottingham (Education support)
- Impact Nottingham (global issues research)
- Impact Nottingham (green issues and sustainability research)

Submit

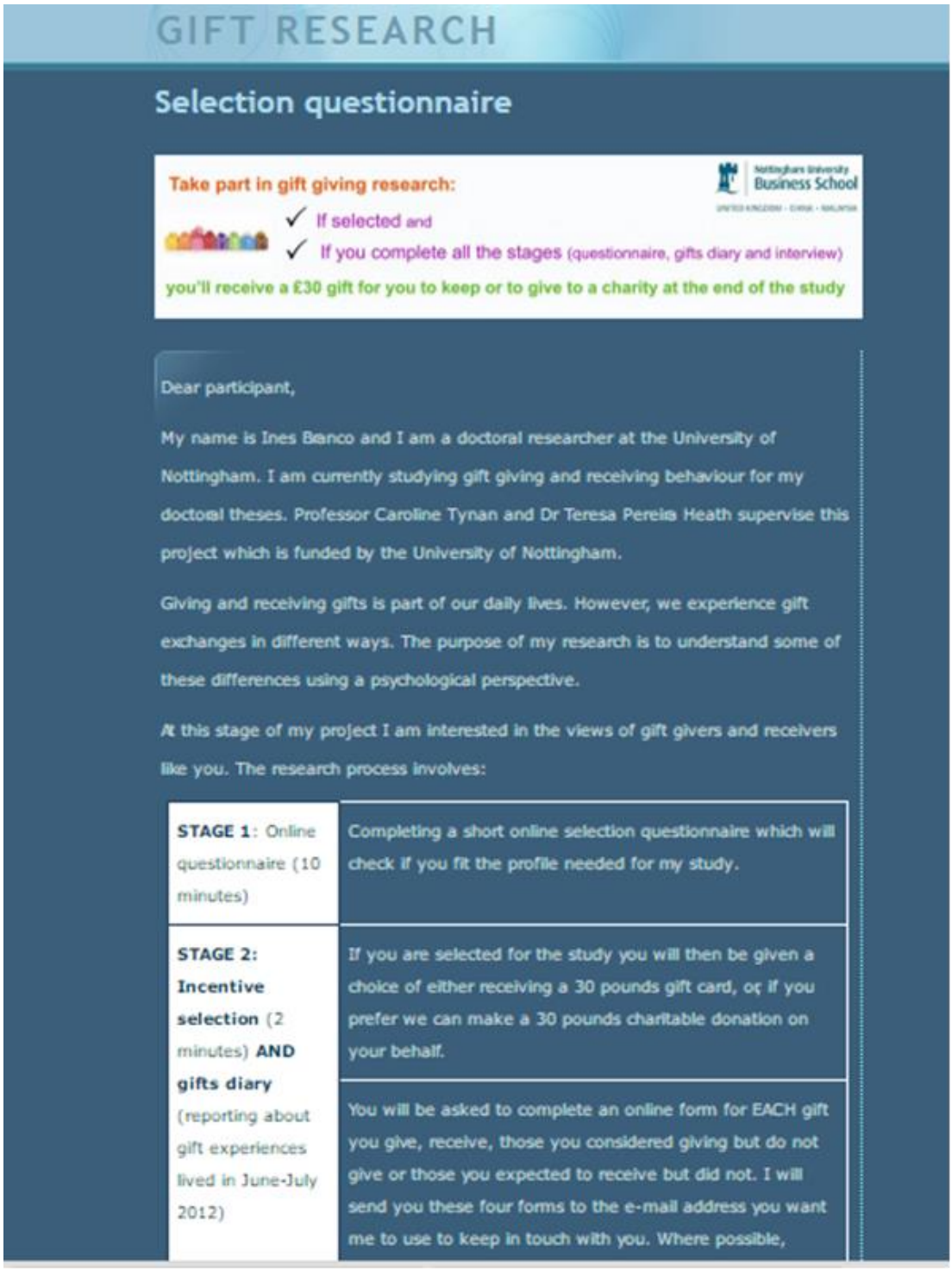
Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

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APPENDIX 4: Website home page



STAGE 3: Short interview (30- 60 min)	After completing your diary, I would like to arrange a short interview with you to ask further questions about your experience.
STAGE 4: A SMALL THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORT	After successful completion of your diary over a 4-weeks period and the following interview, I will send you a 30 pounds gift certificate or confirmation of your 30 pounds charity donation.

All the data you provide will be anonymous and confidential. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please indicate that the question is NOT APPLICABLE. If it becomes necessary you can also withdraw from the study at any time.

Further information about research results will be provided at the end of the study upon request.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me: Ines Branco Illodo, Graduate Teaching Assistant, +44(0)115 8466361, Ines.Branco_Illodo@nottingham.ac.uk, Nottingham University Business School, Jubilee Campus, Nottingham, NG8 1BB.

If you would like to take part in this project please provide an e-mail address where we can contact you.

THANK YOU!

If you cannot see the selection questionnaire correctly, please:
CLICK HERE

APPENDIX 5: Website gift giving diary page

GIFT RESEARCH

Your gifts diary... >

Gift giving diary record



WHEN POSSIBLE, PLEASE, REMEMBER TO TAKE PICTURES OF THE GIFT AND WRAPPING AND SEND THEM TO ME BY EMAIL (inesbranco.giftresearch@gmail.com)

How to complete your gift giving diary

Please, write **ONE** entry for **EACH** gift you **GIVE**. For more than one gift for the same person and occasion, put it in the same entry.

1. Complete all the fields in the form below.
2. Please, try to be as accurate as you can.
3. There is no right or wrong answer, simply detail your gift giving experience.
4. Any other comments are more than welcome. Please add them in the last box of the entry form.
5. Once you have completed the diary entry and are happy with it, click SUBMIT at the bottom of the form and I will receive your diary entry immediately.

OTHER INFORMATION

All the data you provide will be anonymous and confidential. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please indicate that the question is NOT APPLICABLE. If it becomes necessary you can also withdraw from the study at any time.

Further information about research results will be provided at the end of the study upon request.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me:

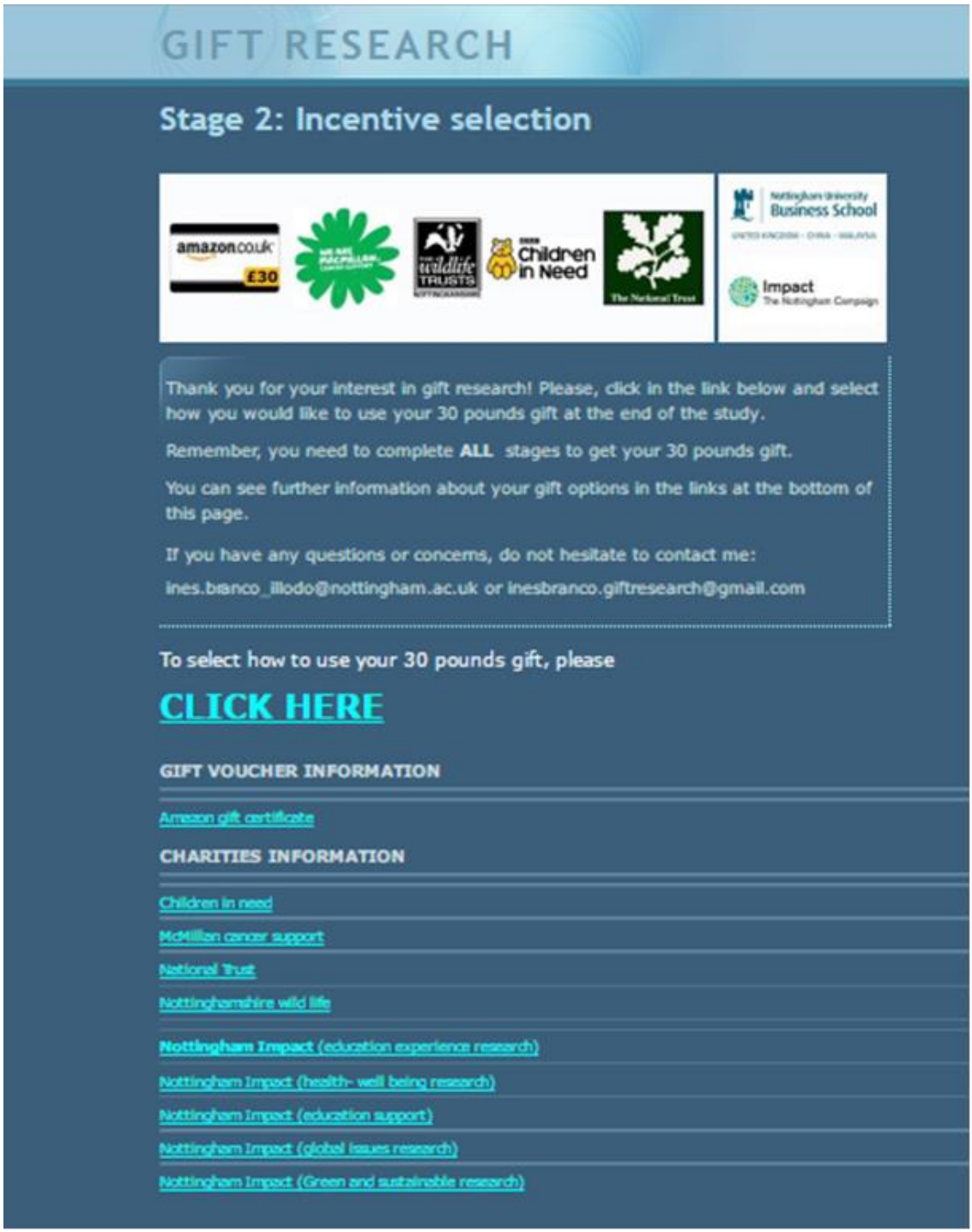
Ines Branco Illodo, Graduate Teaching Assistant & Doctoral Student, +44(0)115 8466361, Ines.Branco_Illodo@nottingham.ac.uk, Nottingham University Business School, Jubilee Campus, Nottingham, NG8 1BB.

THANK YOU!

TO COMPLETE YOUR **GIFT GIVING** DIARY, PLEASE

CLICK HERE

APPENDIX 6: Website incentive selection page



APPENDIX 7: Interview schedule

GIFT

- What makes for you a gift perfect?
- Is there any kind of gift you prefer to give? Something you do not like to give? What do you think about money as a gift? And gift vouchers?
- Where do you normally buy gifts?

GIFT-GIVING

- What is the most important thing when you think about giving a gift to someone? (the gift, how it is delivered, the selection process, price, effort…).
- Do you prefer **giving** gifts to some people than others? Do you have a gift giver's network? Someone you do not like to give a gift to?
- Are you normally satisfied with your gift choice?
- How would you react if someone had **rejected** or shown they really **did not like** your gift?
- How do you know if someone likes your gift?
- Any occasion when you thought about giving a gift but you did not for some reason (in general)?
- **Would you change your gift giving behaviour after a gift giving experience?**
- **Do you normally pay attention to a balanced gift exchange?**
- What would change your gift giving behaviour
- What is your main motivation to give a gift to someone? Does it depend on the person?

- Best gift giving experience EVER. And the worst?

GIFT-RECEIVING

- What is the most important thing when you receive a gift from someone? (the gift, how it is delivered, the selection process, price, effort…).
- Do you prefer **receiving** gifts from some people than others?
- How would you react if someone gives you a gift you really do not like?
- Do you prefer to choose your gift or taking the risk of the surprise?
- Any occasion where you expected a gift but you did not receive one (in general)? How did you feel?
- **Would you change your gift giving behaviour after a receiving a gift?**
- Best gift receiving experience EVER. And the worst?

Do you prefer to give or to receive?

END OF INTERVIEW

YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR INCENTIVE BY EMAIL WITHIN A WEEK - THANK YOU

APPENDIX 8: Example of completed diary (Lesley's diary)

(014G) 12/21/2012 8:25:25 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: 21/12/12

Gift giving date: 25/12/12

Gift: Dorothy Perkins vouchers for my niece

Gift cost: £40

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? Was trying to choose a Kim Kardashians bag for my niece as she is mad about the Kadashians but I didn't like any if the choices and didn't think they were good quality - this way age can choose the one she likes

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love)

Receiver's feelings: Loved , Happy, Excited

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: She always gets excited when I buy her anything and is always grateful

Type of relationship: Aunt [RESPONDENT REFERS TO HER NIECE]

Description of the relationship: Very close - she tells me everything and is very important to me - she is like a daughter and I can rely on her if I need her to do any errands for me!

Distance from you: Within 1 day drive

Frequency of contact: Facebook most days or by text about once a week

Amount of time you have known each other: 16

Describe your experience: I knew she wanted a particular brand if bag but I didn't think it was particularly good value - I know she values my opinion and didn't want to buy something I didn't like do would rather give her the vouchers and take her shopping to spend them - we always have really good shopping trips and then go for food do its a treat for both if us

(016G) 12/21/2012 8:37:02

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: 21/12/12

Gift giving date: 21/12/12

Gift: Bottle of bubbly

Gift cost: £15

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? She is a friend and I know she will give a gift to me

Giver's feelings: Happy, Obliged

Receiver's feelings: Grateful

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: I think sometimes Xmas presents are given just as its expected and do it becomes an obligation - I know she will be grateful as will I for whatever she gives me

Type of relationship: Friend (same gender)

Description of the relationship: We have only become friends in the last 6 months but we click quite well - I think I will put more effort in getting her a present next year - am a bit rushed this year as I left things a bit late - but I know this us a favourite drink of hers and it was half price!

Distance from you: Within 10 minutes drive

Frequency of contact: A couple of times a week at least by text and prob most days by Facebook - meet up once every 2 weeks

Amount of time you have known each other: 6 months

Describe your experience: I wish I'd had a bit more time to buy her a present – next year I will get her a Pandora charm as she lives them – this year I've been really busy at work so didn't get organised in time. I did enjoy buying her the bottle as I know she will like it but I don't think it was very inspired.

(019G) 12/22/2012 10:32:02 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: 22/12/12

Gift giving date: 23/12/12

Gift: Self made 'food hamper' consisting if tinned soups, chocolate, chutneys, biscuits, crisps, jam, pickles and mince pies from M&S - not gift wrapped - just in a canvas bag

Gift cost: £100

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? Husbands grandparents who are always giving us cash or cheques throughout the year so we wanted to get something special that we knew they would use and like

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love), Happy, Excited

Receiver's feelings: Loved , Happy, Grateful

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: We know that they wouldn't spend money on nice food for themselves but wanted to get something they would

enjoy and would keep for them. They always ask us not to buy presents for them so we thought this was more personal and special

Type of relationship: Grandmother, Grandfather

Description of the relationship: We don't see then very often but we are grateful that they think of us often. As my grandparents passed away when I was very young - I really love seeing them and spending time with them as we always hand deliver the gifts

Distance from you: Within 1 day drive

Frequency of contact: About 2/3 times a year for me in person and then by letter maybe 2/3 times a year - very rarely by phone

Amount of time you have known each other: 12

Describe your experience: I love buying food that I know they think of as a luxury but also wouldn't buy for themselves - I take a long time choosing the items as I really want then to enjoy the experience - I would think they appreciate the thought that goes into choosing the items and are always really grateful

(089G) 1/10/2013 2:54:27 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: 24/12/12

Gift giving date: 24/12/12

Gift: an electric blanket for my mum

Gift cost: £39.99 - I left it late to pick this up from argos and the queues were horrendous (getting into town was a pain too) but I didn't mind as it's for my mum

Occasion: New Year

Why do you want to give a gift to this person? My mum hasn't been very well lately and she really feels the cold but my dad doesn't like having the heating on at night so they have both been at odds about the temperature in their bedroom. I knew my mum would appreciate this gift and I'm happy that I can do something to allevaite her aches and pains. She liked it so much that I ended up buying another one for her to use on the couch during the day (despite her protests thatr it was too much)

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love), Happy

Receiver's feelings: Loved , Happy, Grateful, Proud

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: I know my mum would never have asked for the blanket as she is always worried about the cost of things but she kept saying how warm it was keeping her and that I shouldn't have spent so much on her. She also told a number of her friends on the phone about it - I just wish I'd thought of buying it her earlier

Type of relationship: Mother

Description of the relationship: We haven't always been close but I do appreciate that she is getting old and frail now so Iike to spend more time with her - she isn't very mobile so I think she appreciates when I go home and look after her. She is very important to me - aren't all mothers?

Distance from you: Within 1 day drive

Frequency of contact: I phonbe twice a week and then visit about every 3 weeks

Amount of time you have known each other: 44

Describe your experience: I wanted to get something that would be useful to my mum and also have somehing that reminds her of me everyday and since I can't

always be there to look after her, this at least stops her feeling cold all the time. I just wish I'd thought to do it earlier as she was so grateful for it.

(090G) 1/10/2013 2:59:34 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: 31/12/12

Gift giving date: 31/12/12

Gift: Ipad mini

Gift cost: £269 - wasn't a lot of effort as I had pre-ordered it online - though we had to wait 2 weeks as they were out of stock!

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? Because they asked for it

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love), Happy, Excited

Receiver's feelings: Loved , Happy, Grateful, Excited

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: the gift was asked for and when we went to pick it up he was really excited

Type of relationship: Partner/ Husband/ Wife

Description of relationship: We have a really good relationship and I would say we are best friends and respect each other. He isvery important to me and the first person i turn to for anything

Distance from you: Same house

Frequency of contact: daily - we live together

Amount of time you have known each other: 14

I wanted to get him something he really wanted - normally I buy clothes or aftershave but this year I just asked him to tell me what he wanted so that I would

know he was happy with the gift. although he is appreciative of anything I buy him, I know he isn't that bothered about getting clothes. the problem with buying him presents is that if he wants something he usually just buys it so I do struggle for inspiration on birthdays and Xmas

(091G) 1/10/2013 3:11:48 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: Oct and Nov 2012

Gift giving date: 26/12/12

Gift: Scented candles and mother of pearl salt and pepper pots (picked up in Thailand whilst on holiday there)

Gift cost: ~£20min total

Gift occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? She is my mother in law

Giver's feelings: Happy

Receiver's feelings: Grateful

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: The gift is for my mother in law and I'm always conscious that I need to get something suitable but also something she might like. It's always a bit formal between us so I don't want to get the wrong thing

Type of relationship: mother in law

Description of the relationship: We have a very formal relationship - I think she likes me and I like her but we don't interact other than when we visit or they visit us. She is important as she is my partner's mother but we are not very close

Distance from you: Within 1 hour drive

Frequency of contact: Not often - about 2-3 times a year when we cisit (though she speaks to my partner weekly)

Amount of time you have known each other: 10

Describe your experience: I try to keep the presents for her as neutral but nice as possible as I don't really know what she likes and I think sometimes she thinksof me as 'posh' so I don't want to buy anything that she would consider too expensive but at the same time I don't want her to think I didn't spend enough on her - It can be stressful sometimes and my husband isn't very helpful as he just says she will like whatever we buy her. I laso never know if she likes what I have bought as she always says how nice and thankyou

(092G) 1/10/2013 3:16:58 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: Nov 2012

Gift giving date: 26/12/12

Gift: Bottle of whisky

Gift cost: £26.99 - it was on offer for £10 cheaper than normal at Morrisons

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? Father in law

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love)

Receiver's feelings: Happy, Grateful

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: I know that he likes whisky and will like this particular brand.

Type of relationship: father in law

Description of relationship: We have a good banter and I find him much easier to chat to than my mother in law. He is always warm and friendly and gives me lots of hugs when he sees me. He is important as he is my partner's father but also as we get on quite well

Distance from you: Within 1 day drive

Frequency of contact: 2-3 times a year when we visit

Amount of time you have known each other: 10

Describe your experience: I like buying for my father in law as I have a better idea of what he likes and he often says how much he has enjoyed the gift when I see him again. I knew I wanted to buy him something nice to drink s he doesn't drink much but enjoys a nice whiskey (being Scottish!)

(093G) 1/10/2013 3:22:11 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: Nov 2012

Gift giving date: 26/12/12

Gift: Ted baker bathing set

Gift cost: on 3 for 2 at boots but £25individually

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? My partner's sister but also we are good friends

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love)

Receiver's feelings: Loved

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: She loves bathing stuff - her bathroom is bursting with products but she admits she always likes getting more so when I saw the set I knew it would be perfect for her

Type of relationship: Friend (same gender), sister in law

Description of relationship: We get on very well and she is of great importance in my life

Distance from you: Within 1 day drive

Frequency of contact: On Facebook frequently, occasionally by phone and meet up about once a year

Amount of time you have known each other: 10

Describe your experience: She is a very quirky person so I often try to get something amusing or different for her but this year I decided to buy bath stuff as she'd said she is addicted to bathing stuff. I wanted her to know that I had paid attention to what she likes

(102G) 1/14/2013 13:14:44 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: Nov 2012

Gift giving date: 12/1/2013

Gift: A lavender pamper set

Gift cost: on 3 for 2 from boots but would have been £17.50 otherwise

Gift occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? Gina is a good friend who had had a really stressful year due to personal problems do I wanted her to feel good

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love)

Receiver's feelings: Loved , Happy, Grateful

More details about giver's and receiver's feelings: Because I know she will know I care and that I want to give her something that can help destress her

Type of relationship: Friend (same gender)

Description of the relationship: She is very important and was there got me when I went through a tough period at work - she has always supported me and I want to do the same for her

Distance from you: Within 10 minutes drive

Frequency of contact: She hasn't been in touch much lately because of personal stuff but I try and text her once a week

Amount of time you have known each other: 2

Description of the experience: I knew she would like the gift when I saw it as she is always saying how pamper stuff can give a person 'me' time - which I know she doesn't get much of. I think she will like it and be pleased and also grateful every time she uses it

(103G) 1/15/2013 1:42:43 (FURTHER INSIGHTS IN LESLEY'S INTERVIEW)

Name: Lesley

Gift selection date: Dec 2012

Gift giving date: posted in second week of Dec

Gift: cheque

Gift cost: £20

Occasion: Christmas

Why do you want to give this gift to this person? She is my god daughter

Giver's feelings: Loving (Showing love)

Receiver’s feelings: Loved , Grateful

More details about giver’s and receiver’s feelings: I like sending something for my god daughter but also there is a sense of duty as I was asked to be her godmother - she loves getting letters from me

Type relationship: god daughter

Description of the relationship: I think she thinks of me as fun as the time we have spent together always entails playing games or going shopping or for pizza - so she associates me with having a good time - I'd say she was fairly important in my life and her mother is one of my closest friends.

Distance from you: Within 1 day drive

Frequency of contact: Phone maybe once every 5-6 months, but I always send a little letter on birthdays and Xmas and she always sends a thank you note and little update back

Amount of time you have known each other: 9

Describe your experience: I used to struggle to know what to buy her but then a few years ago on her birrhday her mum said she was happy for me to just give some money rather than getting something specific - that way my god duaghter can spend it on what she wants and enjoy the gift more

APPENDIX 9: Example of interview transcript (Lesley's interview)

Hello, how are you?

I'm fine.

Let's start thinking about gift giving first. What makes for you a gift perfect?

So, for me the perfect gift is one that I… if I'm giving a gift, that I have had time to think about that, I know the person will really enjoy, will really get pleasure out of. If they have mentioned something in the past that they really like then I would try to remember that for when I come to buy a gift.

If I know they have been very stressed I'll try to get them something that will relax them. So, I like to put thought in, something to think that when they get the gift they know that I've thought it and they will appreciate the time and effort I've put into it.

Is there any kind of gift you prefer to give or you feel more comfortable giving?

I don't mind what the gift is as long as I know the person is going to enjoy the gift. Sometimes, I think it's easier to give gift vouchers or money because somebody may have something in mind they really want to buy and rather than getting them something they won't enjoy I'd rather give them the money knowing they are going to spend it on something they really, really want, especially if I don't know the person that well, then buying them something that they would enjoy seems a bit silly so to me it's better I think.

And I would feel the same if somebody was buying something for me. I'd rather get vouchers than them spend money on something I'm not going to enjoy, so that's the only time, I think.

Ok, so you use vouchers or money when you are not sure about what to get.

It depends on the person. Most times, if I'm buying a gift it's because I know the person very well so very rarely. But if, for example**,** my **Goddaughter**, I know she likes to buy very specific things and what she wants changes so quickly and I'm not sure, at that age, what to buy her. She's happy to get money so I always send her money for Christmas and for birthdays **[DIARY 103G].**

And, I think sometimes, if you're giving somebody a joint present, as well, it's quite good to buy vouchers because then they can put the money towards… if I know somebody wanted to buy something very specific and they're saving for that, then I think vouchers are quite good for that too.

And is there anything you don't like to give?

I don't think I would buy anything that I don't like to give. I don't like when people have wedding list presents; if I don't' like something on the list I wouldn't buy that. So, I would always buy something that I feel I wanted to give to the person so I wouldn't buy something just for the sake, in that case I would give vouchers rather than buy something I wasn't happy to give them. Then they could buy it themselves [smiles].

And where do you normally buy gifts?

So, I don't go to any one particular place. If I have an idea of what I want to buy somebody, in my mind, I'll go to two or three different shops just to see the nicest thing I can buy, or something I think is more appropriate. If I know somebody likes a particular shop then I will go and buy something from that shop with a gift receipt so that if they don't like it they can take it back.

For example, it's my friend's birthday next week and she really likes Pandora so I've bought her a Pandora charm. I don't know if it's what she likes so I've kept the gift receipt and I don't mind if she changes it because I'd rather she was happy with what I bought her. Otherwise, I will just look around different shops.

And in this particular example, the charm you are going to buy for your friend, how do you select it?

I bought something that I thought was pretty but I don't know whether she will think it's pretty which is why I kept the receipt so she can change if she wants to. I went for something quite sort of neutral, nothing too… it's not my taste and it's a taste that I think everybody would like so I hope I've got it right but I don't mind if she changes it.

And when you think about giving gifts, do you pay attention to how you deliver them, presentation?

Not really. That's the thing I don't… I put a lot of time and effort into buying the gift and I will wrap it. What will happen, I will buy the gift in time and then I'll last minute think "oh, I have to post it off; I have to give it to the person" and I always forget to buy something nice. So, I usually have some nice bows that I can put on them but I don't spend a lot of time thinking about the presentation of the gift. I spend more time thinking about the gift, which to me is more important.

If it needs posting then I always try to post it on time. Sometimes I'm a bit late if I'm busy at work. If I'm going to meet the person then that's fine, I'll just give it in a gift bag. I like gift bags because you don't have to wrap anything up.

Practical.

Yes, it's very practical! [smiles]

Do you prefer giving gifts to some people rather than others?

There are people… I like giving… I only give gifts to people who are quite close or who are good friends. There are some people that I'm less … not that I'm not happy to give a present but some people it's a bit difficult to know what to give them and that's a harder situation. So, my **mother in law**, I always am not sure with her if I've given her the right present because I don't get a reaction from her and because I don't know her that well I'm always worried. My husband always says "no, it's all right, she liked it" and he doesn't put much input in but I always get worried that she won't like the present or it's not what she wants. So, I try to keep it with her very neutral, I always buy either candles or soaps or washing things, something that you can't offend somebody with **[DIARY 091G]**.

But, mostly with people I know what they like and what to get them so it's not a problem and, over the years, you get to know people very well and you know what they do and don't like and, also, if it's the sort of thing they are buying then you know that's what to get them.

And how do you feel when you buy gifts to her?

To my **mother in law**? I'm always a bit anxious because I don't know whether I've spent enough, not enough, or too much because sometimes I think "ok, this is what we're going to spend on her" and then the presents, like at Christmas that we get back, we get of bigger value and then I feel bad and then the next year I spend too much and she spends less. It's always like this kind of like balance of getting it right and … like I said, because I don't' feel comfortable with her… she's a very nice person but I don't feel comfortable with her. Therefore, it's always a little bit "did I get the right thing" and she's always very polite and says thank you so I don't know

if she actually likes what I buy her or not. Whereas, with everybody else in the family I kind of know them really well so it's different. So, that's a little bit stressful **[DIARY 091G]**.

I read in your diary that it's different with your father in law.

Yes, yes. He is a very different person and also I know he likes whisky so I just buy him whisky every year but he's a warmer person and I think with my **mother in law**, she is very… she's not sure of me even though I've known her for a long time and I'm not sure of her so se keep this kind of polite distance whereas **my father in law** he's very different, he will hug me when he sees me and it's just a very… I feel more relaxed with him. It's not that she's judging me but I feel like I'm always I'm the daughter in law and I always have to fit that role, do you know what I mean? So, it can be maybe be a little bit difficult that way **[DIARY 091, 092G].**

You said one year she spends more and you spend less and the other way around, do you normally pay attention to a balance?

I think we have a budget for what we want to spend on presents. What we don't want to do is spend lots of money and then they feel they've got to spend lots of money so we try to do it within a certain budget. But, I think the difficulty is one year she gives lots of presents and then you feel a bit guilty so we try to balance the same amount of everybody in the family so it doesn't feel like you are favouring one person over the other, apart from the grandparents, we always buy them a bit more because they always give us money so we feel… So, it's difficult, I think, to know how to do that.

Is it different for different people?

We try to spend the same on everybody so between £20 - £30 maximum because, obviously, there are a few people but, I mean, with friends we have a "right let's not spend more than £10 - £15" we have agreed that with our friends that we won't spend more than £15 because I mean I don't mind spending, if I see something I will buy it just because, but otherwise it gets very expensive so we try to keep to the budget.

Between you and your husband is it different?

Yeah, I think with us we just if we like something and want something we just buy, there isn't a budget there. It's like … so, this year I bought him an iPad mini because I knew he wanted one, so it's always like if we want something we just buy for each other so it doesn't have to be expensive and it doesn't have to be… there isn't a set budget, it's just if we want something then we buy that **[DIARY 090G].**

Do you prefer giving gifts to some people rather than others – I asked you that question.

Yeah, I like giving, like I say, to **my niece** because she gets very excited when I buy her things **[DIARY 014G]** and some friends, as well. So, I think in that respect there are some people that it's easy to give gifts to. But, we try to treat everybody equally. So, it can be difficult sometimes [smiles].

Do you have a kind of gift receivers' network?

Yeah, I mean, there are certain people that we always… like birthdays and Christmases you know you are going to give those people a present. And I always keep a few presents in reserve just in case somebody I wasn't expecting gives because sometimes that happens and you're like "oh no" last minute you have to

go. So, we always have two or three spare neutral presents like a bottle of wine or something you can give to everybody. But, we tend to be with the same circle of people and friends and family that we always give presents to.

For example, if you had to describe, list them, who would these people be?

Oh, ok, so obviously family and then a handful of friends that every year we…so I have maybe five friends that I would always give presents to and expect presents back from. Then, I always give to my Goddaughters but I don't expect anything back from them. And family, obviously, I obviously give to family.

Do you normally give gifts to family, friends, relatives of your husband or people you are close to?

We always give to… so, we always give to his **parents** **[DIARY 091G, 092G]** and **his grandparents** **[DIARY 019G]** and I'm quite good friends with **his** sister so I always give to his sister **[DIARY 093G]**. Then, we always give to his uncle but I don't really know his uncle that well so it's just an established routine.

Then, with my family it's a little bit more easy going. So, I always give to my **niece** **[DIARY 014G]** but my nephews don't expect anything. We just go out for food instead. Then, I always give something at New Year to my **parents**. So, we don't really do Christmas presents **[DIARY 089G]**. Then, birthdays we tend to give money in the family. So, as I say, with my **niece** as well, I either tend to buy her a gift card for a shop that I know she likes shopping with and then we go shopping together because she has very sort of like… she knows what she wants but she likes to go shopping with me so I tend to say "right, this is how much you've got" and then she knows how much she can spend, and so we go shopping together **[DIARY 014G]**.

So, it's slightly different between my family and his family.

And if you had to find a criteria to differentiate between those people what is that criteria?

I think it's more informal with my friends and family and more formal with my **husband's family** because, obviously, for me I have to feel that I have to… I don't want to upset them so I always… it's a bit more formal with them **[DIARY 091G, 092G, 093G]**. But, with my friends, like sometimes I won't see them for ages so I might have a Christmas present that I don't give them until February or I might have a birthday present that's two months late because I haven't had time to see them. And they do the same with me like it will be March before I see them and then it's like "here's your Christmas present" but that's fine because we don't have expectations. It's just when we see each other, it's like, "I have a present for you, when can we meet up" and then it might be two or three months before we can meet up.

So, that's laid back and you always know that's going to happen so that's quite nice. And with my family again it's quite laid back, so I guess the criteria would be I always try to do **his family** first so that I know to buy them presents well in advance so they are sorted so I don't feel like I've offended anybody [laughs] **[DIARY 091, 092, 093]** but with friends it's laid back so it's not a problem.

And is there someone you don't' like giving a gift to?

Yeah, my **mother in law** [laughs] only because I'm never sure if I'm getting her the right gift or not. So, I think if I honestly knew what she really wanted… like, she hand makes a lot of things and I love… she makes scarfs for me and I love them but then I think she feels she's got to buy a present on top and I'd be happy just with the scarf but then I never know if what I'm buying her is good enough. So, it is very

difficult with her **[DIARY 091G]** whereas, like, it's much easier with my **father in law** because we just buy him a bottle of something every year and he's happy with that. So, you know you don't have to think about that too much **[DIARY 092G].** So, yeah it can be…

Then, also, **for her** birthday as well it can be quite difficult to know what to buy her and also for my birthday, too, sometimes she buys things and it's not quite what I would have bought myself but you don't want to be ungrateful, either, so it's difficult sometimes **[DIARY 091G].**

But, with everybody else I think pretty much I know where I am with them and, like I said, for my **Goddaughter**, she just gets money so that's not a problem either **[DIARY 103G].** Yeah, that's pretty much… also, we have sometimes with friends have wish lists that we share with each other. So, through the year we put thing son the wish list and then it's quite good because we all club in to buy presents and we can go on the wish list and say "shall we get this, this year?" And then we know that person's getting something they really want, so that's a lot easier.

And are you normally satisfied with your gift choice?

In giving or receiving?

Giving.

I think so, I mean, it's very rare that I think "oh no, what should I get this person" because I try to get them what I think they would like so, usually, I'm quite happy with what I've bought them.

And how would you react if someone rejects a gift?

I've never had that happen but if it did I just wouldn't buy them a gift again. I would just be like "well, if they don't' want it, that's fine, they're not going to get another one ever again. But I've never had that happen so...

I don't mind if I buy something and they don't like it and they exchange it because I would rather they were happy with what … so, say I bought somebody a bracelet and it's really not their thing then I always keep the gift receipt and put it in with the gift so I have no problem with them changing something because I'd rather they were happy with what they'd got. Otherwise, I've never really had a rejection.

And how do you know if someone likes your gift or not?

I don't think you ever really know but, usually, from their reaction you can tell … if it's something they wanted, then obviously that's a lot easier because they wanted it or they've asked for something. And, if you see somebody wearing something you know they were happy with it. But, I assume they are happy but you never know, 100% do you really?

Yeah, I kind of just go from the reaction. I assume that what I've got them and if it's something that I know they wanted and I've thought about it then I assume they'll be happy with it. [smiles]

And is there any occasion when you thought about giving a gift to someone and you didn't?

I don't think so. Like I said, I always keep some spare gifts just in case somebody gives me and I wasn't expecting but I don't think I've ever had or been expecting to get something and not got anything, just because we don't give that many gifts out. It's only we maybe give 10 – 12 people gifts so you know that's the network and

they are people who are close to you so there isn't that sort of like… I wouldn't expect something from somebody who … you know, I've had presents I wasn't expecting but I've never not had a present from somebody I expected.

You mention people close to you. What makes for you a relationship close?

Well, somebody who I think is a really good friend, well, family can be friends too but somebody who I care about, who I am in touch with, who I know cares about me and is there for me. That to me makes a close relationship with somebody.

And would you change your gift giving behaviour after a gift giving experience?

If I bought something and it was a complete disaster then I would think "oh right, I got it really wrong there", so I would probably ask that person "in future what can I get you" if I knew they were really, really unhappy with what I'd bought them, that they just said "this is a horrible gift," or something. But, not really.

I mean, quite often, with the friends, I discuss with other friends, "what do you think I should get this person" or we do ask each other "is there anything you really, really want?" But I don't think I would change. Then, with my nephews and nieces, because I tend to give them money it's not really a problem in that respect or I'll take my **niece** shopping and say "choose your gift" then that's different because I know it's what she wants **[DIARY 103G].** So, I don't think I would change that, really.

Would you normally ask people about the gifts they would like to receive?

I do ask if there is anything they really want and some people say "nothing, it's ok" and then some people might say "oh, I really want this". And I would rather know what to get somebody so I know I'm getting something they really want. Then, you still have some choice so they might want a particular type of, from a particular

shop or something. Then, at least you know, or if they want a particular book or something then I'm happy to get that and I might get something a bit extra as well. But, yeah, if somebody really wants something I think it's a lot easier but otherwise I just go with where I think they would shop or what I know they like and I tend to go to those shops and try and find something from those shops.

And what is your main motivation to give a gift to someone?

I think it's just showing appreciation. If you care for somebody and if you like somebody then you want them to be happy on whatever occasion you are giving the gift. So, if it's a birthday or Christmas I think it does make it really … it makes it very important to make sure that you are showing them that you appreciate them and that you are thinking about them. And also, because you just want them to be happy on that occasion. To me it's just about showing that I care about the person which is why I like to think about what I'm buying them just because … yeah, you wouldn't think if you didn't care and I wouldn't give a present to somebody I don't really care about. So, I might give cards to people that I don't' know that well but I would only give a present to somebody I really care about.

Is there any difference between your mum or father, mother in law, in terms of motivations?

With **my mum** and dad it's different because, obviously, I know them very, very well and they always say "no, we don't want presents" so I always try and… I see a cardigan and I know my mum will like or, this year, she has been feeling very cold so I got her an electric blanket because I knew we could keep her warm. So, I think things like that where you sit and think "well, it's not even like a present, it's just I know that's something she would appreciate, then I'll do that and I know that they

do really appreciate it because if I say to them "do you want something?" They will just say no. they won't ask for a present so I try to think about like, "oh, my dad's jumper is getting a bit old, I'll get him a new one". So, that's different but that's because I know them very, very well **[DIARY 089G]**.

Whereas, obviously, with my **husband's family** it's a little more… I don't know them as well and he just doesn't think in that way. He's just like "oh, it's family, it doesn't matter, just buy them socks" in typical man fashion. So, I try to think about what I'm buying them but it wouldn't probably be in the same kind of…**[DIARY 091, 092, 093]**

And then, also with my parents if I don't buy something and I wait to buy something it's not a problem **[DIARY 089G]** whereas with **his family** I want to make sure it gets there on time so there is that kind of… there is more pressure. I think it's pressure I put on myself because I don't want them to feel I'm not making the effort **[DIARY 091, 092, 093]**.

And for example, this Christmas with the iPad you bought for your husband and the electric blanket for your mum, was your motivation different, it was Christmas but…

I think it's just because I knew **he** really wanted an iPad and sometimes I struggle to know what to buy him and I didn't want to just buy him clothes **[DIARY 090G]**.

Then, with **my mum**, she has been feeling cold and I don't always buy a present at Christmas for my mum, it's just sometimes I'll just buy them through the year sometimes just because I see something I know would make her life easier then I'll just buy it so I knew it was something she would really appreciate. So, it is different, I think, at that level compared to other people because you are, maybe, associating

more with these people than you would with other people. So it probably is slightly different **[DIARY 089G]**.

Also, you probably get more satisfaction out of what you've bought them because you'll see them using it and you'll see the joy and appreciation which I won't be seeing with what I've bought for other people because I'm not seeing them every day or I'm not spending time with them as much. So, when I go home and my mum has the electric blanket on she just says to me "oh, I love this blanket" you know **[DIARY 089G]**. And **my husband** has been glued to his iPad since I bought it him, so I know he likes that, whereas I won't see the use of the other gifts in the same way. So, maybe I don't know it's appreciated in the same way **[DIARY 090G]**.

And do you think your gift giving behaviour towards your parents or husband changed with time, when you were at home with your parents was it different?

Yes, it probably has but… yah, it probably has because when you are younger you kind of don't know what to buy **your parents** so you kind of just buy the generic perfume or aftershave kind of thing. But, as you get older you can see things that I think … they don't maybe have as much a need for the other things but what you do buy them, perhaps you can put a bit more thought into how it's going to make their life easier. So, that's definitely changed **[DIARY 089G]**.

And, with **my husband**, I think I've realised that I need to buy him what he wants, not what I think he wants because I used to buy him clothes and things and he's not really interested in clothes and stuff so now I try to buy him something that I know he'll really want. So, we tend to chat about what to get him, and stuff **[DIARY 090G]**.

Ok, so learning. And what is the worst gift giving experience ever?

I can't think. The worst gift experience ever… I don't think I've had anything really… like I said, I do struggle with my **mother in law** **[DIARY 091G]** but I don't think I've ever had something where I've given anything to anybody who… that I thought "oh no, I shouldn't have done that". I can't think, now, sorry.

Or even with the reaction of the person?

No, I don't think so, I can't think of anything off the top of my head now. I don't think so.

And the best one?

Giving or receiving?

Giving.

I did like the fact that **my mum** really liked the electric blanket **[DIARY 089G]**. I liked **my niece's** reactions because I always get it right with her because I take her shopping so I know what to get her, and stuff **[DIARY 014G]**. And I think, obviously, my husband is really pleased with the iPad, too **[DIARY 090G]**. So…

Ok, and when we think about gift receiving, rather than giving, what is the most important thing for you when you receive a gift?

I think in the same way that the thought that I put into a gift to buy for somebody, if they do that back for me then it makes me feel like they've really thought about me, and stuff. So, for example, just recently it was my birthday and my friends know that I love Monsoon and they went and got me the Monsoon gift card and that's great because they just know what I like and so last year I really got into gardening so they bought me a rose bush that I put in my garden and that's nice because

every time I look at that I think of them, because they are two very good friends and we always buy gifts together so that's really sweet to think about them.

And it's like with them one of them really loves her tea so we got her a personalised tea last year. Things like that I think you know your friends put a lot of time and effort thinking into stuff. So, to me when I receive a gift if I know they've put the time and effort in and they've got it spot on, that's nice because it shows… I think it shows appreciation. If someone is thinking about what to get you rather than just getting you something and you know they know that's what you'd like.

These same friends, the year before that, she knew that I was into butterflies and she took ages to find me a butterfly necklace online so the present was late because it wasn't delivered for ages but then she got spot on what I liked because she had heard me say I had seen a necklace in Paris that had butterflies on and I'd said that maybe three months earlier and I had forgotten I'd said that. And so she had remembered and got me the butterfly necklace. So, things like that, I think really really… and so I would always make sure that I go out of my way to make sure that I get her something special too because I know that she really cares. So, that's important, I think.

And how people deliver the gift to you, good wrapping or presentation, does it matter?

To me the presentation isn't so important. It's the thought behind. So, if it's in a gift bag or if it's wrapped up that's nice but I wouldn't be offended if it wasn't. I think it's the thought and time and effort they've gone to actually get the present is more important than how it's presented.

Ok. And do you prefer receiving gifts from some people rather than others?

Yes, I don't like getting gifts from **my mother in law** because I don't know how to react to them. But, like I said, she makes some really lovely knitted stuff that I really like but then I think she thinks that's not good enough for me and it is and I don't know how to do, to sort of sort that out. **[DIARY 091G]** But, yeah, I like getting them from my husband because he usually gets it right **[DIARY 090G]** as well but, otherwise, I think it's just nice to be able to get gifts and give gifts.

And I saw your diary that for example with your parents you were happy even if they didn't give you a gift. And for example, with your husband you expected him to be more…

[laughter] Yes. I think it's difficult because with my parents because … I mean, sometimes I'll get… you know, I don't have the expectation but I think if you're in a relationship then I would be very upset if my husband didn't give me a gift, just because, I don't know, I just expect it really because he's my husband and so I want him to put time and effort because… in some ways it shows that he's… it's not that he shows that he loves me because obviously he loves me, he's my husband but I think if he didn't make an effort I would be … I would feel disappointed, definitely **[DIARY 090G]** So, I suppose it's a bit hypocritical really but…

Why do you think is that?

I don't know, I think it's because for **his** birthday I go out of my way to make sure I do everything, lots of little special things and stuff and so I would expect… **[DIARY 090G]** all my life **my parents** gave me birthday parties so I don't expect it from them because that's unconditional love, anyway, whereas I think in a relationship it's love because you want to love the person. You have to love your child, you have

to love your parents **[DIARY 089G]** but you don't have to love **the person you are with**. So, I guess it's just reaffirming that affection. So, yeah, he would be in a lot of trouble if he didn't get me something nice **[DIARY 090G]**.

I guessed that when I read the diary and that's why I thought "I need to ask her this question". If you think about the difference between those two relationships, parents, …

I mean, you don't choose your parents and you don't' choose who your child is but you do choose your **partner** in life. Therefore, you want to feel special for the person that you've chosen because they are special to you **[DIARY 090G]**, so I guess that's the difference, whereas like your **parents** they're going to love you regardless so you don't… and they've brought you up so you don't feel in the same way that they have to buy you gifts **[DIARY 089G]**. I mean, I don't know why I feel that way, I just do [smiles].

Ok. So, do you feel that you need to reinforce the bonds with your husband?

It's not even reinforcing because we have a healthy respect for each other. It's just that I feel… I think it's a different kind of relationship to… if you are related because you've got a brother or sister, or your mother or father or child, then you didn't have a say in that relationship but if **you are with somebody** because you have chosen to be with them you have a say and I think it just is a sign of respect, as well because it's one day out of the year when you are making a big effort for that person which you should make an effort all the time but to go above and beyond to make them feel special then I think that does make them feel more loved, I guess, really **[DIARY 090G]**.

Because I would do it to them, I would expect it back from them but I don't expect that level from anybody else but then I'm not, you know, to me that's what a relationship is about, making somebody feel special about themselves as well.

That's great. How would you react if someone gives you a gift you really don't like?

I would hopefully not let it show on my face but I would say thank you and then I would probably take it to a charity shop or pass it on to somebody else who might want to use it but I wouldn't say to the person, I wouldn't say to the person if I didn't know them very well. If my husband bought me a present I didn't like I'd tell him I didn't like it. But, I think, otherwise I would probably try to think about their feelings. But I don't think I've ever… I've never been in that situation so it's difficult to know.

And with your husband you say you would be honest with him.

He'd be honest with me too, so I would just say like if he bought me something I would just be like "I don't like that colour or can I change it for something?" And if he didn't like what I'd bought him I would expect him to go and change it just because you want to get them something they are actually going to use as well, otherwise it's just a waste of money and stuff, really **[DIARY 090G]**.

And is there anybody else that you would be really honest with them about?

Well, most people think… will, just get it right so … no, I think it's just maybe my husband that I would be honest with. I might change next week, I might think differently, but right now that's how I feel [smiles].

And do you prefer to choose your gift or take the risk of a surprise?

I do like surprises. But, if it's with my husband then I try to drop hints and things. With friends I don't mind because they tend… I think sometimes your friends know you better anyway, just because you go shopping with them and you go "oh, this is nice, do you like this?" so they maybe get a better idea. I think men just aren't interested in shopping and things so they probably don't really pay attention.

So, it's nice to choose a gift but it's also nice to get surprises, I think, so long as a surprise is what you want, otherwise it's not… yeah.

And is there an occasion where you expected to receive a gift and didn't?

I don't think so. No, I don't think so.

And the other way round, to receive a gift you didn't expect?

That does happen sometimes. Like if you have a Christmas party and somebody brings something but then I always try to… like I said, I keep presents in reserve and this year my boss gave me chocolates and I wasn't expecting them so I didn't give anything back because she had basically given on the last day of working so that was nice but I hadn't expected that. So, sometimes it can happen, you get a gift and you're a bit "I wasn't expecting anything" but I do try to keep things in reserve...

And how do you feel about that?

I thought it was really nice because it just showed that… she was really sweet. She gave a card saying she appreciated the hard work and everything. And I wasn't expecting to get anything so I thought it was really nice that she did that and had I known I probably would have got a bottle of wine in advance to give to her but literally it was as I was leaving on the Friday and so I didn't have time to get her

anything. But, that was really nice of her, I think. It makes you feel appreciated when somebody at that level gives you something.

Would you change your gift giving behaviour towards someone after receiving a gift?

I think I'd like to think I wouldn't but I think if I'd spent a lot of time, effort and money on somebody and then they got me something really cheap then I might think twice about how much I spend on them. So, say I go and spend £30 on a gift and then when it's my birthday it's obvious they have only spent £5 I might think "right, next time I need to reduce what I spend on that person." But, I don't think that's ever happened. Just because we have a budget, we've agreed a budget with friends, we have for Christmas presents we say "anything between this and this" and not to go beyond that. So, that works quite well, so we say £10 - £15 and then you know that you are not going over your limit, and stuff. So, I think that would be the only occasion that I would change it, if I felt…

But then, my friends aren't like that so I don't' think it would happen and I don't think I would like to give gifts to somebody that I don't … that did that basically because it wouldn't… that's not how I… my friends wouldn't do that and I wouldn't want to be friends with somebody who was like that either.

And have you ever received a gift that you perceived a particular message?

I mean, I know from my **mother in law** they are very neutral gifts and that's because I give her very neutral gifts too, so there isn't sort of like, it isn't geared towards a certain thing **[DIARY 091G]**. Like, with your friends, I try to make them very personal, I try to make them what they want and also with my husband too **[DIARY 090G]**. But, I think with my mother in law it's a very impersonal gift, usually

it will be soaps or those kinds of things that we give to each other, or bubble bath or very generic things that you don't really think,… there is no personalness but I think it's better that way because then we don't offend each other either **[DIARY 091G].** I think that probably answers that question [smiles].

Ok. And have you ever received a gift you felt uncomfortable with?

I don't think so. No, I don't think so. I mean, with **Adam's grandparents**, quite often, they give us a lot of money sometimes and we don't like taking money but they will insist in giving the money and if we go to visit they always give us like petrol money and stuff like that and so we always try to get them something nice. And we always buy them a hamper at Christmas but we hand pick the hamper ourselves and make the hamper ourselves.

So, I kind of always feel like bad taking money off them, not bad but kind of like I wish they gave us less money because they are always quite generous but apart from that… but that's not a bad gift it's just I feel uncomfortable because it's a lot of money that they spend on us that I wish they spent on themselves instead. We say every year but they are just like "we don't need anything so we like to give it to the grandchildren" and that's really nice but it's also very uncomfortable to get that amount of money from somebody.

I think if it was my grandparents I wouldn't feel uncomfortable but because they're not my grandparents and they give me money separately to him, as well, so they always put money in my card as well. I feel a little bit… it's lovely, it's a lovely thought but I don't like taking money off them, if you know what I mean? So, we always try to get something nice back for them. But, they just… yeah, that can be a little bit uncomfortable **[DIARY 019G]**.

Why do you think you feel like that?

Just because I want them to spend it on themselves and not to give us the money. It's … I mean, I don't think they are going without to give us it, but it's always a lot of money that they give us and you always feel a little bit like… I think, like I said, if it was my grandparents and I knew them it would be different but it's kind of … you just wish they would spend it on themselves. It's difficult to explain really.

But why different with your grandparents?

I don't' have grandparents. My grandparents died a long time ago, so I think if they were my grandparents it would be like with my parents, I would know them very well and if my parents gave me a lot of money that's fine because I kind of it's my parents and I would maybe spend it back on them but we don't have the opportunity to spend on his grandparents the money; so, when they give us the money, like, we buy the hamper at Christmas but we don't have the opportunity to spend it on them. So, like, if I go home I can take my parents out for a meal but because we don't see his grandparents that often we don't have the opportunity to return the value of what they've given us, if that makes sense, so … and I think he's fine with it because, obviously, they are his grandparents but I always feel like, I wish they would just give us a bit less and then I'd feel a bit more comfortable about it **[DIARY 019G]**

Is there anything that might change how you react after receiving a gift with someone?

I don't' think so. Like I said, most times when people give gifts they have put… I am only giving and getting gifts from people that I know really well. So, I think it would be… I think for example, if you had to suddenly give a present to somebody at work

that you didn't know very well, that would be a bit weird but because over the years the people that you give presents to get less and less and you are only giving the presents to the people you really want to give presents to, I don't think it would change because you've established what they are to you and they've established what you are to them. So, you know how, where you are in the scheme of things and what the balance of things are.

So, I think it would be a bit different if I met somebody new and I suddenly had to buy them a present and then it's you've got to start from scratch. That would be a bit weird but I don't think I'd change anything, then, because you've established that friendship, you've had them for years so you know where you are with them.

And what's the worst gift receiving experience ever?

For me? Ok, one year my husband, on my birthday, he wasn't working which was fine and he bought me a book which would have been fine but he also bought himself a computer game at the same time and then he let slip that he had bought me the book with vouchers from his previous leaving present and it was only £6 where he actually spent the money on his game, so I was very angry with him because I don't' mind even if he just bought me something for £5 but he shouldn't have told me that he used vouchers from his leaving present. So, then he had to go and make up for that and bought me a really expensive dress to say sorry. So, that was probably like… that was probably more annoyance than the worst gift but I was quite annoyed with him for not putting any time and effort into thinking what to get me. So, he never buys me books anymore! That's probably the worst.

And how did you feel about that?

I was very angry with him because I think he hadn't realised it was very early on when we had only maybe been together about a year or so and so I don't think he realised at the time how important presents were for me because for him presents aren't that important. So, yeah, I was kind of like… so we laugh about it now, we always bring it up and say "you did buy me that book…" But I think that was more like to me he showed that he hadn't put any effort and hadn't really appreciated me and so, yeah, I think…

I think maybe when I was a child birthday presents were quite a big deal so if you have grown up in a family where they are… whereas he grew up in a family where birthday presents weren't a big deal so I guess that maybe just it's a remnant of childhood that you think that somebody has to put a lot of time and effort into getting your present, not just a book they just picked up last minute.

And has he changed his…

Yeah, he's changed a lot. Now he gets it right. Now he always thinks about what to get.

And the best gift receiving experience ever?

So, having given me the worst he has also given me the best. So, last year I'd been away for my birthday and when I came back he'd bought me a Mulberry bag and I'd been wanting a Mulberry bag for ages. So, it was the Christmas he bought me the bag and then he bought me a Mulberry wallet as well so that was probably the best. And I wasn't expecting that at all so, literally, to open something that you've really wanted for ages and hadn't even realised that you were going to get, it was really nice.

And in general what do you prefer, giving or receiving?

I do like giving presents because I think it's nice to show people appreciation but it's always nice to get things too. I'm not sure of the two which is … with my friends I like to give and then I think with my husband I like to get [smiles] so that probably balances it out. But, I just think gift giving is something that you should only give out or appreciation to somebody. So, if you appreciate the family or a friend, or you know, somebody in your life then whether you are giving or receiving it isn't important, it's the fact that you are putting thought into them and thinking about them and valuing their position in your life that's more important, I think.

So, I do like giving presents because my husband laughs, he says I'll give a present at the drop of a hat but I do like giving presents just because I think it feels like you are adding something to that person's life and you're giving a piece of yourself to them that they, hopefully, will appreciate.

Thinking about gift giving, do you normally stick to occasions?

Mostly I do, yes. If I have **a friend who's been down**, I had a friend and she's been quite upset because her mum was quite ill, I might just go buy flowers for a gift to cheer them up. That's quite nice because they are not expecting it, either. So, I did get, I got a little sort of keepsake for my friend just to try and cheer her up to make her feel better. I think things like that are quite nice.

I remember, like, I was having a rough time at work, not last Easter, the Easter before and one of my friends came round with an Easter egg and things like that when you are not expecting something is really, really nice because it just shows those people care about you. So, if I've got a friend who's down I'd go out of my way to go and get something just whether it be flowers or a plant or something just

to cheer them up because I think it kind of just shows them there is somebody there for them as well **[DIARY 102G]**.

But like I said, I would only give gifts to people who I'm very close to. So, those people are important to me. So if they are going through a bad time I'd do anything to make them feel happy and I think they would do the same, well, I know they have done the same for me in the past so that's when those things are important.

Yes, and sometimes it's not about the money, it's not about the occasion, it's about the thought, it's about getting it right in the right moment when you need it.

Yeah, we've done things like bake cakes for each other and just take them round when they're not expecting them. I think things like that actually mean more than spending money on somebody because you're thinking about them and you're doing something positive to make them feel good about themselves. So, to me it's not always about those kinds of occasions. We have done things where we've like baked a cake and just taken it round to our friend's house to cheer her up and things like that. So, … or just turned up with a bottle of something. I think…

I like the idea of making that person feel valued and making them realise that they are important in your life and that's why I said I don't give that many gifts to people because there are not that many people that important in my life but, aside from family, I've maybe got a handful of friends that I really care about and I know they care about me and I think that's more important than anything else, really.

Yes, it's true. Is there anything else about gift giving and receiving, anything that comes to your mind that we haven't talked about?

No, not really. I think sometimes people put too much on having to give gifts, like at Christmas it becomes such a commercialised thing. And I don't like commercialisation but, I mean, I want to give a present at Christmas because I care about that person. I don't want to give a present at Christmas because it's Christmas. So, … and for example, like Valentine's Day, it really annoys me that people make money out of those things so I would always refuse to give a present on Valentine's Day just out of principle but, then, I think that the whole thing of what gifts are about and why we give a gift, it should be because you cherish somebody, not because you feel "right, it's 25th December, I have to give a gift." I think we are sometimes a bit guilty of that and I'm glad that I managed …

I mean, when I was at school you gave gifts to everybody and even when you were at university you gave gifts to everybody because you felt you had to and I'm glad that I've managed to get away from that, that gifts only get given to the people that I want to give gifts to. It's not an obligation, it's a pleasure to give gifts. You know, that's it really.

So, is it your experience different when you buy a gift in the spur of the moment rather than sticking to occasions?

Yeah, I think sometimes if you're buying a gift just because, like I say, if someone is down and you see something, or sometimes, I'll just see something and think "that reminds me of that person, I'll just buy it" to give to them. Like, I saw this cute little ugly monster thing that I bought for my friend just because we had this joke thing

going. And things like that. And sometimes they do that as well and it's kind of nice to…

Or, if I go on holiday there are two friends that I always bring something back for, you know, and so it's nice to have that as well, I think. But, yeah, I think when you've planned a gift it's slightly different to if you just give on the spur of the moment because if you've planned a gift you've put maybe a lot more thought into it but on the spur of the moment it just reminds you of somebody and you just want to cheer somebody up you just think "that will make them happy" so they are two slightly different things, aren't they? So, you would put a lot more time and effort planning something for an occasion than you would on the spur of the moment.

Good, thank you very much.

End of interview.

APPENDIX 10: Example of coding and analysis

EMPIRICAL OBSERVATIONS			THEORETICAL OBSERVATIONS		THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS	
Step 1: Organising data	**Step 2:** Reading and familiarisation with the data (finding diary-interview connections)	**Step 3:** Initial Coding	**Step 4:** Interpretation AND combination of codes into categories		**Step 5:** Development of framework	
RAW DATA		**CODES**		**CATEGORIES**	**CONCEPTS**	**THEORY**
		Initial code	**Final code**			
Anne's diary {071G} {072G} {073G} {074G} {104G} {105G} {106G} **Anne's interview** **Agnes' diary** {008G} {009G} {022G} {082G} {083G} {002R} {008R} **Agnes' interview** **. . .** **Anthony's diary** {048GS} {049GS} {050GS} {051GS} {052GS} **Anthony's interview**	"*My dad is **one of the most important** relationships in my life*" {Anne, diary, 104G}.	Relationships that stand out	**Uniqueness**	**Sacred recipients** Relationship based Attachment signs	**Direct receivers** (sources/ targets of emotional security)	Taxonomy of gift recipients based on attachment (how givers relate to gift recipients)
	*"I know that **if I ever need her** [my close friend Jane] **she will be there for me**"* {Agnes, diary, 008G}.	Being always there	**Responsiveness** (Secure base)			
	*They are **my parents** and I love them dearly […] I wish there was **more I could do for them**, and I know **they feel the same way***" {Robert, diary, 009GS}. "*With **my parents** the **relationships is pretty much the same** all the time, so there is **less pressure** [to give than giving to other people]"* {Robert, interview}.	Helping	**Based on support** (Safe Haven)			
	*"I **always give** something [gift] at New Year to **my parents** […] with my mum and dad it's different because, obviously, I know them very, very well"* {Lesley, interview}.	Always receiving gifts	**Permanent receivers in givers' gift list**			
	"*We [my young half-sister and I] have always got on really well and have a nice friendship, often **teasing and joking** with each other […] we **only speak when we see each other***" {Ruth, diary 027G}.	Based on interaction	**Time spent together** (proximity maintenance)	**Personal recipients**		
	*"It's [gift-giving] basically my family unit and the occasional friend **on and off** […] or **girlfriends if I'm seeing them at the time** and the odd friend but not many"* {John, interview}.	People in and out of the list	**Transient receivers in the givers' gift list**			
	*"I will be **giving** something [little gift] to about 5 people **in my workplace** as I move to a new one […] we have been **working together** for a long time […] the new job will soon start, and **I hope to find nice people there too**"* {Joan, diary, 042GS}.	Receivers in a particular social setting	**Restricted to a social context** (group attachment)	**Social recipients**		
	*"There is a regularity of the people I give gifts to **except if** there is […] a **new friend** who has his **birthday** and I, will buy him something"* {Brian, interview}.	Occasional gift receivers	**Sporadic members in the givers' gift list**			
	*"I **always** buy [a gift] for Lisa [my friend's daughter] […] I consider her [Lisa] to be **part of the family**, a sort of **cousin or sister to Jake [my son]** {*Mary, diary, 065G}. *"Other than him [my partner] and our son, **I have no family** now"* {Mary, diary, 059G}.	Receivers filling a relationship void	**Surrogate recipients** (surrogate attachment)	**Surrogate recipients**		
	*"The **brother of my brother in law** got married recently […] I knew this gift was a hit […] we appreciate each other and consider each other to be "blood" (**my relationship with him is tied to that of my sister and brother in law)**" (James, diary, 027GS).* *"We [my **sisters' husband** and I] are completely different (one could say 'polar opposites') so **we will never be buddies** -but we trust each other implicitly and there is a sense of camaraderie in our interactions; we share -after all- the **same goal: the happiness of my sister**" (James, diary, 025GS).* *"My **sister & I** grew up together […] we are naturally close to each other" (James, diary, 026GS).*	Relationships dependant on a third person	Givers' relationship with the recipient tied to a third person (different from the recipient).	**Mediated recipients** (extensions of special others)	**Mediated receivers**	