



Title: The Role of Cross Multi-Sensory Marketing Strategies in Pet Care Stores: A Hermeneutic Phenomenological Investigation at Animates Invercargill

Author: Rodrigo Borges Teodoro

Degree: Master of Applied Management, Southern Institute of Technology

Supervisor(s): Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen

Year: 2021



© The Authors. This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

**The role of cross multi-sensory marketing strategies in pet
care stores: a hermeneutic phenomenological investigation
at Animates Invercargill**

**by
Rodrigo Borges Teodoro**

Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Applied Management

in the School of Business
Faculty of New Media, Business and Arts/SIT2LRN

SOUTHERN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
(An affiliate of the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology)

Supervisor: Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen

Due Date: 26 March 2021

Word Count (excluding contents and appendices): 21666

Abstract

Sensory marketing has become a trending topic in contemporary business strategies. Managerial attitudes increasing the store atmospherics with sensory cues have found to be more influential in determining purchase behaviour than attitudes toward mere merchandise. There is robust literature investigating the positive correlation among multi-sensory marketing strategies, customer behaviour and brand loyalty. However, as humans and their pets respond differently to the same sensory stimuli, the challenges in managing a cross multi-sensory marketing strategy in the pet care segment created a gap in the literature. Through a hermeneutic phenomenological investigation, the present research unveils the feasibility of cross multi-sensory marketing strategies to the pet care retailing segment and its impacts on customer behaviour and brand loyalty. Data collection used a sequential-explanatory design through a questionnaire, focus group and phenomenological observation. The data was triangulated to ensure analytical rigour and findings' reliability. Adopting a cross multi-sensory strategy at Animates, a pet care store in Invercargill – New Zealand, proved to impact the customers' perceptions, creating an emotional-eliciting circumstance where customers expressed their wish to engage in a deeper engagement to the brand. Customer behaviour and brand loyalty were positively impacted by the lived experience, with a robust increase in the time spent in the store visit, average purchasing value per customer, and customer's perception of brand differentiation and uniqueness of Animates' purchasing experience. Recommendations are made to further studies investigating the limits of cross multi-sensory strategies in the pet care segment to avoid sensory overload.

Keywords: sensory marketing, store atmospherics, customer behaviour, brand loyalty, pet care retailing

Dedication

To God – supreme intelligence and primary cause of all things: for not letting me forget who I really am.

To Viviane, for being my partner in this life and beyond. I love you.

To Eulalia, Zafir, Sebastian and Vicente, for being the evergreen promises of happiness in my heart.

A note to myself: "Though nobody can go back and make a new beginning, anyone can start over and make a new ending." Chico Xavier

Acknowledgements

To Viviane, for being patient to the limit with my absences; resilient with my weaknesses; and for inspiring me with her silent strength.

To my much-loved mother and father, Abadia and Solimar: “Behind me are all my ancestors giving me strength. Life passed through them until it reached me. And in honour of them, I will live it fully”. Bert Hellinger.

To my friends from SIT Dilushan, Flavio, Luisa, Monica, Pamela, Scarlett and Agatha for making everything lighter, for the unrestricted confidence and for the friendly presence.

A special thanks to Josh Kilpatrick, a soul-brother that never recognised distance as a barrier to express his friendship and support to my journey.

A special acknowledgement to my Supervisor Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen, for her theoretical competence and human excellence. An admirable human being who went to great lengths for the success of my academic journey.

To Mariana and Dr Roberto, special friends from beyond life.

To God, the alpha and omega of my inner universe. Thank you, dad!

Table of Contents

Student Declaration	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	xi
List of Acronyms	xii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	2
1.3. Significance of the study	5
1.4. Research aim and objectives	6
1.5. Structure of the thesis	7
Chapter 2. Theory and Industry Analysis	8
2.1. Introduction	8
2.2. Theoretical analysis	9
2.3. Industry analysis.....	14
2.4. Summary	19
Chapter 3. Literature Review	21
3.1. Introduction	21
3.2. Sensory marketing and store atmospherics	22
3.3. Sensory interplay and customer behaviour.....	27
3.4. Sensory marketing strategies for the pet care segment.....	31
3.5. Summary	33
Chapter 4. Methodology.....	35
4.1. Introduction	35
4.2. Research philosophy and approach to the theoretical development.....	36
4.3. Research design	42
4.3.1. Store atmospherics modifications.....	43
4.4. Method 1: Questionnaire	44
4.4.1. Purpose of the questionnaire	44
4.4.2. Questionnaire design	45
4.4.3. Pilot testing.....	45
4.4.4. Procedure.....	46
4.4.5. Sampling.....	46
4.5. Method 2: Focus group.....	47
4.5.1. Purpose of focus group.....	47
4.5.2. Focus group design.....	49

4.5.3.	Procedure and participants.....	49
4.6.	Method 3: Observation	50
4.6.1.	Purpose of observation	50
4.6.2.	Observation design and purpose.....	51
4.7.	Data analysis.....	51
4.8.	Limitations, reliability and bias	54
4.9.	Ethical considerations.....	56
4.9.1.	Method 1: Questionnaire	57
	Method 2: Focus group.....	57
4.9.2.	Method 3: Observation	58
4.10.	Summary	58
Chapter 5.	Findings and Analysis	60
5.1.	Introduction	60
5.2.	Results	60
5.2.1.	Results and findings of the questionnaire.....	60
5.2.2.	Dog-owners perceptions and their dogs' reactions	61
5.2.3.	Customer behaviour.....	66
5.2.4.	Brand loyalty	69
5.2.5.	Open questions	71
5.3.	Results and findings of the focus group	76
5.3.1.	Dog-owners' perceptions and their dogs' reactions.....	76
5.3.2.	Customer behaviour.....	80
5.3.3.	Brand loyalty	82
5.4.	Results and findings of the observations	85
5.4.1.	Physical settings	86
5.4.2.	Actions, reactions and interactions.....	87
5.5.	Triangulation	89
5.6.	Summary	92
Chapter 6.	Recommendations and Conclusion	93
6.1.	Purpose of the research.....	93
6.2.	Answering the research questions and objectives	94
6.3.	Relationship to previous research.....	96
6.4.	Limitations of the present study	97
6.5.	Recommendations for future research and practice.....	99
6.6.	Conclusion.....	100
References		102
Appendix A.	Ethics Approval.....	123
Appendix B.	Formal acceptance of the research terms and conditions by Animates Invercargill.....	124
Appendix C.	Questionnaire	125

Appendix D.	Focus group questions	132
Appendix E.	Focus group's consent form	135
Appendix F.	Focus group's information sheet.....	137
Appendix G.	Ethics Application.....	139

List of Tables

Table 1	A comparison between phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology ..	40
Table 2	Summary of focus group participants	50
Table 3	Direct analysis six steps (adapted from Halcomb & Davidson, 2006	54
Table 4	Single-component questions evaluating dog-owners self perceptions	62
Table 5	Multi-component question evaluating dog-owners' self-perceptions ¹	64
Table 6	Dogs reactional arousing scale	65
Table 7	Questions exploring customer behaviour	67
Table 8	Questions exploring brand loyalty	69
Table 9	Lexicon list regarding feelings, emotions and instincts of dog-owners during the lived experience (and the counts of each lexicon)	72
Table 10	Lexicon list regarding feelings, emotions and instincts of dogs as perceived by their owners during the lived experience (and the number of counts of each lexicon)	73
Table 11	Sample of memories and anecdotes representatives of the general answers given to question 19	74

Table 12	Quotes of participants regarding their perceptions about their own emotion.....	77
Table 13	Quotes of participants regarding their perceptions about their dogs' reactions	78
Table 14	Quotes of participants regarding customer behaviour – question four	80
Table 15	Quotes of participants regarding how the sensory experience impacted their time spent and purchase value	81
Table 16	Quotes from participants regarding their memories aroused by the sensory experience and the rule of memories on the construction of brand loyalty in their minds	83
Table 17	Quotes from participants regarding their memories aroused by the sensory experience and the rule of memories on the construction of brand loyalty in their minds	84
Table 18	Linking themes and key findings to research objectives	90

List of Figures

Figure 1	Gadamerian Hermeneutical Circle	54
----------	---------------------------------------	----

List of Acronyms

SIT	Southern Institute of Technology
SM	Sensory marketing

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Sensory marketing has become a trending topic in contemporary business strategies. Attitudes towards the store atmospherics have sometimes found to be more influential in determining purchase behaviour than attitudes toward mere merchandise (Mishra et al., 2014). From a managerial perspective, sensory marketing - SM is a strategic tool capable of creating subconscious triggers that modulate consumer perceptions of abstract notions of the product, generating a high level of consumer engagement and brand loyalty (Krishna, 2012). From a research perspective, SM adds to the knowledge of how sensation and perception can be aroused and how it applies to consumer behaviour (Krishna, 2012, p. 333). The present research investigates the impact of multi-sensory marketing on customer purchasing behaviour and brand loyalty in a pet care shop.

Applying SM strategies to any business is challenging, as there are several variables involved in how individuals perceive and react to a sensorial stimulus (Hulten, 2011). Hence, using it in an industry such as pet care retail, where pets sometimes accompany customers to the stores – and assuming that humans and animals perceive and respond differently to the same sensory stimuli, turns it into a complex environment. Previous research has shown how some researchers underwent difficulties and limitations when studying animals' sensory reactions (Di Donfrancesco et al., 2012; Hobbs &

Shanoyan, 2018; Tsai et al., 2020). However, the present research outlines a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge by using phenomenological observation of a sensory quasi-experiment conducted at a pet care store and analyses how customer behaviour was affected after being exposed to a cross sensory-based marketing strategy. In the present research, the word "cross" refers to arousing human and animal senses simultaneously.

This chapter is structured into four sections which introduce relevant background and context to justify the present research. First, it will introduce and link the SM field as a viable strategy for the pet care retailing segment. Second, it justifies and discusses the relevance of the research to the applied management is discussed. Third, the research aims and objectives are introduced. Finally, an overview of the structure of the thesis is provided.

1.2. Statement of the problem

For the last four decades, marketers in various industries have been investigating to what extent arousing the five senses could reach and engage customers. New research indicates that SM research is now mature enough to lead many more consumer products companies to take advantage of sense-based marketing (Rajain & Rathee, 2017). In contemporary society, driven by information overload and time-space compression, companies cannot keep developing brand strategies exclusively through transactional or relational marketing as before (Rajain & Rathee, 2017). Instead, contemporary SM

research highlights the significance and positive impact of sensory dimensions through engaging customer behaviour to brand experiences within a value-generating process (Rodrigues, 2014). In this evolutionary process, branding literature has evolved from branding theories that understood brands as "identifiers and embedded in goods and brand value as determined through value-in-exchange to a new brand logic that views brands as dynamic and social processes and brand value as a brand's perceived value-in-use determined by all stakeholders" (Merz et al., 2009, p. 344). Sensory marketing plays a central role in this movement towards a new understanding of customer behaviour.

However, although SM has evolved into a maturing research field currently being spun out into commercial applications, sensory strategies have not yet been consistently used or researched in connection with the pet care retail (Surie, 2014). Some authors have identified fundamental obstacles when investigating animals' reactions to sensory stimuli, especially the lack of a common cross-lexicon able to describe both human and animal senses simultaneously (Di Donfrancesco et al., 2012; Hobbs and Shanoyan, 2018; Tsai et al., 2020). The present study recognises this gap in the literature as a substantial obstacle that demands a deeper understanding of pets' neurological responses, the socio-affective context on which the sensory stimuli were provided, and behavioural learning patterns in pets (Tsai et al., 2020).

Once this first gap is explored, another one even more challenging will present itself to researchers: building an understanding of the cross-reactions to the same sensory stimuli regarding pets and their human guardians. This research does not try to cover

these gaps in the literature. Instead, this is acknowledged here as a circumstantial obstacle. While there are many practical limitations for this type of research, this experiential focus on phenomenological research makes it an appropriate fit here and more than suitable to observe how pet owners and their pets react when exposed to a multi-sensory marketing strategy in a pet care store. As this methodological choice is not commonly observed in the business area (Seymour, 2007), the chapter devoted to the methodology presents a deeper understanding of its praxis and validating process (refer to chapter 4).

Data were gathered following a sequential explanatory design, using questionnaires and a focus group where respondents were asked about their perceptions of the sensory modifications managed in the Animates Invercargill store atmospherics. The store atmospherics modifications refer to an in-site interplay sensory contextualisation including sight, smell, taste and hearing senses of dogs and their owners. Questionnaires were used to capture documental fast responses from customers and their dogs' reactions through their perspectives, while a focus group collected customers' anecdotes related to memories of their own living experiences and emotions aroused by the sensory exposition. The researcher observed the phenomena through the lens of a hermeneutical phenomenological approach and this was triangulated with data from a questionnaire and a focus group. The purpose was to explore how this sensory experience could influence customer behaviour and brand loyalty. Findings could be potentially generalised to the pet care retailing in New Zealand in general.

1.3. Significance of the study

Marketing is a critical subject in the Master of Applied Management at the Southern Institute of Technology, where the present study was hosted (Master of Applied Management, n.d.). Within the Applied Marketing paper, SM plays an emerging role among the advanced topics and techniques in the area. Sensory marketing is increasingly gaining importance as a promising approach to effectively appeal to consumers, increase their purchase intentions; create and improve their brand loyalty; and transport them to a remarkable experience while shopping (Haase & Wiedmann, 2018; Krishna, 2012). Krishna (2012) affirms that all customer experiences are based on the integration of sensory inputs provided by the store atmospherics and that these inputs are strong enough to affect their judgment and behaviour.

The pet care segment performs a vibrant, growing part of the New Zealand economy (Companion Animals New Zealand - CANZ, 2011; 2016; 2020). Regardless of the circumstantial obstacles to SM research in the pet care segment (refer to section 1.2), it is important to recognise that an estimated market of NZD 2,1 billion in 2020 (CANZ Report, 2016) should not be excluded from the SM discussion. The present research benefits business research by approaching the literature gap through a phenomenological investigation. Findings are expected both to add to the body of knowledge of SM research and incentivise future research through the same methodology. Potential benefits to the pet care industry include a deeper understanding of the feasibility of employing SM strategies in the retailing segment; a deeper understanding of cross-

reactions regarding dogs and their owners; and gaining knowledge about the impacts of SM strategies on the customer behaviour and brand loyalty, marketing differentiation, distinguishing and positioning companies in the pet care retailing segment.

1.4. Research aim and objectives

This research aims to investigate how cross multi-sensory strategies impact customer behaviour in pet care shops through a phenomenological observation at Animates Invercargill.

The key objectives are as follows:

1. To observe and describe how pet owners and their dogs react when exposed to a cross multi-sensory shopping experience in a pet care store.
2. To explore how emotions, memories and perceptions can influence customers' purchasing intentions in the pet care retailing segment after being exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience.
3. To explore how emotions, memories and perceptions can influence customers' brand loyalty in the pet care retailing segment after being exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

The study is structured into six chapters, following the guidelines provided by the MGT910 – Research Project Study Guide of the Southern Institute of Technology - SIT (SIT, 2020). The first chapter has set out the background to the research

Chapter 2 – Theory and Industry Analysis, presents the fundamentals concepts behind the SM theoretical development; how SM became a well-recognised research field in the business area; an analysis around the relevance of the pet care retailing industry; and how the theory and industry merge into the present research. Chapter 3 – Literature Review, provides a comprehensive review of the literature supporting the modern concept of SM, the sensory interplay possibilities and the feasibility of SM strategies in the pet care segment. Chapter 4 – Research Methodology, describes an in-depth overview of the research design and gives attention to phenomenological philosophy as a feasible choice for the business area. All the compounding elements of the methodology used in the present research are addressed in this chapter. Chapter 5 – Findings and Analysis, presents the results and explores the impact of SM strategy in customer's behaviour and brand loyalty in the pet care segment and describes the phenomenological observation of the phenomena conducted at Animates Invercargill through the analysis of the customers' anecdotes and their relevance to the brand loyalty. Finally, Chapter 6 – Recommendations and Conclusions, discusses the limitations of the present study, addresses recommendations for further developments by referencing the gains to the body-of-knowledge observed in the present research.

Chapter 2. Theory and Industry Analysis

2.1. Introduction

This chapter has a dual objective: first, to examine the theoretical fundamentals supporting the SM concept; second, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the pet care industry in New Zealand and its possible connections with SM strategies. The first section presents a retrospective discussion regarding experiential marketing's conceptualisation and how it supports the modern, sophisticated SM theory. The correct understanding of the lexicon *experience* is crucial to capture the further theoretical nuances presented by the marketing field's sensory approach. Brand differentiation and brand loyalty are also investigated in their conceptual connections with SM theory.

The second section of this chapter advances towards a deeper understanding of the pet care retail industry in New Zealand. This business segment is susceptible to phenomena such as *pet parenting* and *pet humanisation*, which denote a possible synergic approach to SM strategies. It starts with an overall industry analysis in New Zealand. Later, it provides an in-depth discussion of the present study's originality linking an SM approach to the pet care retailing segment, and highlights the present research's relevance. As phenomenology predominantly cares about analysing individual perceptions of reality, not the reality itself, this chapter does not utilise traditional industry analysis tools such as SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats analysis). Finally, the research problem's complexity is explored – using epistemologically acceptable

parameters, through a value and vision analysis combined with some SM theoretical fundamentals.

2.2. Theoretical analysis

The research focus is the applicability of SM strategies in a specialised market: the pet care retailing in New Zealand. However, SM is an emergent theme in marketing studies, and a deeper understanding of its theoretical construction is vital not to misinterpret its applications. Even though SM theory achieved academic relevance after Krishna's conceptualisation in 2012 (Krishna, 2012), it is essential to observe and understand its precursory studies. The store atmospherics concept (Potter, 1973) and some relevant theoretical developments from that, such as the servicescape theory (Booms & Bitner, 1981), were relevant contributions to the understanding of how the human senses could be aroused to influence customer behaviour and improve customers' perception of purchasing experience.

At this stage, a deeper understanding of the lexicon *experience* in the marketing field is essential. Despite its prevalence in sensory studies (Helmefak & Hulten, 2017), Poulsson and Kale (2004) observe that no attempt has been made to define what experience means systematically. The lack of consensus on the definition of experience did not diminish this lexicon's relevance as a pivotal SM theory structure. Whilst SM studies struggled to achieve epistemological recognition as a valid theory due to its complex nature and fluid connections with other research areas, such as Psychology,

Sociology and Medicine (Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019), the studies about the role of experience as a factor affecting customer behaviour enjoyed prestige among relevant researchers since early 1970s (Same & Larimo, 2012).

Several researchers have focused on understanding the phenomena observed of an increasing number of people looking after meaning, happiness, sensations, new forms of fulfilment, and core values in replacement of mere convenience and pragmatism in their purchasing practices (Acevedo et al., 2018; Helme Falk & Hulten, 2017; Olahut et al., 2012; Petit et al., 2019; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). The concept of *peak experiences* as "rare, exciting, oceanic, deeply moving, exhilarating, elevating experiences that generate an advanced form of perceiving reality, and are even mystic and magical in their effect upon the experimenter" (Maslow, 1963, p. 64) generated a movement of authors interested in extending this concept to the business area. The flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; 1980; Csikszentmihaly & Csikszentmihaly, 1988) added the concept of hyperfocus – when by the sensory arousing a person is fully immersed in a feeling of energised focus, and opened a possibility to bring this theory to a better understanding of customer behaviour. The lexicon experience's relevance to the marketing area peaked in 1982 with the experimental aspects of marketing proposed by Halbrook and Hirschman: a theoretical framework representing customer behaviour aspects and variables focusing on the symbolic, hedonic, and aesthetic nature of consumption (Halbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

In the early 1990s, the concepts of extraordinary experience (Arnould & Price, 1993) and customer experience engineering (Carbone, 2004; Carbone & Haeckel, 1994) added practical guidelines for applying the *customer experience* theories in the retailing environment. A sophisticated synthesis of the experience body of knowledge was presented in 1998 by presenting the concept of "experience economy" (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). According to Pine and Gilmore (1988), "an experience occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event. Commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, and experiences *memorable*" (p. 112).

As a result of the growing research surrounding the lexicon of experience, the definition of experiential marketing affirms it as a unique set of tools capable of creating strong brand awareness and emotional connections with customers throughout the engagement of all five human senses (Schmitt, 1999). Robust developments came after the initial efforts on conceptualising experience, such as the practical guidelines for improving commercial experience (Poulson & Kale, 2004); the conceptual model of experiential marketing (Van Doorn, 2006); the experiential pyramid technique and personal change scale (Tarssanen & Kylanen, 2007); the differentiation between experiential marketing (tactic level) and experience marketing (strategic level), proposed by Yuan and Wu (2008); and finally the contribution of Wall et al. (2011) regarding the concept of customer experience.

While the concept of experience became a dynamic and academically recognised field of study, that the concomitant theoretical developments of the lexicon experience (as

a concept) had a significant contribution to bringing SM research to a highlighted role in business research (Hulten, 2011; Krishna, 2012). In fact, after the advent of the customer experience conceptualisation in 2011 by Walls et al. and Krishna's SM concept in 2012, the two fields seemed to merge into a single SM field (Helmefalk & Hulten, 2017).

In contrast to insights gained from single layer studies (experience only, one sense only), the unified SM field offered literature focused on examining multi-layered aspects of customer behaviour as sensory interplay experiences (please refer to Chapter 3). The present research uses this theoretical framework to develop new knowledge about possible cross-multi SM strategies in pet care retailing, namely the New Zealander company Animates.

Beyond the SM concept's longitudinal evolutionary curve, it is important to analyse two side concepts' contributions to the body of knowledge: brand differentiation and brand loyalty. Customer's experience is a key element to determine to what extent businesses could reach up to a high level of differentiation and customer retention, that is, customer loyalty. A SM approach "offers a firm the opportunity to differentiate and express a brand through sensorial strategies, based on cognitive, emotional or value-based elements concerning the human mind and senses" (Hulten, 2012). Hassan and Iqbal (2016) claimed that identity plays a central role in creating a brand, as the brand would be distinguished regarding its distinctive identity from its competitors. Besides traditional advertising elements, brand differentiation can be reached using several sensory elements like visual, auditory, olfactive, haptic and gustative features (Krishna,

2012). There is a contemporary understanding that sensory stimuli generate instant interaction, strong engagement and deep brand identification by the customers, contribute to raising the brand to the top of the customers' mind and offering unique experiences with the brand (Hassan & Iqbal, 2016, p. 732).

Brand loyalty displays the customer's affection for a brand (Rundle-Thiele & Bennett, 2001). The uniqueness of a purchasing experience plays a central role in determining how a customer will remain that experience in his/her mind (Mishra et al., 2014). Mishra et al. (2014) affirmed that the customer's satisfaction is derived from transactional aspects - price, service, and product quality-but especially from emotional aspects such as affective memories evoked, positive sensations aroused and interactive identification with the shopping experience. The main objective of SM strategies is to deeply create emotional identification and response rather than highlight the product's characteristics by increasing brand knowledge and building stronger customer loyalty (Lindstrom, 2005). Hassan and Iqbal (2014) observed that the intentional management of perceived five senses in relation to customers enhances the feelings and emotions that increase sales and customer loyalty. Thus, the purpose of SM is to "develop the way to indulge the customer falling in love with the brand as quickly as possible and also make them surprised by offering a remarkable interactive experience" (Hassan & Iqbal, 2014, p. 729). Nevertheless, Hassan and Iqbal found evidence that employing sensory stimuli in the store atmospherics leads customers to a stage where they will recall the business' name, products, and services for many years (2014, p. 729). By applying these marketing

strategies, businesses can embrace such customers exposed to sensorial experience with the brand and become loyal customers (Clegg, 2003).

This section has focused on providing a comprehensive longitudinal overview of the concept of experience and its relation to the business area. Attention was given to demonstrate how the theoretical developments of 'experience' contributed to legitimising SM research in the marketing field. Complimentary concepts such as brand differentiation and brand loyalty were analysed through the light of the present study interest, highlighting their connections with the SM theory.

2.3. Industry analysis

This section describes and analyses the pet care industry in New Zealand and highlight the importance of matching this robust industry with contemporary SM strategies. As explained in session 2.1, the present research does not utilise traditional industry analysis tools such as SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats analysis), instead it provides a description of the pet care segment as well as a discussion about some relevant phenomena impacting customer behaviour in it. According to The New Zealand Companion Animals Inc. (CANZ) 2020 Report, New Zealand is home to more than 4.35 million pets - or companion animals, the second-highest proportion of families with companion animals in the world, only behind the United States with a share of 67% - against estimated 64% in New Zealand (CANZ, 2020, p. 9). Cats are the preferred companion animal in New Zealand, with 41% of families caring about at least

one cat and more than 1.2 million cats in the country (CANZ, 2020, p. 9). Dogs are the second most popular, with a third of New Zealand households having at least one dog, with an estimated 851,000 dogs living in New Zealand (CANZ, 2020, p. 9).

The robust numbers observed in the pet care population, aligned with some pet parenting trends lately observed in New Zealand (Gates et al., 2019) – like pet parenting and pet humanisation, have a significant impact on the pet market in the country. In 2016, CANZ estimated that the total expenditure in the pet care market in New Zealand was around NZD 1.8 billion, 12,5% higher than the NZD 1.6 billion total expenditure estimated in its previous survey in 2011 (CANZ, 2016, p. 10). Despite being under half the population size of fish and cats, dogs accounted for all companion animals' highest annual expenditure in New Zealand at \$797 million, or 44% of the total in 2016 (CANZ, 2016, p. 21). In 2015 the average family was expected to spend NZD 1,686 on their dogs, which turn the dog segment attractive enough to host SM research. No reliable data source had made these numbers updates publicly available after 2016. However, using the New Zealand GDP (gross domestic product) growing annual rates from 2016 to 2019 as an updating parameter, we could estimate the pet care industry to be as big as NZD 2,1 billion. The rise of pet food expenditure and pet ownership in recent years shows the intense engagement that New Zealand owners have with their pets. The pet market is, therefore, highly emotive (Surie, 2014, p. 9). Robust evidence suggests that because of their relationship with their pets, owners purchasing behaviour follows human purchasing behaviour patterns (Bohrer, 2011).

For this study, it is interesting to investigate how humans and their pets respond when exposed to the same sensory stimuli within a purchasing experience. Despite the limitations of this intricate question, some aspects can be studied, such as the emotional interaction between humans and pets, given that pet owners tends to translate their pet's needs into human emotions and judgments when purchasing pet goods or services (Hobbs & Shanoyan, 2018). The phenomenon of pet humanisation implicated in an evolution of the terminology used to companion animals. The word pet (from the root of the French word "petit") has since long been adopted as an affective name for animals kept for pleasure and companionship. However, professionals and researchers in veterinary medicine, animal behaviour and general welfare, and human-animal interaction prefer the term companion animal to connote a psychological bond and a mutual relationship (CANZ, 2020, p. 6). A companion animal is any animal sharing a living environment and relationship with humans. The term 'companion animal' is "an all-encompassing phraseology given to an entire spectrum of animals with whom interaction and/or companionship is enjoyed by humans, and where a responsible guardianship is established and accepted for their welfare by humans" (CANZ, 2020, p. 3). Such a statement was true for 78% of New Zealanders with dogs in 2016 (CANZ, 2016, p. 10).

Evidence is that pet owners in New Zealand are engaged in the global trend of 'pet parenting' – treating their pets more than mere humans, but as their children (Surie, 2014). At this stage, a pet parent feels responsible for providing the best goods and treatment to their pets and recognising their pet's nutrition, training, behaviour and health as direct results from observing their parenting obligations. Stimulated by this

phenomenon, the pet care industry has had significant changes in recent years, with the leading players launching more sophisticated and diverse pet products increasingly, with an important impact on pet shop stores – investing in attractive store layouts and personnel training, and supermarkets opening more shelf space for pet products (Surie, 2014). As premiumisation and humanisation continue to influence the pet care industry massively, New Zealand retailers face the challenge of having a more in-depth understanding of their customers' behaviour and feelings associated with their pets. One of the main implications of the premiumisation trend is the development of personalisation. Consumers increasingly look for products and services that meet their pet needs through a humanisation lens, turning the search for products increasingly more specific and demanding higher purchasing experience levels (Euromonitor, 2020). This understanding is crucial to provide customers with a remarkable purchasing experience capable of improving brand loyalty and increasing profitability.

The pet humanisation and pet parenting phenomena and their impacts in the pet care retailing industry justify why it is crucial to analyse both pet and pet owners' reactions to an SM strategy in a cross-sensory study. Given the limitations of this kind of research (discussed in chapter 4), the present study aims to take advantage of a phenomenological observation to add to the body of knowledge how sensory cues impact customer behaviour after customers and their dogs being exposed to an SM strategy in a pet care shop. Due to its intrinsic methodological nature, phenomenology studies prescind more in-depth technical industry analysis (Moran, 2000).

E-commerce is causing a significant change in the pet care industry as New Zealand consumers are ordering online for regular purchases due to the ease and convenience. Although supermarkets remain the primary distribution channel for pet care across New Zealand and pet shops are leading the process of premiumisation and humanisation of products, internet retailers have been cutting into their value share with their advantages of convenience, accessibility, and discounts on repeat purchases (Euromonitor, 2020). However, the e-commerce environment will not be subject to the present research due to technological limitations to provide SM interplay experiences on online shopping (refer to chapter 3).

At the local level, the Companion Animal Ownership Survey 2020 estimates that 70% of South Island households have at least one pet, with 35% of them having at least one dog (CANZ, 2020). These numbers support a vibrant, growing pet care retailing segment in Invercargill. An examination of the local market conducted by the researcher showed that in February of 2021, Invercargill had five pet care stores and some other pet care institutions and facilities (veterinarian clinics, grooming salons, kennels, hotels, pet behaviourists, pet welfare organisations and some other services). Among the pet care stores located in Invercargill, Animates was chosen to host the present research for its store size and product portfolio, largely more extensive and more sophisticated than its local competitors.

Animates is a specialty pet retail brand with fifty-four stores throughout New Zealand. From the opening of its first store in Christchurch in 1996, the Animates goal of

creating a pet superstore has thrived. Animates NZ Holdings Ltd is owned jointly (50/50) by two parent companies – Greencross Ltd and EBOS (Animates, 2020). Greencross Ltd is a leading player in pet care and veterinary services in Australia, owning a range of well-known brands in that country such as Petbarn, Greencross Vets and City Farmers. Greencross provides Animates NZ with management services, systems and guidelines. EBOS is a New Zealand company with expertise in the healthcare segment. Besides Animates NZ, they own the MasterPet industry, creating a vertical integration in the pet care segment with a high synergy potential (Animates, 2020). Animates is a significant player in the New Zealand pet care market, as well as Animates Invercargill has a prominent role at the local level.

2.4. Summary

The refinement of "experience" in a marketing context opens a gateway for new research in SM research in the marketing field. This research proposes novel applications of SM to the pet care market but acknowledges the complications of the cross interaction between human and pet responses to sensory stimuli. Despite the challenges, the tremendous growth in the pet care sector makes the application of SM in the pet care sector highly attractive. With an estimated 64% of New Zealanders owning one or more pets, the proposed research is highly relevant to business opportunities in New Zealand. Furthermore, the trend of pet humanisation and the related phenomenon of premiumisation in pet care products makes SM strategies well suited to the goals of pet

care marketing. Animates was chosen as a target environment for this research based on its national and local success in the pet care market.

Chapter 3. Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

Sensory Marketing's impact on customer engagement and behaviour has been well established in marketing literature over the past ten years. Initial studies by Hulten (2011) and Krishna (2012) are credited with unleashing sensory marketing application in practical business contexts, but adjacent studies on what is most frequently termed customer engagement and store atmospherics also contributed to the foundational concepts which established SM as a unique tool. These studies, for example, Mishra et al. (2014) and Hassan and Iqbal (2016), proceeded in parallel to merge store atmospherics to SM. More than thirty published studies across more than twenty-five journals and authored by over twenty-six unique researchers have established SM as an effective tool to increase customer engagement and encourage desired behaviour and are discussed by this literature review.

This review will be organised into three sections. First, it will provide a chronological review of the literature describing store atmospherics and sensory marketing. Second, it will delve into a critical assessment of the sensory interplay experience and its impact on customer behaviour and brand loyalty. Finally, it will highlight literature that addresses marketing strategies that this author purports to suit the pet care retail sector. Though the importance of sensory cues in a store atmosphere has

long been recognised both by managers and researchers, especially in the retail context, this phenomenon has not yet been explicitly explored in pet care businesses.

3.2. Sensory marketing and store atmospherics

This section presents a brief historical overview of the SM theory and how it is linked to the store atmospherics concept. The SM concept, implications and deployments have been subject to substantial research in marketing. Krishna (2012) defines sensory marketing as a pool of applied techniques that emerged from the understanding of the human senses in the field of marketing, affecting especially a "customer's perception, cognition, emotion, learning, preference, choice, or evaluation" (p. 354). This concept is widely accepted in more recent literature, with several authors developing their research based on Krishna's concept (Acevedo et al., 2018; Helmfalk & Hulten, 2017; Olahut et al.; Petit et al., 2019; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019 2012; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019;).

Despite the increasing interest in SM in contemporary marketing literature, the first study aiming to identify the rule of sensory cues in customer behaviour was written long ago (Laird, 1932). However, Laird's attempt to collect data in a house-to-house survey by stimulating sensory cues in households was abruptly interrupted by an incident with the police when a housewife suspected the unusual approach. Despite this, Laird's incomplete findings indicated that perceived sensory impressions were a potent factor in how customers evaluate a product's quality (Laird, 1932, p. 246). The discontinuation of

Laird's survey seemed to have discouraged new studies in the area for an extended period after that (Kotler, 1973).

The resumption of SM research occurred in 1973 when Kotler developed the concept of store atmospherics as a natural consequence of the use of sensory cues in retailing. In his seminal article, Kotler describes the store atmosphere as the qualities of the surrounding perceived through the human senses (Kotler, 1973). The original term 'atmosphere' became largely adopted in the marketing field, though some authors have explored some other exciting developments, like Booms and Bitner (1981), when describing the 'servicescape' as to how physical and psychological factors such as pleasure, arousal and dominance could determine customers' perceptions of a service environment (p. 49). Undoubtedly, Bitner's contribution to the sensory marketing field had majored when he developed the S-O-R (Stimulus → Organism → Response) model (Bitner, 1992), which became a paradigm to the sensory marketing research field. Bitner's S-O-R model (1992) claimed customers behaviour responded to each sensory stimulus in three different aspects which could be potentially measured: physiological, emotional (affective) and behavioural (purchasing preferences). This model has created a favourable environment for contemporary SM research since it stands up to the present as the most commonly used measurable understanding (Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019, p. 334).

However, psychological and emotional responses to sensory stimuli were still challenging to measure without addressing individual motivation to purchase a product. A recent study by Scarpi (2020) suggested that an SM approach tends to move customers

from utilitarian to hedonistic behaviour. Scarpi's theory is critical in this context because it places customers' pleasure and self-fulfilment (hedonistic purchase orientation) as pivotal factors to engage customers in a store loyalty strategy based on perceived value. Indeed, Scarpi's research also confirmed the approach-avoidance hypothesis raised by Russell and Mehrabian (1978), which previously suggested that customers would express the desire to affiliate themselves to environments driven to emphasise a hedonistic purchasing experience. The Russell and Mehrabian's PAD (pleasure, arousal and dominance) Scale became a milestone in the construct of customers emotional state when exposed to sensory cues in a store atmosphere and, for the first time, evoked the importance of potential response moderators as measuring tools related to SM (Russel & Mehrabian, 1978).

Mishra et al. (2014) investigated the moderating effects of customer perceptions on behavioural responses to sensory stimuli. In the light of Mishra et al. (2014), a response moderator could be any factor that increases/decreases the standard stimulus-response rate. An interesting statement from Mishra et al. (2014) was also that the behavioural response from customers to sensory stimuli would be the sum of store atmosphere moderators - ambient conditions, space and functions, and signs and symbols; customer perceptions - quality, emotions, price, and social variables; and emotional state - PAD Scale. Controversially, Acevedo et al. (2018) argued that meeting positive feedback from all response moderators could cause customers' sensory saturation (or sensory fatigue), prohibitive costs for the business, negative impact on profitability indexes, a negative experience to customers, depending on their emotional background. The discussion

concerning negative aspects of response moderators has increased the importance of response mediators like profitability and brand loyalty indexes in the sensory approach (Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019).

At this point, the use of response moderators and mediators was considered an essential aspect when employing sensory strategies as promotional advantages for creating brand differentiation and brand loyalty, as analysed by Hassan and Iqbal (2016). The link between sensory marketing and brand differentiation and loyalty was successfully established when Hassan and Iqbal (2016) emphasised the importance of conceiving an SM strategy under strict budget management to guard profitability indexes while adding value to the company aiming to brand differentiation and customer retention. However, the literature to date has many problems representing how human sensory stimuli could be measured in terms of business profit or convenience (Acevedo et al., 2018; Balaji et al., 2011; Krey, 2016). Historically, there has been some confusion in the literature regarding measuring scales. While Russell and Mehrabian's PAD Scale (1978) represents an emotional approach to sensory response, Bhatt et al. (2020) lately proposed a sensory mathematical validating scale aiming to "empirically understand the psychological mechanism through which customers perceive different store cues holistically leading to the elicitation of store satisfaction" (p.370). There are still unexplored opportunities to explore validating methods to evaluate the efficiency of SM strategies.

While the present research does not address SM's implications in the digital marketing environment, e-commerce has an importance that cannot be overlooked. Some theories about sensory adaptation to digital media deserve to be mentioned in this literature review. The issue of the applicability of SM strategies to e-commerce remains briefly approached in the literature. Poncin and Mimoun (2014) addressed this issue through the concept of e-atmospherics, described as a pool of tools used to carry on customers holistic perceptions of a physical store (sensory perception, value perception and affective reactions) to an online shopping experience. Equally important, Belk (2014) introduced the concept of a digital body and the extended "self" in a seminal study to determine how digital technologies affected consumer behaviour. Belk reported how the creation of digital avatars mixed with sophisticated embodied sensory-like technologies has created multiple opportunities to introduce digital arousal of the human senses and should be explored as a marketing approach (2014). In addition, Petit et al. (2019) presented a list of sensory technology developments potentially useful for an online sensory experience but highlight the "multisensory-enabling technologies as online as the future of the internet" (p. 19). However, the absence of digital technologies capable of transporting bodily sensory experiences to the virtual environment is still an essential obstacle for developing a sensory e-atmosphere.

Finally, there is a broad psychological discussion about the five human senses' role and how they affect customers behaviour when stimulated into a marketing strategy (Hulten, 2011; Olahut et al., 2011; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). Visual, auditory, olfactory, gustative and tactile senses can be differently aroused,

individually or thorough an interplay environment (Hulten, 2011, p. 257). A wide range of factors such as emotional and social background, psychological aspects, the *momentum* (indoor or outdoor interaction, duration of stimuli, day or night) demands more systematic research. Several theories have been proposed to determine a specific role for each sense, some focusing on the marketing aspects (Hulten, 2011; Krey, 2016; Krishna, 2012), others on the neurological aspects of sensory stimuli and the ethical implications of a neurological manipulation for marketing purposes (Lee at al., 2007). Overall, additional studies to a deeper understanding of SM and its implications on store atmospherics are required.

3.3. Sensory interplay and customer behaviour

Despite Kotler (1973) having moved the atmosphere concept forward from the original notion that it was a casual or organic factor, he kept the notion enclosed to how single senses influenced customer's behaviour and gave only marginal attention to interplay possibilities. This section will discuss how SM has become a broader concept known as multi-sensory – or sensory interplay strategy. Hulten (2011) covered this gap when drawing an experimental perspective of customers behaviour linking value creation to a multi-sensory interplay environment. Hulten also stated that a sophisticated interplay experience could result in "a multi-sensory brand-experience in differentiating, distinguishing and positioning a brand in the human mind as an image" (p.256). Much more than a mere business-purpose tool, Hulten claimed individualisation of lifestyle to be a crucial factor when presenting a multi-sensory marketing experience, as interplay experiences can better access customers' minds, and they will necessarily connect to

customers emotional background. Concluding this reasoning line, Hulten claimed the SM model "takes its point of departure in the human mind and senses, where mental flows, processes and psychological reactions take place and result in a multi-sensory brand-experience" (p. 262).

Managing an interplay strategy is regarded as an experimental logic by some authors (Hulten, 2011; Krey, 2016; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). According to Hulten (2011, p. 10), an interplay experience "refers to how individuals react when a firm, in offering and delivering brands, goods or services, participates in their purchase and consumption processes through the involvement of the five human senses". Likewise, Eriksson and Larsson (2011) state that a multi-sensory experience – or interplay sensory, happens when customers perceive more than one human sense during a purchasing experience. The same authors address research in a critical question in the literature: how the sensory cues interact and interfere with one another (Eriksson & Larsson, 2011). Understanding how an interplay experience can affect customer behaviour gained importance in marketing research from the combined findings from Hulten (2011) and Eriksson and Larsson (2011). By the same token, recent researchers (Bhatt et al., 2018; Helmevak & Hulten, 2017; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019) have given interplay strategies a central role in the SM approach.

Regarding measuring methods or scales on interplay strategies, the S-O-R (Stimulus → Organism → Response) paradigm (Booms & Bitner, 1981) is still paramount to analyse how sensory interplay affects customer behaviour. Several studies support the

use of S-O-R as a useful tool to predict customers behaviours when exposed to a multi-sensory environment (Bhatt et al., 2018; Belaji & Jha, 2011; Hulten, 2011; Krey, 2016; Mattilla & Wirtz, 2001; Olahut et al., 2012; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019). The combined conclusions of those authors suggested a positive correlation between sensory interplay and customers behaviour in most of the experiments conducted and analysed through the S-O-R method.

Some studies concerning the correlation between sensory interplay and customers behaviour have stated, "customers express higher levels of hedonic value, satisfaction, and positive effect in stimulating environments" (Krey, 2016) and respond particularly well to sensory interplay experiences (Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). The understanding of such specific behaviour is developed by Scarpi (2020) when suggesting that hedonic customers are more likely to share their positive sensory perceptions in a proactive behaviour when exposed to a multi-sensory purchasing experience. Scarpi developed original empirical research with random street shop consumers in Italy and found that consumers have been shown to shop in one of two ways: they are either mainly driven by fun, escapism, and variety, or by need and efficiency. However, Krey (2016) has found that even for the hedonic customer - and especially for utilitarian individuals, a "high intensity of sensation environments lower the consumer's ability to accurately complete perceptual and cognitive tasks (Krey, 2016, p. iv)". Interestingly, results from the same research suggested that the excess of sensory interplay stimuli moves customer behaviour backwards to a utilitarian behaviour, as the "utilitarian value gains in importance since the primary goal of participants is now on completing the task at hand" (Krey, 2016, p.

77). This pendulum movement of customer behaviour when exposed to a traditional/minimum sensory stimulus (utilitarian behaviour), to a multi-sensory environment (hedonic behaviour) and finally to a too-much sensory experience (back to utilitarian behaviour) should be subject to further research aiming to delimitate the theoretical and managerial limits of each behaviourist zone.

More recently, Helme Falk and Hulten (2017) have researched the congruency between multi-sensory and store atmosphere design. In a controlled retail store atmosphere in Sweden, the authors found that non-visual cues were more relevant in increasing time spent and purchasing, as well as valence and arousal, than merely adding another visual cue to existing ones in the store environment. Their research has successfully demonstrated a positive correlation between congruent sensory cues on customers behaviours and emotions in a retail setting (Helme Falk & Hulten, 2017, p. 8). Assuming that most of the shopping environments have visually dominant atmospheres, they also claimed that managers should introduce an interplay element to enrich the purchasing process with the sensory cues lacking in the environment. Helme Falk and Hulten refer to the congruency process as "a jigsaw puzzle in which congruency is depicted as the shape of each piece and how these fit together in a store atmosphere" (2017, p. 9). Although similar studies have been conducted by some researchers (Bhatt et al., 2020; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019), the problem of sensory congruency and how it impacts customer behaviour is still insufficiently explored.

3.4. Sensory marketing strategies for the pet care segment

This section will introduce and investigate the existing literature regarding possible SM strategies for the pet care segment. Previous research found some relevant facts regarding pet owners' purchasing behaviour in New Zealand. A thesis conducted at Lincoln University regarding pet food purchasing behaviour in New Zealand (Surie, 2014) suggests that New Zealanders are in pace with the global pet parenting trend (refer to chapter 2). In such a phenomenon, the emotional bond between owner and pet brings the customer satisfaction attached to understanding and enjoying their pet satisfaction like they were their offspring. The same research (Surie, 2014) assessed how New Zealand pet owners perceive pet products' attributes, but findings seem very inconsistent due to the lack of a common lexicon regarding human and pet's sensory perception of quality and satisfaction. Moreover, although Surie's research has illuminated some aspects of the customers' behaviour regarding pet products, no study to date has examined how customers react to sensory stimuli in a pet care environment and how to create a cross-sensory strategy regarding human and animal senses at the same time. As humans and animals are differently aroused by being exposed to the same sensory stimuli, creating a common language is vital to reach a common theoretical ground in further research.

At this stage, the initial obstacle to consider a cross-sensory approach to the pet care environment is the lack of meaningful language (a lexicon) capable to elucidate animal sensory responses into a human understanding. Di Donfrancesco et al. (2012)

described an "initial sensory lexicon for the human description of the flavour, aroma, texture and appearance characteristics for dry dog food" (p. 498). Twenty-one products, available in the USA market, were studied. A five-member highly trained descriptive sensory panel identified, defined and referenced more than 70 sensory attributes for this product category. However, their methodological choice for reaching a perception consensus among a sensory specialists' panel instead of cross-neurological comparisons (Lee et al., 2007) made the results insufficient to be widely accepted by the marketing community. In another study, Tsai et al. (2020) developed an essential list of basic terminologies to describe pet owners' emotions and their pet's reactions using a regression model. Interestingly, Tsai et al. (2020, p. 2) have used the Coppin and Sander (2016) emotion's concept, that defined emotion as "an event-focused, two-step, fast process consisting of relevance-based emotion elicitation mechanism that shapes a multiple emotional (i.e. action tendency, automatic reaction, expression, and feeling)". Coppin and Sander also proposed in the same study a neuroscience-based model able to measure appraisal directly related to sensory stimuli. Assuming both instincts and emotions are measurable variants was an important step to reach this initial inter-lexicon category.

Even though the existing literature has many problems with creating a common lexicon to enable a credible cross-sensory strategy, some studies have been done about how the store atmospherics impacts customer behaviour in pet care environments. Hobbs and Shanoyan (2018) conducted a qualitative experiment analysis about customer perception of product attributes in pet food and highlighted that sensory cues could increase purchase intent if congruent to those values identified by pet owners as likely to

make their pets satisfied. Their study also explained how sensory cues impact marketing and brand strategy in pet care environments in a positive interrelation.

Regarding the digital business environment, the absence of a common cross-lexicon combines with the lack of sensory technologies to place a challenging aspect for both researchers and managers. Parwath (2017) attempted to use some of the available programming and framework languages (Django, Python, HTML and CSS) to create a digital pet showroom. Parwath's thesis enhanced some sensory aspects when proposing an interactive system architecture and data flow diagram. Although Parwath's study outlined a friendly pet care interface, the results concerning how to enable online sensory stimuli to customers on this niche were insufficient.

Finally, additional studies to understand the key tenets of describing and measuring animals' reactions to sensory stimuli are required. Even in general, a credible sensory marketing strategy for the pet care segment research is needed. Substantial gaps are noted by the literature, especially the lack of a common cross-lexicon capable of supporting more focused research; and, as a consequence, measurement methods or scales to validate eventual findings (Di Donfrancesco et al., 2012; Hobbs & Shanoyan, 2018; Tsai et al., 2020).

3.5. Summary

The present literature review has investigated the literature relating to multi cross-sensory marketing strategy and possible applications for the pet care retail segment. The theoretical contributions of adjacent concepts, such as consumer experience (refer to Chapter 2) and store atmospherics, were previously considered as structural elements of the SM theory. Several authors have researched SM as a robust and innovative marketing tool (Acevedo et al., 2018; Bhatt et al., 2018; Belaji & Jha, 2011; Hulten, 2011; Krey, 2016; Krishna, 2012; Helme Falk & Hulten, 2017; 2018; Matilla & Wirtz, 2001; Olahut et al.; Petit et al., 2019; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019 2012; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). Interesting concepts have been derived from SM, such as store atmosphere and servicescape. Strong evidence supports the notion that sensory stimuli positively impact customers' behaviour when combined into an interplay experience (Eriksson & Larsson, 2011; Hulten, 2011; Krey, 2016; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). Despite the literature showing a growing interest in interplay environments and how they influence customers' purchasing experience, further research is needed to better understand this phenomenon. Finally, this review revealed the absence of previous studies regarding multi cross-sensory strategies in the pet care industry. From the literature review here, this question has previously never been addressed because of the fundamental lack of a common cross-lexicon able to describe both human and animal senses simultaneously.

Chapter 4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the methodology for the present study: hermeneutical phenomenology. Attention is given to the philosophical bases, assumptions, focus and design of research, research outcomes and methods. The adoption of phenomenology philosophy for the research could be criticised, provided that qualitative methods are sometimes viewed in the business area as "second rate ... [and] not good enough for research purposes" (Gummesson, 2000, p.1) or as lacking "the rigour and objectivity of the quantitative approach" (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003, p. 60). This chapter seeks to present enough details to justify the choice of phenomenology as the most suitable for the proposed study, describing its ontological, epistemological and axiological rigour as crucial elements to understand this approach.

Once it has been introduced, there is still a need to differentiate phenomenology from hermeneutical phenomenology. This differentiation is a critical step to understand the option to use not a single qualitative approach but mixed-method research into a sequential explanatory design. This chapter follows a systematic structure and will discuss the sampling framework, data collection and analysis, limitations, reliability, and bias reduction. The methods to be used under the sequential explanatory design (questionnaire and focus group) are discussed in detail. Finally, this

chapter describes the in-store phenomenon utilised as the contextual element by the present research.

4.2. Research philosophy and approach to the theoretical development

This section aims to define hermeneutical phenomenology as a research philosophy and consider its ontological, epistemological, and axiological distinction to establish it as a research paradigm. Historically, many academic research areas – and especially the business area, have utilised quantitative or empirical methods as mainstream. Quantitative research emphasises those questions responsive to empirical inquiry methods (Gergen, 1985; Valle et al., 1989). As the classical view of business sustains that management is a rational set of tools, activities and practices performing actions such as planning, leading, organising and controlling (Mukhi et al., 1988), it is natural that managers have sought empirically measurable methods to add value and validation to their studies. However, the business area has proven itself to be a highly complex interpersonal and relational activity that is very much concerned with developing the enterprise's human side (Ehrich & Knight, 1998, p. 3).

For this reason, phenomenological methodology, which focuses on human experience, can be applied to explore a range of human experiences within the management field. Osborne (1994) identified the early 1980s as the time when greater disillusionment with the limits of logical-empirical research methodologies began.

Increasing issues were raised about the focus of inquiry and the exploration of methodologies that emphasised discovery, description and meaning instead of prediction, control and measurement (Lavery, 2003). There is raising awareness of the limitations of empirical methods' requirements for inquiring many important questions in the human realm (Polkinghorne, 1983). For instance, empirical methods would hardly trespass the surface if applied to answer questions about the meaning humans attach to their relationships with their companion animals.

According to Husserl (1980), phenomenology is concerned with studying experience from the individual's perspective, bracketing taken-for-granted assumptions and typical perceptions. Epistemologically, phenomenology is based on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity and emphasises the importance of personal perspective and interpretation (Kagimu, 2019). As such, phenomenological approaches are useful for grasping subjective experience, obtaining in-depth insights into people's motivations and actions, and cutting through the confusion between taken-for-granted assumptions and conventional wisdom (Kagimu, 2019). It is important to note that Husserl refused the idea that objects in the external world exist autonomously and that the information about real-life objects is reliable (Lavery, 2003). He argued that people could be sure about how things appear in, or present themselves, through their consciousness (Eagleton, 1983; Fouche, 1993). To reach certainty, anything outside direct experience "must be ignored, and in this way, the external world is reduced to the contents of personal consciousness" (Lavery, 2003, p.30). Thus, Husserl considered the reality as pure "phenomena" and the only absolute data from where to begin (Lavery,

2003). Husserl named his philosophical method "phenomenology", the science of pure "phenomena" (Eagleton, 1983, p. 55).

Holloway gives an evolutionary timeline of phenomenology (1997, p. 115-128), highlighting that Husserl was a scholar of Franz Brentano, who provided the basis for phenomenology. Brentano first stressed the "intentional nature of consciousness" or the "internal experience of being conscious of something". By its turn, Martin Heidegger, a Husserl's student, introduced the concept of "Dasein" or "Being there" and the dialectics between a person and their surrounding world. Heidegger and Husserl respectively explored the "lived-world" and "Lebenswelt" as an average existence in an ordinary world (Schwandt, 1997).

It is important to highlight that Husserl's main focus was studying phenomena as they appeared through consciousness (Schellemborg, 2010). He suggested that minds and objects both occur within the realm of individual experience, thus eradicating the mind-body dualism. Valle et al. (1989) reported that Husserl viewed consciousness as a co-constituted dialogue between a person and the world. Moreover, he saw access to the structures of consciousness not as a matter of induction or generalisation but as a result of directly grasping a phenomenon. This grasping was seen as "an intentional process, actively guided by human intention, not mechanistic causation" (Polkinghorne, 1989).

Given the intentional grasping of phenomena, bias reduction – or bracketing, is a critical step in phenomenological studies. Husserl proposed the necessity to bracket out

the outer world and individual biases to contact essences (Lavery, 2003). By bracketing, Husserl understood a process of suspending observers' judgement or bracketing particular beliefs about the phenomena to see it clearly. Klein and Westcott (1994) stated that the process of bracketing includes exemplary intuition, imaginative variation, and synthesis. In exemplary intuition, the researcher chooses a phenomenon and retains it in his/her imagination. The researcher then moves to create comparable examples of experiences through a continuous exercise of imaginative variation. Finally, the integration of these variations is achieved through a synthesis of the crucial points of interest. However, there is no bias reduction in hermeneutical phenomenology, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Hermeneutic phenomenology is attentive to both philosophies combining hermeneutics and phenomenology at the same time (van Manen, 1990). It is a "research methodology aimed at producing detailed textual descriptions of the experiencing of selected phenomena in the lived world of individuals that can connect with the experience of all of us collectively" (Smith, 1991, p. 80). Hermeneutical phenomenology rejects the idea of suspending personal opinions in describing a phenomenon. Kafle (2012) suggested that for hermeneutical phenomenologists, bias reduction – or bracketing, is impossible. This acceptance frees them to apply their research efforts to explore underneath the subjective experience and extract the genuine objective nature of the things – or reality, as perceived by an individual.

Whilst hermeneutical phenomenology is similar to phenomenology in many aspects, an objective comparison of phenomenology as depicted by Husserl and hermeneutic phenomenology as understood by Heidegger and Gadamer aids in understanding the several distinctions of both methods, as seen in Table 01:

Table 01: A comparison between phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology
(Lavarty, 2003)

<i>Phenomenology – as per Husserl</i>	<i>Hermeneutical Phenomenology – as per Heidegger and Gadamer</i>
Epistemological	Existential-ontological
Epistemological questions of knowing	Questions of experiencing and understanding
How do we know what we know?	What does it mean to be a person?
Cartesian duality: mind-body split	Dasein concept: "being there" as a whole unit mind-body; being part of the world
A mechanistic view of the person	Person as self-interpreting being
Mind-body person live in a world of objects	Person exists as a 'being' in and of the world
Ahistorical	Historicity
Unit of analysis is meaning giving the subject	Unit of analysis is a transaction between the situation and the person
What is shared is the essence of the conscious mind	What is shared in culture, history, practice, language

Starts with a reflection of mental states	We are already in the world in our pre-reflective states
Meaning is unsullied by the interpreter's own normative goals or world view	Interpreters participate in making data
Participants' meanings can be reconstituted in interpretive work by insisting data speak for themselves	Within the fore-structure of understanding, interpretation can only make explicit what is already understood
Claim that adequate techniques and procedures guarantee the validity of the interpretation	Establish own criteria for the trustworthiness of research
Bracketing defends the validity or objectivity of the interpretation against self-interest	The hermeneutic circle (background, co-constitution, pre-understanding) – a holistic approach to contextual analysis

The choice for a phenomenological approach has strong reasons. Qualitative methodologies aim to unveil and understand a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever-changing (Walters, 1995). Therefore, qualitative methodological approaches are usually based on recognising individuals' subjective, experiential perceptions and the description of their experiences in depth (Patton, 2002). In this context, phenomenology provides an in-depth, comprehensive study of phenomena as people experience them (von Eckartsberg, 1998). As the sensory experience is typically perceived differently from individual to individual, the option for

a phenomenological approach will provide the researcher with a collection of descriptions of meanings from individuals about their lived experiences and experiences of concepts or phenomena (Creswell, 2007).

4.3. Research design

The present research is consistent with Privitera and Ahlgrim-Dezell's quasi-experimental design concept, defined as:

the use of methods and procedures to make observations in a study that is structured similar to an experiment, but the conditions and experiences of participants lack some control because the study lacks random assignment, include a pre-existing factor (i.e. a variable that is not manipulated), or does not include a comparison/control group. (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Dezell, 2019, p. 334).

No control group or pre-existing comparison factors were set for the present research due to its phenomenological nature. A phenomenon exists for itself, and from a single-case observation, a researcher can extract taken-for-granted knowledge (Husserl, 1980). According to Ziakas and Boukas (2014, p. 287), "phenomenology can shed light on the multifaceted nature of event meanings and their polysemic grounds that are conveyed symbolically, often patterned by culture, to manifest local values and

meanings". This section explains how the research was designed to match its objectives.

The research was designed under an explanatory sequential model: quantitative data was collected - questionnaire, followed by qualitative data collection in two phases. First, one focus group; and finally, observation of the phenomena. A Thurstone scale questionnaire (Wright & Hicks, 1966) captured the customers' perceptions of store atmospherics modifications. Open questions were also used to gather customer perceptions. A focus group with six participants was conducted.

Moreover, the observation was conducted as recommended by Pfadenhauer and Grenz (2015) regarding the researcher's participation in the data collection. They observed that participation in phenomenology-based studies is about the researcher's involvement and "doing-it-yourself" – an application of the *Daisen* concept (being in the world) to the researcher himself, not only to participants. This movement is likely to "generate data derived from immediate experience that can contribute to the reconstruction of the internal viewpoint by uncovering the essence of a phenomenon" (Pfadenhauer & Grenz, 2015, p. 1).

4.3.1. Store atmospherics modifications

As seen in section 3.2, the store atmospherics was defined by Kotler (1973) as the qualities of the surrounding perceived through the human senses. However, the present study aims to extend this concept to analyse how pets perceive the surrounding sensory

stimuli. The research has finally gained the 'cross' categorisation since it aims to analyse how humans and animals react to the same sensory stimuli. As different animals may react differently to the same stimuli (for instance, the same smell or taste), and Animates has a wide range of different pet parents within its customer base, this study opted to include only dogs and their owners as the targeted population.

For two days (23 and 27 of February 2021), a sensory packet of store atmospherics modifications was introduced at the Animates store in Invercargill, focusing on dog owners and their dogs. The sensory packet was inspired by a natural jungle environment and used many sensory tools. There were two different sets of electric aroma diffusers – thirteen units among the dog dry food aisles, emitting exciting bacon and hickory barbecue fragrance; and five units at the counters, emitting a calming lavender fragrance. Another sensory tool was using an ambient soundscape in the store to replace the typical pop songs. The sounds of a tropical rain forest played throughout the store and included rustling leaves, wind and rain in the grass, dripping water and birdsong, insects and animals.

4.4. Method 1: Questionnaire

4.4.1. Purpose of the questionnaire

The use of questionnaires is a controversial topic within the phenomenological approach. Some authors refer to them as against phenomenology's basal ethos (Grbrich,

2007; Finlay, 2009). However, due to the present study's hermeneutical aspect, a questionnaire was used to generate the textual part of the hermeneutical approach (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007). Using this strategy, the information that emerged from the questionnaire's data analysis can be considered a primary source text to be analysed within the phenomenological approach (Spiegelberg, 2012). The questionnaire was given to respondents after they were exposed to the phenomena. The questionnaire aimed to investigate how customers at Animates Invercargill perceived the store atmospherics' modifications using cross multi-sensory cues. The questions were designed to unveil the respondent's perceptions about store atmospherics and focused on how it aroused the respondent's emotions and highlighted the emotional bond with their dogs.

4.4.2. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was designed using the Thurstone scale, which measures a respondent's opinion, feeling or behaviour by using a series of "agree-disagree" statements of several different aspects. These statements help determine how a respondent feels and how strongly they feel that way (Patton, 2002). This research questionnaire had nineteen questions (sixteen closed questions – using a scale from 0 to 10, and three open questions – used to collect anecdotes from the participants regarding their experience). A copy of the questionnaire is available in Appendix C.

4.4.3. Pilot testing

The questionnaire was piloted using an *ipsis litteris* version of the original questionnaire. Five students of the Master's in Applied Management at the Southern Institute of Technology were invited to respond to the questionnaire, which proved to be clear and concise. No modifications were made to the questionnaire after the pilot tests were conducted.

4.4.4. Procedure

When customers queued to pay for purchases or immediately after leaving the counters, customers identified as "gold customers" were invited to complete the questionnaire. Gold customers were defined as customers who owned dogs and had their pet with them at the store. At this stage, the customers had already experienced the store atmospherics modifications and were only told about the research and its objectives at the moment they were invited to complete the questionnaire.

4.4.5. Sampling

Wilson (2014) affirms that not everyone, whether participant or researcher, is suited to the phenomenological investigation's open-ended nature. Participants in phenomenological research should be interested in and committed to exploring their lived experience. It can be demanding and rewarding for people to engage deeply with their feelings and responses concerning a particular element of their lives. The number of participants can be as low as one to three (Finlay 2009) and commonly ranges between

six and 20, but there is no hard and fast rule. Baker and Edwards (2012) suggest that it is better to focus on quality rather than quantity.

The questionnaire used a convenience sample, following a specific categorisation given by Animates Invercargill's customer database. The Animates Pet Points Club divides customers by measuring how many points they accumulated within the last twelve months in the store (1 dollar of purchase = 1 point). There are several categories, namely bronze, silver, gold and platinum segments. The gold segment was selected as the sample in the present study as this customer group is more likely to influence other segments regarding shopping trends and customer behaviour because of the broader interval of their average basket value, the frequency at which they visit the store and the number of customers classified as "gold". Participants had to meet three essential criteria: they needed to be gold customers, dog owners, and be accompanied by their dog during the visit to the store. Twenty questionnaires were completed in total. This number is enough to have a high level of representativeness among customers fulfilling both criteria of being part of the gold customer strip and dog owners.

4.5. Method 2: Focus group

4.5.1. Purpose of focus group

The methodological choice to adopt a focus group in phenomenological research is also somewhat controversial. Webb and Kevern (2001) delivered a critique of the use

of focus groups in phenomenology. They claimed that phenomenological research's objective is to extract the essential aspects of phenomena, and a phenomenological approach demands that an individual describes their experiences in an 'uncontaminated' way. Webb and Kevern (2001) concluded that collective, interactive data collection methods involving several participants – such as focus groups, are incompatible with phenomenological research. However, some authors disagree with Webb and Kevern's critique and deliberately used focus groups in their phenomenological research. These researchers have identified many advantages and improvements in using a group method to collect data (Carr 2004; Robley et al. 2004; Sikma, 2006; Spence, 2005). Of the main advantages raised by such authors, two are particularly relevant to the present research: the enhancement of data because of participants reflecting on and sharing their experiences (Spence, 2005); and elucidation and checking for understanding both among participants and between participants and researchers (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2008).

The focus group aimed to investigate how customers at Animates Invercargill have perceived the modifications managed in the store atmospherics using cross multi-sensory cues. Without the limitations of the questionnaire's scales, the focus group allowed participants to refine their language and explanations to refine their language and explanations through dialogue with others, helping other participants to identify new and clarified language about their experience. The questions were semi-structured and designed to unveil the respondent's perceptions about store atmospherics, and to which extent it aroused the respondent's emotions and highlighted the emotional bond with their dogs

4.5.2. Focus group design

A semi-structured focus group design was adopted to be easily adapted to circumstantial conditions, which are likely to be observed in a phenomenological investigation (Finlay, 2009). Six open questions were asked, provoking answers capable of unveiling their feelings regarding the sensory cues present in the store atmospherics modification; how these feelings aroused past feelings, memories and instincts; how these aroused feelings and memories impacted their wish to stay in and return to the store for further purchases; and how they perceived their dogs' lived experience. Participants shared several anecdotes linked to their lived experiences at Animates. The focus group was recorded on a cell phone and transcribed. Refer to Appendix D for a copy of the questions.

4.5.3. Procedure and participants

While store atmospherics modifications were conducted at Animates Invercargill, six customers who met the experiment criteria were asked to participate in a focus group rather than completing the questionnaire (to avoid duplication of data). The participants fulfilled the same requirements for the questionnaire (gold status, dog-owners and accompanied by their dogs). The focus group was conducted on the 28th of March 2021 at the Anderson Park gardens picnic table. Participants were told to bring their dogs along

with them, and all of them did. Below, Table 2 summarises the focus group participants' profile.

Table 02: Summary of focus group participants

Participant 1	Male, late 40s, owner of two adult German Shepherd dogs
Participant 2	Female, late 60s, owner of an adult Schnauzer cross Jack Russell dog
Participant 3	Female, late 20s, owner of an adult English Staffy dog
Participant 4	Female, early 40s, owner of a French Bulldog puppy
Participant 5	Male, early 40s, owner of a Labrador cross Mastiff dog
Participant 6	Female, early 70s, owner of an adult Giant Poodle dog

4.6. Method 3: Observation

4.6.1. Purpose of observation

Observation provides a here-and-now experience in depth. According to Cypress (2018, p. 306), it "is the act of noting a phenomenon through the five senses and recording it for scientific purposes". In phenomenological observation, the researcher may look at physical settings, participants, actions and reactions, interactions, conversations, and their behaviour during the observation (Cypress, 2018, p. 306). Smith (1991) valued observation of a phenomenon through fieldwork as an important tool to

gain an in-depth understanding of the context in which people interact. The observation of how Animates' customers interacted within the store atmospherics sensory modifications was important to contextualise the data that emerged from the questionnaires and the focus group.

4.6.2. Observation design and purpose

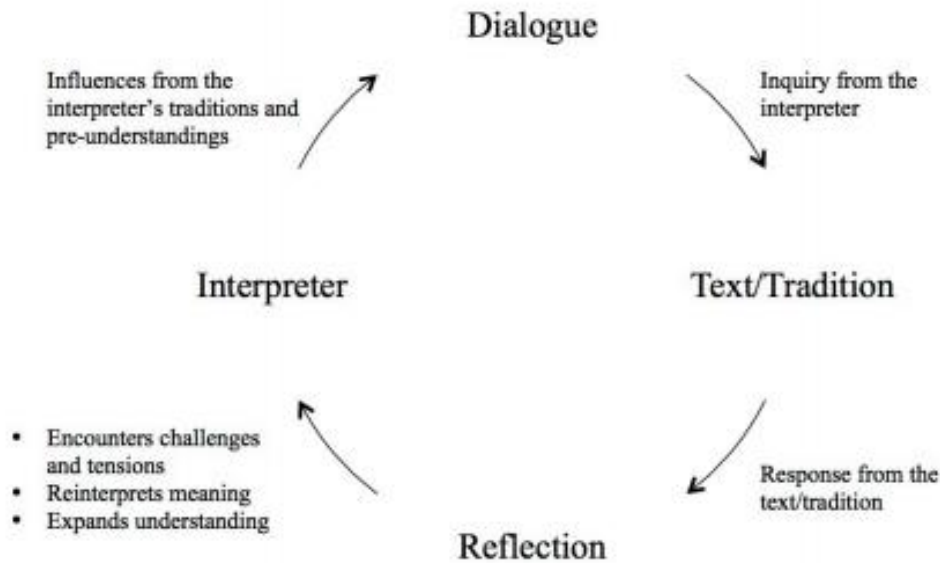
While immersed in the phenomena, the researcher observed some customers purchasing at the dog section of Animates Invercargill. Only customers accompanied by their dogs were observed. The researcher took notes regarding his perception of customers' behaviour, actions, reactions and interactions related to the sensory set running at that time. Interactions also occurred with some of the customers during the observations. The researcher is also a staff member at Animates, and as part of the natural context, there were some informal conversations regarding store atmospherics modifications that occurred and notes were made of these as part of the observations.

4.7. Data analysis

Phenomenology is based on the interpretation of the lived experience. The process of interpretation used in this project was circular rather than linear. Even when taken respecting the phenomenon's timeline, the participant's perceptions occur in a circle: they are dynamic – they have no bottom, top, beginning or end, no subject-object distinctions.

The hermeneutic circle (figure 1) proposed a non-linear interpretation to avoid a possible loss of meaning when analysing one's lived experiences (Walsh, 1996). The textual part of the present research is given by the questionnaires and is an essential part of the interpretation process. While the questionnaires explored adjacent subjects to the investigation's main questions and were applied simultaneously to the store atmospherics modifications, it is impossible to nest them into a timeline exploration of how customers lived the experience. For example, in the informal conversations during the observation period, many customers shared contextual perceptions and anecdotes with the researcher. However, their perceptions were not linear. Instead, they were contextual, filled with anecdotes, moving back and forth in time, sometimes linking to memories, sensations and instincts unlikely to follow a predefined scale or narrative line. However, under the hermeneutic circle scheme (figure 1), the whole can be understood by taking the particular and the particular in its connections to the whole (Walsh, 1996). The hermeneutic circle was applied to interpret the data collected via focus group, the observations, and the triangulation with the questionnaires.

Figure 1: Gadamerian Hermeneutical Circle (Cushing, 2020, p. 30)



Creswell (2007) theorised that a phenomenological analysis of the focus group transcripts must involve two different stages: first, a textural description of the participants' experiences (what they experienced); and second, a structural description of participants' experiences (how it was experienced regarding the background and environmental conditions such as situation or context). From the combination of

With the questionnaires structural and textural analysis, the researcher could aim to reach the essence of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). The modus operandi for the theoretical model proposed by Creswell was previously given by Halcomb and Davidson (2006) regarding general focus group data analysis and was adapted to the present phenomenological method, as seen in table 2:

Table 3 – Direct analysis six steps (adapted from Halcomb & Davidson, 2006)

Step 1	Audio taping of focus group and concurrent note-taking
Step 2	Reflective journaling immediately post focus group
Step 3	Listening to audio recording and amending/revising field notes
Step 4	Preliminary content analysis
Step 5	Secondary content analysis
Step 6	Thematic review

In phenomenology, triangulation refers to using multiple methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena and as a strategy to test knowledge validity through the convergence of information from different sources (Patton, 1999). The amalgamation of the focus group excerpts with the questionnaire's data gave the hermeneutical aspect to the research (Kagimu, 2019). The data were then triangulated with the data collected via observation and resulted in two main themes that form the central axis of the discussion section: customer behaviour and brand loyalty.

4.8. Limitations, reliability and bias

Limitations to the present research can be divided into methodological and practical issues. Usual phenomenology limitations relate to difficulties in analysing and interpreting data, lower levels of validity and reliability compared to quantitative methods, and issues concerning data collection, such as time and include difficulties with

analysis and interpretation, usually lower levels of validation and trustworthiness compared to positivism, and time and other resources required for data collection. Most of these limitations were mitigated by adopting multiple sources of data collection and their further triangulation. The main limitations concerning practical issues related to the research are collecting and interpreting a dog's reactions to sensory stimuli. The lack of a lexicon scale capable to elucidate animal sensory responses into a human understanding is still a subject opened to more in-depth research. The adoption of a phenomenological approach in the present research was an innovative way to cope with this limitation since the dog-owners' perceptions about their dog's emotions were taken-for-granted in the context of the investigation.

Whilst in quantitative research, reliability refers to exact replicability of the processes and the results, in qualitative research, such definition of reliability is puzzling and epistemologically counter-intuitive (Leung, 2012). A perimeter of variability for results is accepted in qualitative research, provided the methodology and epistemological boundaries consistently yield data that are ontologically similar but may differ in richness and ambience within similar dimensions (Carcary, 2015). Silverman (2009) proposed five steps for increasing the reliability of process and results: refutational analysis, constant data comparison, comprehensive data use, inclusive of the deviant case and the use of tables. The researcher meticulously followed all these steps in both data collection and data analysis in the present research.

As discussed in session 4.2, hermeneutical phenomenology does not require bias reduction. Regarding the generalisation of phenomenological research, Leung (2015) argued that with an escalating tendency of knowledge synthesis from qualitative research via meta-synthesis, meta-narrative or meta-ethnography, assessment of generalisability became a valid discussion. The author argued that a pragmatic tactic to assessing generalisability for qualitative studies is to adopt the same criteria for validity used for quantitative methods: that is, proceeding to systematic sampling, triangulation and constant comparison, proper audit and documentation, and multi-dimensional theory. All those aspects were rigorously observed in the present research.

4.9. Ethical considerations

The present research received approval from SIT Human Research Ethics Committee before the research commenced – please refer to Appendix A to access a copy of the original ethics approval from the SIT Ethics Committee and Appendix G to access a copy of the original ethics application. A formal acceptance of the research terms and conditions was provided by Animates and can be accessed in Appendix B. All the ethical requirements from the ethics committee were strictly followed in conducting the present study. It is worth noting that the researcher's supervisor is also the Chair of the SIT Ethics Committee. To manage this conflict of interest, when the Committee considered the ethics application for this project, the Chair excused herself, and the meeting was presided over by an alternative member of the Committee while the application was being discussed.

4.9.1. Method 1: Questionnaire

As carefully informed in the questionnaire's ethical application, no vulnerable participants were accepted into the project. No conflicts of interest were identified, as informed. Measures to certify participants' confidentiality were taken, such as avoiding requiring personal information in the questionnaire or collecting them in any way. No risks or deceptions were identified to involve participants of this study, and no compensation or reward was offered, keeping the participation strictly voluntary and with the possibility to withdraw at any time. A copy of this can be seen at the top of the question in Appendix C.

Method 2: Focus group

A focus group can feel very informal for participants. However, a rigorous ethics scheme must be built to guarantee that both participants, researcher and data are free of harness and safe. The focus group ethics follows strictly the same rules. A consent sheet containing all information regarding ethics concerns and precautions was provided to the participants. The consent form contained relevant info regarding the volunteer aspect of the participation; the right reserved to participants to withdraw from participating at any time without explanation, disadvantage or disincentive; guarantee of the anonymity and exclusivity of the use of data for the present research's purposes; guarantee that participants will have access to the final report; guarantee that any data contained in the transcription of the focus group, if used in the report, will have actual

names or other characteristics that may lead to the identification of individuals or organisations changed. Refer to Appendix E and F to access the focus groups` information sheet and consent form, respectively.

4.9.2. Method 3: Observation

Cypress (2018) affirmed that ethics demand that observations must be undisguised and should occur in a natural setting rather than an artificial one, as an artificial context fundamentally modifies the phenomenon being studied. As the researcher had permission from Animates to research the store, the observation was overtly conducted. During the observation, the researcher had sometimes identified himself to customers, explained the nature of the ongoing research project and sought the customer's verbal consent to engage in a conversation with them.

4.10. Summary

Phenomenology is not a typical research method used in the business area (Gummesson, 2000). This chapter presented a comprehensive effort to justify a hermeneutical phenomenological approach in the present research. Methodological choices, design and techniques used in the present study and the rationale behind them were discussed and supported by the literature. The data collection methods – questionnaire and focus groups, were discussed in detail, providing an in-depth understanding of their contribution to reinforce the hermeneutical aspect of this

phenomenological investigation and answer the research question, aim, and objectives described in chapter 2. Data analysis; limitations, reliability and bias; and ethical considerations followed to build this chapter in a format to allow other researchers to replicate the present research with the same rigour and reliability.

Chapter 5. Findings and Analysis

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will present and analyse the results from a questionnaire administered to customers exposed to a sensory marketing experience at Animates pet care store in Invercargill, a focus group with participants of the experience and observation of the phenomenon created by the modified store atmospherics. First, it will summarise and analyse the questionnaires' findings through the average rate and mode results. The questionnaire results are also discussed concerning relevant literature, where appropriate. Second, the focus group data will be analysed, aiming to collect anecdotes and memories and seek an in-depth investigation of participants' perceptions of the lived experience. Third, it will scrutinise the main notes taken from the observation of the contextual components of the sensory experience. Attention is given to human and dog actions, reactions and interactions during their exposure to the modified store atmospherics. Finally, the information from the three methods will be triangulated to answer the research questions.

5.2. Results

5.2.1. Results and findings of the questionnaire

The present research aims to investigate how pet owners and their dogs react when exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience in a pet care store and how their perceptions, emotions and memories of the lived experience influence customer behaviour and brand loyalty patterns. All the questionnaire respondents were identified as gold customers at Animates customer database, were dog-owners and were accompanied by their dogs during the experience. Twenty customers were invited to fulfil the questionnaire, with a response rate of 100%. Three themes emerge from the research objectives: dog-owners' perceptions and their dogs' reactions; customer behaviour; and brand loyalty

5.2.2. Dog-owners perceptions and their dogs' reactions

Several questions in the questionnaire were focused on how dog-owners perceived their emotions, feelings and instincts were aroused by the sensory experience, while others addressed their perception of their dogs' reactions. First, table 4 grouped the single-component questions regarding how customer evaluated their engagement to the sensory stimuli felt in the modified store atmospherics experience. Table 5 shows the results for a multi-component question addressing the same question. The data has been analysed to present the average score and also the mode to provide the most precise representation of the findings.

Table 4 – Single-component questions evaluating dog-owners self perceptions¹

Questions	Average Rate ²	Mode ³
Q1. It was easily perceptible that some sensorial stimuli (sounds and smells) were differently displayed in the store today. The store "sounded" and "smelled" different today	9.35/10	10 (13/20)
Q2. In general, the new set of sensorial stimuli turned the visit to Animates today a more pleasant shopping experience, if compared to the usual store environment (how the store normally is)	8.65/10	10 (10/20)
Q5. In general, the new set of sensorial stimuli made me feel emotionally closer to my dog by evoking memories of our past and present parental bond (me and my dog, or me and my dog including diverse situations, places, people, etc.). This made me wish to be a better dog parent.	7.90/10	10 (7/20)
Q10. The increased level of excitement of my dog during the visit to Animates today made me more aware of the joy of sharing a shopping experience with him/her.	8.15/10	10 (8/20)

Note: 1 - Thurstone scale was from 0 – strongly disagree, to 10 – strongly agree. 2 – Average rate is the mean value for the answers given by the participants, out of 10 – the maximum score; 3 – Mode is the most frequent answers in a set of data, and in brackets is given the frequency rate – number of answers given, out of 20 questionnaires in total.

All the questions addressing how the lived experience aroused the human senses showed a high customer engagement level. Questions 1 and 2 showed that the new sensory set was easily perceptible (9.35/10) and made the shopping experience more pleasant than the store's previous purchasing experience (8.65/10). The dog-owner's emotional connection with the dog formed a relevant part of the pet parenting phenomenon and was addressed by questions 5 and 10. Respondents answered that the lived experience made them feel emotionally closer to their dogs (question 5 – 7.90/10) and that this feeling brought a higher level of joy and contentment for sharing a shopping experience with their dogs (question 10 – 8.15/10). A relevant finding is that all the questions had a mode of 10, which suggests that the sensory experience greatly impacted most participants. Those findings show a clearly established emotional connection between this group of dog owners and their pets and is in keeping with Surie's observations about this phenomenon as a trending issue in the pet care segment in New Zealand (Surie, 2014).

Table 5 presents the results for a multi-component question regarding how customers perceived the arousal of their memories, feeling, sensations and instincts when living the sensory experience at the pet care store. All these emotional components were perceived as pleasantly aroused by the vast majority of the respondents. To capture a wider frame, while the vast majority of respondents referred to their feelings, sensations, instincts, and memories have been pleasantly aroused by the sensory experience, very few of them remained neutral to the experience and even less related any degree of

unpleasant perception. According to Russel and Mehrabian (1978), approach-avoidance rates are essential to give the level of customer affiliation to a particular environment. Russel and Mehrabian suggested that the highest the customer's acceptance to a set of sensory stimulation, the highest will be customers' wish to affiliate (engage) themselves in an environment. Russel and Mehrabian (1978) affirmed that a high level of customer affiliation legitimises the environment's emotional-eliciting qualities. The findings shown in table 2 may lead to pet care companies using cross SM approach to gain a competitive advantage.

Table 5 – Multi-component question evaluating dog-owners' self-perceptions¹

Question	Pleasantly Aroused	Unpleasantly Aroused	Neutral
Q3. In general, the sounds and smells perceived in the shop today brought me pleasant/unpleasant memories, feelings, sensations or instincts			
Q3A. Feelings	15/20	2/20	3/20
Q3B. Sensations	15/20	3/20	2/20
Q3C. Instincts	10/20	4/20	6/20
Q3D. Memories	16/20	0/20	4/20
Q3E. Other	6/20	0/20	0 /20

1 – Results expressed as modes. A mode is the most frequent answers in a set of data, and in brackets is given the frequency rate – number of answers given, out of 20 questionnaires in total.

Table 6 below shows the results of a multi-component question investigating how dog-owners perceived their dogs' reactions to the same sensory environment. Dog-owners had a strong perception that their dog's reactions were pleasantly aroused compared to previous visits to Animates store. It is relevant to note that very few respondents perceived their dog's behaviour as it is usually, while only one negative perception about the dog's reactions was given.

Table 6 – Dogs reactional arousing scale¹

Question	Pleasantly Aroused	Unpleasantly Aroused	As usual	Not Applicable
Q4. In general, how could you describe your dog's reactions to the sensory stimuli present in the store today. If you can, please give some adjectives that better describe your dog's reactions regarding each element (write bellow each element)				
Q4A. Excitement	18/20	0/20	2/20	0/20
Q4B. Interaction with the environment	17/20	0/20	3/20	0/20
Q4C. Interaction with other people	14/20	0/20	1/20	5/20
Q4D. Interaction with other dogs	11/20	1/20	3/20	5/20

Q4E. Any aggressive trace	8/20	0/20	0/20	12/20
Q4F. Calm and sociable	18/20	0/20	2/20	0/20

1 – Results expressed as modes. A mode is the most frequent answers in a set of data, and in brackets is given the frequency rate – number of answers given, out of 20 questionnaires in total.

Dogs' reactions were perceived by their owners as pleasantly aroused by the sensory experience in the vast majority of question components if compared to those reactions unpleasantly impacted (only one case reported). Interestingly, “excitement” and “calm and sociable” were perceived behaviours for almost all respondents (18/20, each). Few respondents perceived their dogs' reactions "as usual" in the investigated reactions, while in a few cases, it was not possible to evaluate the dog behaviour (for example, when there were no other dogs or customers in the store at the time of the lived experience).

5.2.3. Customer behaviour

Five questions aimed to investigate how the lived experience impacted the respondent's customer behaviour. The questions summarised below (table 7) explored the impact of the lived experience of sensory modified store atmospherics at Animates.

Table 7 – Questions exploring customer behaviour¹

Single-component Rating Questions	Average Rate ²	Mode ³
Q6. In general, the new set of sensorial stimuli somehow contributed to making my decision to buy products for my dog easier when compared to how I felt during my last visit to the store	7.40/10	10 (7/20)
Q7. In general, the shopping experience with olfactive and hearing sensory stimuli somehow made me prone to expend more money or buy more products today when compared to how I felt during my last visit to the store	6.35/10	5 and 10 (5/20 each)
Q8. The sounds and smells in the store made it easier to merge my personal perception of product quality with what I believe would be my dog feeling/need/reaction/preference to the same product	7.25/10	10 (7/20)
Q. 15 Compared to my normal spending with products/services at Animates, my spending today was increased/decreased by a rate of:	+28.5% (NZD)	+50% or more (9/20)
Q. 16 Compared to the time I normally spent inside Animates Invercargill store, the time I spent exploring the store today was increased/decreased by a rate of:	+39.5% (minutes)	+50% or more (13/20)

Note: 1 - Thurstone scale was from 0 – strongly disagree, to 10 – strongly agree. 2 – Average rate is the mean value for the answers given by the participants, out of 10 – the maximum score; 3 – Mode is the most

frequent answers in a set of data, and in brackets is given the frequency rate – number of answers given, out of 20 questionnaires in total.

Results obtained in question 6 (7.40/10) suggests that the cross-SM environment made the purchasing decision easier for customers. These findings were consistent with Hulten (2011; 2017) and Krishna (2012) when they concluded that SM strategies might have a positive impact on some customer behaviour elements such as customer evaluation of product quality; product alternatives; purchasing decision (including value and cost-benefit evaluation), and shopping frequency (frequency of visit to a shopping environment and time spent on each visit). Further investigation might investigate if SM strategies add facility or difficulty elements to the purchasing choice in highly diversified segments, like the pet care stores.

As shown in Table 7, the lived experience with a modified sensory environment affected customers purchase intentions. Question 7 showed that customers agreed that the lived experience made them prone to expend more money or buy more products when compared to how they felt during their last visit to Animates (6.35/10), with a dual mode of 5 10 (5/20 each answer). However, this is the lowest average rate observed among all questions in the questionnaire. Question 8 showed that the sensory experience facilitated dog-owners to merge their perceptions of product quality to what they understand as being their dogs' needs and preferences (7.25/10). This finding connects to the pet parenting phenomenon in New Zealand, as observed in session 5.2.2.

Despite the results in this session presenting the lowest impacts of the Animates customers' sensory experience, customers expressed themselves significantly impacted by how much time and money they spent in the store during the lived experience compared to their last visit to Animates. The lived experience was responsible for raising the average basket value by a rate of 28.5% (average rate), with a mode of 50% or more money spent to 9/20 respondents. The customers also declared that the lived experience made them spend 39.5% more time (average rate), with a relevant mode of 50% or more spent time on 13/20 respondents.

5.2.4. Brand loyalty

Three questions of the questionnaire explored how customers perceived the lived sensory experience connected with their brand loyalty associated with Animates. Table 8 summarises the findings that emerged from these questions.

Table 8 – Questions exploring brand loyalty¹

	Average Rate ²	Mode ³
Q11. The smells and sounds made the shopping experience at Animates Invercargill noticeably different from the shopping experiences I have had in other local pet care stores.	8.40/10	10 (8/20)

Q12. The sensory shopping experience contributed to creating a strong recognition in my mind of Animates Invercargill as a unique brand and a pleasant place to go shopping with my dog	8.75/10	10 (11/20)
Q. 13 If Animates Invercargill adopt regularly different sensory stimuli in its store, I am likely to return more frequently to the store in the future if compared to the frequency I have been visiting it up to now	8.30/10	10 (8/20)

Note: 1 - Thurstone scale was from 0 – strongly disagree, to 10 – strongly agree. 2 – Average rate is the mean value for the answers given by the participants, out of 10 – the maximum score; 3 – Mode is the most frequent answers in a set of data, and in brackets is given the frequency rate – number of answers given, out of 20 questionnaires in total.

Question 11 showed that customers agreed that the sensory experience builds an image of Animates' differentiation from its local competitor (8.40/10), with a mode of 10 for 8/20 respondents. This finding is similar to what Hassan and Iqbal (2016) stated about the positive rule of SM over brand differentiation. Question 12 regarding how the sensory experience created in customer's mind an image of uniqueness in the shopping experience at Animates showed an average rate of 8.75/10, with a robust mode of 10 for 11/20 respondents. This finding is consistent with the positive impact described by Hulten (2011) of SM strategies over brand loyalty, considering the uniqueness of a sensory experience as a potent marketing tool. Finally, question 13 showed a high wish affiliation from customers to the sensory modified store atmospheric. This question's finding exposed that customers are likely to increase their in-store shopping frequency at

Animates if the company regularly adopts SM strategies in the future (8.30/10).

Combined, the findings from questions exploring brand loyalty were consistent with previous research, as Nadanyjova et al. (2006), that pioneered SM as a tool for building brand value. This notion was furtherly better conceptualised by Hulten (2011) and Krishna (2012) as they gave the bases for the peak experience and uniqueness of an experience as a basal contribution of the SM to generate a strong brand loyalty image on customer's mind – theories confirmed by the findings from the present research.

5.2.5. Open questions

The final questions were three open ones. These aimed to create a list of emotional lexicons capable of connecting and reinforcing the lived experience as observed via a focus group. Question 17 invited customers to create a list of words which described how they perceived their feelings, emotions and instincts during the lived experience. Question 18 invited customers to create a list of words which describe how they perceived their dogs' reactions to the lived experience. Although dogs do not have emotions (as defined for humans), the question used the same lexicon for dogs as per humans (feeling, emotions and instincts) to make it easier for a respondent to create comparative scales. Finally, question 19 invited respondents to write memories aroused by the lived experience or tell anecdotes related to their perceptions of the sensory modifications in the store. The results are summarised below in Tables 9, 10 and 11, and will be discussed in detail after Table 11.

Table 9 – Lexicon list regarding feelings, emotions and instincts of dog-owners during the lived experience, followed by the counts of each lexicon

<p>Q17. Please write a list of words that could better describe your feelings, emotions, instincts, and perceptions in general that were somehow aroused by the sensorial experience at Animates today</p>
<p>Q17A. Emotions and feelings – 137 counts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest/alertness - 43 counts (curious – 10, engaged – 10, excited – 10, interested – 10, energetic – 1, inquisitive – 1, vibrant – 1) • Contentment/serenity – 39 counts (relaxed -13, peaceful – 9, calm – 6, comfortable – 4, serenity – 4, satisfying – 2, tranquil – 1) • Pleasure/delight – 39 counts (evocative – 14, pleasant – 12, happy – 9, amazing – 3, wonderful – 1) • Love/admiration – 11 counts (connection – 8, tenderness – 2, caring, 1) • Nervousness/anxiety – 5 counts (unpleasant – 2, ambiguous – 1, overwhelming – 1, worried – 1)
<p>Q17B. Instincts – 12 counts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness – 3 • Freedom/being in the wild/member of a pack (with the dog) - 3 • Hungry – 3 • Urge to urinate – 3

Table 10 – Lexicon list regarding feelings, emotions and instincts of dogs as perceived by their owners during the lived experience (and the number of counts of each lexicon)

<p>Q18. Now, please write a list of words that you believe could better describe your dog's feelings, emotions, instincts, and perceptions in general that were somehow aroused by the sensorial experience at Animates today</p>
<p>Q18A. Emotions and feeling – 105 counts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest/alertness – 44 counts (excited - 12, curious – 11, engaged - 8, interested - 8, inquisitive – 4, snoopy - 1, sniffer - 1, eager - 1) • Contentment/serenity - 37 counts (relaxed – 14, peaceful – 8, calm, 8, comfortable - 5, tranquil - 1, placid – 1) • Love/admiration – 13 counts (cheering – 4, connection – 4, affective – 2, loving - 2, caring – 1) • Pleasure/delight – 10 counts (happy - 8, joyful - 1, blissful – 1) • Nervousness/anxiety – 1 citation (insecure – 1)
<p>Q18B. Instincts – 24 counts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom/being in the wild/member of a pack – 9 • Aware – 8 • Hungry – 3 • Adventurous – 1 • Explorer – 1 • Reactive – 1 • Fear - 1

Table 11 – Sample of memories and anecdotes representatives of the general answers given to question 19.

<p>Q19. Finally, use the space below to shortly describe your perceptions of the store atmospherics during your visit today or to tell us about some memories, feelings and emotions aroused by the sounds and smells present in your shopping experience at Animates today. Do not be shy, and tell us how your experience today linked to your emotions. If you would like to share more of your felt experience, memories or feelings, please call the researcher (Rodrigo) at any time, and he will be glad to record your stories</p>
<p><i>Tropical, like I was on vacation, very relaxed. Immediately noticed a different atmosphere when we entered, and dog was the calmest I've ever seen in any store! All Animates should adopt this. (Q13)</i></p>
<p><i>I felt like I was walking in a jungle with waterfalls and animals all at their happiest. Rose, my wee poodle, loved the peacefulness as well. (Q9)</i></p>
<p><i>I noticed to different smells and sounds straight away. The smells at the dog dry food section remembered of my grandmother's pumpkin & bacon baked pies for breakfast when in my childhood. (Q15)</i></p>
<p><i>The sound of birds and water triggered memories of holidays with family and friends. The sounds didn't seem to affect my dog, but the smells certainly did. It was good to see him excited and curious about the new smells around the shop. It certainly made it a very pleasant time for both myself and Jake. 😊 (Q7)</i></p>
<p><i>Certain sounds (like the water drops) were not pleasant and made me urge to pee. Also, the smell at the dog aisle was intriguing for me, not in a pleasant way, but it</i></p>

was amazing to watch my dog so excited. That sure had an effect over her. She seemed very interested and happy. (Q10)

It felt like going for a walk in the bush, very calming. My dog was visibly more excited than normal, especially down the dog food aisle. He stopped & was stary up at the ceiling. Then sniffed down the bottom of shelves and among the food bags. He looked at me like he was asking me to buy that food for him. He never does this. He was also walking around sniffy as he was searching for something. It was an amazing experience. (Q8)

Although no parameters were given in the questionnaire to avoid respondents' biases, Table 9 and 10 resulted in a coincident list of core emotions. The lexicon replication suggests that humans tend to project their feelings/emotions in their pets and create a narrative where they (humans) can abstract and transcript their dog's reactions into a meaningful language to themselves. This also suggest that the pet parenting and pet humanisation phenomena are in the process of consolidation in New Zealand. The language used in the anecdotes showed on Table 11 had a lexical repertoire similar to those showed on Tables 9 and 10, suggesting the relevance of understating the cross-lexical resources to create an effective sensory marketing strategy to a pet care store. Finally, anecdotes on Table 11 are consistent with findings regarding brand loyalty and highlights the importance of creating a emotional-eliciting environment to validate the brand positioning in customer's mind.

5.3. Results and findings of the focus group

The focus group discussion was held to get in-depth insights on the themes of the present research: reactions of pet owners and their dogs when exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience in a pet care store; dog-owners perceptions, emotions and memories aroused by the lived experience and how they influence customer behaviour and brand loyalty patterns. Two actions were taken to revive the participant's perceptions regarding the lived experience: first, the place where the focus group were held was a bucolic outdoor spot at the Anderson Park, in Invercargill; second, the participants were told to bring their dogs with them, if they wished – all of them brought their canine companions.

5.3.1. Dog-owners' perceptions and their dogs' reactions

The focus group was formed by six questions to be answered and discussed among the participants. Two of those questions relate to the first theme: how the sensory lived experience was perceived by dog owners themselves and how they perceived their dogs' reactions to the same sensory stimuli. Tables in this section provide representative excerpts taken from participants' answers and are discussed following the table.

Table 12 – Quotes from participants regarding their perceptions about their own emotions

Q1. Briefly describe how the lived sensory experience at Animates regarding its modified store atmospherics (sounds and smells) was perceived and stimulated your five senses, and which emotions were aroused by that stimulation.	
Participant	Quote
P1	<i>It was clear from my first step into the store that something was different. The bird sounds caught my attention immediately and gave me a sense of peacefulness. The dripping water noises made me want to loo, but that felt funny to me. I felt like entering a mysterious forest right in the middle of the city. That was a happy and energizing experience.</i>
P3	<i>I felt immediately different vibration when entering the store that day. I am very sensitive to environmental energies, and the atmosphere in the store was pouring a highly pleasant vibe. Since the first step into, I started creating mental scenes and stories combining my aroused senses.</i>
P4	<i>Sounds funny but I felt myself silly for a moment. Didn't know what was going on with so many different senses. I stared to the ceiling like a fool and felt other customers laughing at my behavior, but I just laughed back at them because they were behaving the same way. This very pleasant experience will remain in my mind as an exceptional moment.</i>

P5	<i>Actually, some noises were intriguing to me – not in a good way. The dripping water made me anxious and at times I wished I had a gun to shot at the birds (laugh). The smells made me feel calm and hungry, altogether, and I wish they had a Fuelburguer inside Animates store. However, I was a bit worried about my partner because he has asthma and there was a wee smoky scent at the dog aisle.</i>
----	--

Findings from question 01 are consistent with a vast array of literature (Acevedo et al., 2018; Helme Falk & Hulten, 2017; Olahut et al., 2012; Petit et al., 2019; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019;) affirming that people respond differently to the same sensory stimuli. Interplay strategies can be challenging and demand in-depth knowledge and understanding of the company's target public and must be based on an experimental logic of trial-and-error (Hulten, 2011; Krey, 2016; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019). However, most participants perceived their lived experiences as "pleasant" or "greatly pleasant". None of the participants remained neutral to the sensory stimuli experience.

Table 13 – Quotes of participants regarding their perceptions about their dogs' reactions

Q2. Briefly describe how you perceived your dog's reactions when exposed to the lived sensory experience at Animates regarding its modified store atmospherics (sounds and smells)	
Participant	Quote

P1	<i>Jake and Blue were greatly interested. They didn't want to leave the shop after I paid for the purchases. They never behaved like that before.</i>
P2	<i>Sniffed around and were inquisitive about the bird sounds. He behaved like a leader of a pack exploring a new area.</i>
P3	<i>My old staffy buddy was excited like I haven't seen him since long ago. He was curious about the environment but was calmer than never with other people and dogs, not even a single bark that day! He seemed very happy and wild, in a good way.</i>
P4	<i>My wee bulldog was tuned to the smells and sounds. He behaved like in a dog's holiday park.</i>
P6	<i>Laika seemed a bit shy at the beginning. She didn't like the sounds as I could see, but loved the bacon scent at the dog aisle.</i>

As shown in Table 13, the dogs' reactions were perceived by their owners as pleasantly impacted in most of the cases. None of the participants perceived their dog as "neutral" in the face of the sensory stimuli. Interestingly, the language used by participants to describe their emotions and their dog's reactions were similar to those used by questionnaires respondents in the open questions, which increases the validity of the lexicon for describing animal reactions and human emotions.

5.3.2. Customer behaviour

The focus group participants also shared anecdotes indicatives of how their customer behaviour was impacted by the lived sensory experience at Animates. Table 14 summarises relevant quotes for question 4, which aimed to investigate any possible sensory overload or discomfort and how it could affect future customer behaviour. However, only one of the participants expressed discomfort with the sensory stimuli, yet considering that his dog's pleasantly aroused reactions would not affect his shopping frequency at the store in the future.

Table 14 – Quotes of participants regarding customer behaviour – question four

Q4. Have any of the sensory stimuli made you feel uncomfortable? If yes, explain how this perception would impact your future visits to Animates.	
Participant	Quote
P1	<i>No, besides making me want to go to the toilet. More funny than disgusting. I would appreciate coming more times to the store.</i>
P5	<i>Bird sounds made me anxious, and some smells were kind of disgusting to me – I am not sure if I liked them or not. However, my dog was so excited, and it was so good to observe him reacting like that. I don't think sensory things would prevent me from returning in my usual frequency to the shop.</i>

Below, Table 15 presents the relevant quotes regarding how the lived sensory experience impacted the time spent in the visit to the store and the purchase value on that day. Two participants expressed that they remained neutral in both aspects. The other four participants revealed that they spent much more time that day when compared to their last visit to the shop. By the same token, they have spent more money than expected and compared to what they spent on their last visit to Animates. These findings are consistent with the approach-avoidance theory (Russel & Mehrabian, 1978), as the more aroused in their emotions, the customers are, the more they wish to affiliate themselves to the environment. Also, as discussed in chapter 3, Krey (2016) reported that sensory overload could cause customers to move their customer behaviour backwards from hedonistic to a utilitarian pattern. A cross multi-sensory strategy seemed to be challenging at this point, as it aims to arouse reactions in both humans and animals and must be carefully designed to avoid overloading one – or both of them.

Table 15 – Quotes of participants regarding how the sensory experience impacted their time spent and purchase value

Q5. To which extent this kind of sensory experience impacted the time spent and the purchase value of your visit to Animates, if compared to your last visit to the store?	
Participant	Quote
P1	<i>I got late for an appointment with my doctor, and that says a lot (laugh). I would say I was expecting to spend fourty-ish dollars that time, but came to pay sixty-ish in total.</i>

P2	<i>I felt like staying there a wee longer was a gift I owned to myself, so it was. I came on in only because my sister was there previously and told me to come with my dog to see what was going on, so I wasn't really looking to purchase a thing. However, I got some bags of dog treats for my dog. I felt like he deserved it!</i>
P3	<i>Much more time, for sure. A good couple of dollars more, I would say.</i>
P4	<i>Count the double for both time and money spent, for sure.</i>

5.3.3. Brand loyalty

Table 16 presents key quotes relating to whether the sensory experience brought memories to customers and the role of those memories in creating a mental image of Animates in their minds. The results of this question were also consistent with approach-avoidance theory (Russel & Mehrabian, 1978) and proved a strong relation between emotion-eliciting moments with generating brand value to a company. The lived experience incited participants to evoke meaningful memories related to their sensory perceptions. Some reports suggested that memories can extend their emotional meaning to the brand, which could be used as a competitive advantage by a pet store promoting cross multi-sensory marketing strategies.

Table 16 – Quotes from participants regarding their memories aroused by the sensory experience and the role of memories on the construction of brand loyalty in their minds

Q3. Has the sensory lived experience brought you any memories? Were they pleasant or unpleasant? How these memories contributed to creating an image of Animates in your mind?	
Participant	Quote
P1	<i>[...] my sister's favorite food was benedict eggs with bacon. My sister died a few months ago, and the smells in the store made me miss her so deep. I think Animates gave me back this sense of connection, that is possible to stay connected, don't matter if she is here or not. I'm grateful for that experience.</i>
P2	<i>That's funny how you mentioned missing your beloved sister (to P1). I recalled trip with family and friends to Rarotonga a few years ago. All the birds and bacon-made breakfast in front of the sea. My father was there. He's not here anymore, and I felt a connection with him, too. Now that you said that, maybe that is why I wanted to stay longer at Animates that day.</i>
P3	<i>No sad stories here, guys (to P1 and P2). I just got a sense of being transported back to my childhood out at the Wetlands listening to all the chaffinch birds. That was a happy time. Now I only go there from long to long, but since that experience I'm seriously thinking about going back there more often. Thanks to Animates for that.</i>

P4	<i>It is hard for me to talk about memories. None came to my mind at that time. I was more deeply impacted in my senses rather than in my memories. Anyway, I am glad to hear your stories and feel like Animates has become a member of your family.</i>
----	---

Finally, question 6 of the focus group approached customers' perceptions about how the sensory experience gave them a sense of brand differentiation and how that sense could influence their future visits to Animates. Aligned with Hassan and Iqbal (2016), the data present her suggest the positive relation between SM, brand differentiation, and customer retention. Except for one participant who expressed himself neutral (P4), all the others exposed a clear relation between the perceived brand differentiation and future shopping frequency, as seen below in table 17.

Table 17 – Quotes from participants regarding their memories aroused by the sensory experience and the rule of memories on the construction of brand loyalty in their minds

Q6. Experiences like these are likely to make you feel like Animates environment is different from what you have seen in other pet shops and make you prioritise visiting Animates first instead of coming to another pet shop?	
Participant	Quote
P1	<i>Definitively. I'm used on shopping at Animates since long ago, but that experience made it the number option in my mind.</i>
P2	<i>Yes. I think I would be seen there more frequently.</i>

P3	<i>Sure yes. I feel like shopping at Animates is no longer the same of coming a K-Mart or Warehouse store. I loved it.</i>
P6	<i>[laughed to P3] Yes. Animates is no longer like a K-Mart for dogs!</i>

5.4. Results and findings of the observations

As discussed in chapter 4, phenomenological observation includes paying attention to relevant physical settings, participants, actions and reactions, interactions, conversations, and their behaviour during the observation (Cypress, 2018). In the realm of hermeneutic phenomenology, the observation can be used to give the contextual framework to the textual elements - the questionnaire, in the present research (Kafle, 2011). The observations in the present research aimed to take notes from relevant facts regarding how the lived experience affected dog-owners' perceptions and their dog's reactions, customer behaviour and brand loyalty. However, as observation focuses on depicting the context – and assuming that the context is the same for the themes studied in the present research, this section is organised following the key elements given by Cypress (2018) and not the usual thematic scheme followed by the other sections in this chapter.

5.4.1. Physical settings

Outdoor and indoor banners, tags, promotions and advertisements were displayed with no visible modifications. No advertisement or banner was displayed warning customers about the ongoing research in the store, to prevent customers from developing pre-established expectations capable of modulating their sensory perceptions and responses. Products were displayed on gondolas as usual. The aroma diffusers were settled up as exposed on session 4.2.1 and were visible to customers but in a position to avoid any physical contact of direct interaction. After realising that the diffusers were the source of the smells spread across the store, some customers expressed interested in testing the same devices in their home to reach similar effects in their dogs (especially calmness and engagement) and asked at the counters if the diffusers and essential oils were for sale at Animates. The ambience sound was modified as exposed in session 4.2.1. Beyond olfactive and hearing senses, the other human senses were not subject to the present research, and no modifications were made to the store atmospherics regarding their arousal. Overall, the experience followed Riedel and Mulcahy's suggestions that besides those aspects intentionally modified aiming to arouse customers' perceptions, all the other physical settings must remain neutral and non-interactive to prevent diverting customers' from the main focus.

5.4.2. Actions, reactions and interactions

Actions, reactions and interactions are often difficult to differentiate through the hermeneutic circle as the lived experience cannot be analysed by a linear timeframe (Walsh, 1996). For this reason, the *duo* action-reaction was taken in the present research as an *uno*: response. Observations of customers' responses to the modified store atmospherics were taken, as discussed in chapter 4.

Most of the customers seemed to realise the sensory modifications in the store atmospherics as they entered the store. The first response observed in most of them was looking around and then staring at the ceiling, looking for flying birds. Several customers stopped from time to time to look around, over the shelves and continuously at the ceiling until they finally noticed the sound coming from the store sound system. Some occurrences were observed when customers spontaneously engaged in random conversations with other customers about the modified store atmospherics, sharing curiosity and personal perceptions. Their perceptions about the dog's reactions were commonly subject to conversation among customers. Those conversations were usually friendly and punctuated by laughs and, sometimes, anecdotes. Although Animates' customers are generally friendly and open to conversations with staff members, this behaviour is not commonly observed among customers themselves. Some customers easily engaged in spontaneous conversations when approached by the researcher and shared their perceptions about the modified environment with a richness of details, vastly consistent with findings gathered via questionnaires and, significantly similar to the

anecdotes collected via focus group. A variety of customers' stories and perceptions agreed to a sense of calmness and a more relaxed posture while purchasing at the store.

As customers walked in across the store's central aisle and approached the dog food session, where several aroma diffusers were installed, their olfactive sense seemed to overlap the hearing perceptions. As the diffusers were visible to the customers, their responses were apparently more related to the aroma's nature and not to its source. Many customers sniffed around several times and seemed to be enjoying pairing their behaviour with their dogs at this time. It was commonly observed that customers encouraged their dogs to sniff around and happily talked to their dogs while exploring the dog food aisle.

Some customer behaviour elements, such as the time spent per customer inside the store and the average basket per purchase, seemed to positively impact the modified sensory store atmospherics. Some customers shared their perceptions of spending more time than expected and compared to their last visit to Animates and buying more products than their initial expectation. The contribution to forming a positive image of Animates' brand in customers' minds was positively impacted. Some customers shared their perceptions through an emotional-eliciting attitude by telling anecdotes indicatives of creating an emotional link with the store.

5.5. Triangulation

The aim of this research is to investigate how cross multi-sensory strategies impact customer behaviour in pet care shops through a phenomenological observation at Animates Invercargill, and it has the following research objectives:

RO1. To observe and describe how pet owners and their dogs react when exposed to a cross multi-sensory shopping experience in a pet care store.

RO2. To explore how emotions, memories and perceptions can influence customers' purchasing intentions in the pet care retailing segment after being exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience.

RO3. To explore how emotions, memories and perceptions can influence customers' brand loyalty in the pet care retailing segment after being exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience.

In addressing these objectives, the data collection was made through questionnaires, focus group and observations. The key findings of each method are listed in table 18 below, linking with its correspondent research objective:

Table 18: Linking themes and key findings to research objectives

	Questionnaire	Focus Group	Observations
RO1			
Dog-owner's perceptions and their dogs' reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive responses from dog-owners and their dogs' reactions showed the feasibility of cross multi-SM strategies to pet care stores • Perception of purchasing experience as a quality time shared with their dogs • Confirmation of pet parenting trend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different people react differently to the same sensory stimuli • A cross multi-SM strategy must pay attention to those differences • Positive responses from dog-owners and their dogs showed the feasibility of cross-multi-SM • Confirmation of pet parenting trend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive responses from dog-owners and their dogs' reactions showed the feasibility of cross multi-SM strategies to pet care stores • Perception of purchasing experience as a quality time shared with their dogs Different people react differently to the same sensory stimuli
RO2			
Customer behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28.5% higher average purchase basket value • 39.5% more time spent in the store • Intention to increase both indicators in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional-eliciting sensations engage customers to a higher average purchase basket 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity made customers spend more time exploring the store • Dog-owners pairing behaviour with their dogs

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-SM can potentially engage customers to more frequent and more prolonged visits to the store 	suggests the pet parenting trend
RO3			
Brand loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of brand differentiation • Perception of the uniqueness of purchasing experience • Consolidation of Animates as the first choice company in the local market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memories aroused created a sense of emotional bond with the brand • Emotional perception of brand differentiation and uniqueness of the purchasing experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of brand differentiation • Perception of the uniqueness of the purchasing experience • Creation of an emotional-eliciting bond with Animates

Consistent with several findings in the literature (Acevedo et al., 2018; Helme Falk & Hulten, 2017; Krishna, 2012; Olahut et al., 2012; Petit et al., 2019; Riedel & Mulcahy, 2019; Sliburyte & Vaitieke, 2019), the triangulated findings of the present research lead to and understanding that SM can have a positive impact in customer behaviour and brand loyalty. The originality of the present research is adding to the body-of-knowledge an understanding of the impacts of a multi-sensory marketing strategy to a segment where humans must be aroused simultaneously as their pets.

5.6. Summary

This chapter has presented the results from a hermeneutic phenomenological study about the feasibility of a cross multi-sensory marketing strategy to the pet care retailing segment and its impacts on customer behaviour and brand loyalty. Following a sequential-explanatory design, three data collection methods were used in the present research, and their findings have been discussed and triangulated in this chapter. The questionnaire's findings showed that the sensory experience positively impacted all the aspects investigated regarding cross sensory perceptions, customer behaviour and brand loyalty. The questionnaire also gathered a preliminary list of terms to provide a common lexicon of to further cross-sensory marketing research in the pet care segment. The focus group's findings are similar to those of the questionnaire, with participants reinforcing that a cross-sensory marketing can potentially engage customers to visit the store more frequently and for longer periods of time. Finally, the findings from the observations suggested that the sensory experience turned the purchasing experience into a quality time shared between dog owners and their dogs. These results suggested that adopting cross multi-sensory marketing strategies may be useful for pet care retailers. The cross-sensory stimuli aroused in customers an emotional-eliciting perception of the purchasing environment, with positive and relevant impacts on customer behaviour and brand loyalty

Chapter 6. Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter provides a summary and conclusion of the research. First, it will outline the research aims and objectives and present the presumed obstacles in adopting a cross multi-sensory marketing strategy to a pet care store. Second, it will explain the significance of the research and its implications to the practice and industry. Third, it will report the delimitations and limitations of the research. Fourth, it will address the potential opportunities to be developed from this research as recommendations for future investigations. Finally, it will present the conclusion by linking the research throughout.

6.1. Purpose of the research

The present research aimed to investigate the feasibility of cross multi-sensory marketing strategies to pet care stores. A hermeneutic phenomenological study was carried out, split into three main research objectives: first, to describe and observe how dog owners and their dogs reacted when exposed to a sensory modification in the store atmospheric; second, to study the correlation between SM and customer behaviour in pet care stores; third, to analyse how the construction of brand loyalty in a customer's mind was impacted by adopting a cross sensory-marketing strategy in a pet shop.

Disincentives to the initial challenge of pleasantly arousing humans and their pets by a set of sensory stimuli in the same shopping environment were significantly added by

the lack of lexicons capable of describing dogs' reactions meaningfully into human emotions. The research only marginally addressed this gap in chapter 5, when a list of lexicons describing dog owners aroused emotions and dogs aroused reactions, into lists with many similarities. However, the magnitude of the pet care market in New Zealand – an estimated 64% of households with at least one pet supporting a total market of NZD 2,1 billion, could not be kept apart from such a trading topic in the marketing research as the sensory marketing.

6.2. Answering the research questions and objectives

RO1. To observe and describe how pet owners and their dogs react when exposed to a cross multi-sensory shopping experience in a pet care store.

The sensory experience conducted at Animates had a positive impact on dog-owners emotions and their dog's reactions. Human emotions were congruent with dogs reactions: the experience pleasantly aroused both. Despite an overall positive perception, people reacted differently to the same sensory stimuli. Adding dogs to this equation can make it challenging to design cross-multi sensory marketing strategies for the pet care segment. In the present research, the combined positive responses from dog-owners and their dogs showed a ripple effect on customer behaviour and brand loyalty. Finally, living the same sensory experience as their dogs seemed to confirm the pet parenting phenomenon among pet owners in New Zealand.

RO2. To explore how emotions, memories and perceptions can influence customers' purchasing intentions in the pet care retailing segment after being exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience.

The customers' overall positive perception about their own emotions and their dog's reactions when exposed to the sensory stimuli has created an emotional-eliciting environment resulting in a relevant increase of the time spent in the store and the average purchase basket value per customer. The sensory experience showed evidence of a positive impact of customers wish to engage themselves in spontaneous conversations with staff members and other customers, usually sharing a sense of curiosity and joyfulness, enhancing the hedonistic aspect of the purchase.

RO3. To explore how emotions, memories and perceptions can influence customers' brand loyalty in the pet care retailing segment after being exposed to a cross multi-sensory experience.

The creation of a positive image of the brand in the customer's mind was positively impacted as the customers living the experience expressed a strong perception of the brand differentiation and the uniqueness of the purchasing experience. This aspect also relates to RO2, as findings suggest that the sensory experience moved customers' focus from a utilitarian view to a hedonistic position. Participants said they stayed longer and spent more and one commented that it seemed like Animates had become a member of their family. This phenomenon contributed to creating a mental image of Animates as

a premier brand, supported by a genuine emotional bond between customers, dogs, and the brand. Evidence has shown that pet care stores can potentially use cross-SM strategies as a competitive advantage to build long and profitable relationships with their customers via brand loyalty focus. Finally, findings suggested a high potential of cross-SM strategies to retain customers by providing them with a quality, unique experience.

6.3. Relationship to previous research

The present study is consistent with the paradigmatic S-O-R (Stimulus → Organism → Response) model (Bitner, 1992) – as discussed in chapter 3. Sensory stimuli from environments affect an individual's cognitive and affective reactions, which influences customer behaviour. No theory was found linking the S-O-R (or any other SM model) to a cross-application including dogs. However, the S-O-R model is considered the most reasonable theoretical background for understanding the psychology behind customers' buying behaviour (Krishna, 2012), it was adopted to structure the present research.

Regarding SM data analysis, the PAD (pleasure, arousal and dominance) is paramount (Russel & Mehrabian, 1978) – as discussed in chapter 3. However, the lack of meaningful language (a lexicon) capable to elucidate animal sensory responses into a human understanding proved the inadequacy of the PAD paradigm to be used by the present research. Instead, this study approached the hermeneutic cycle (Chuching, 2020) as a feasible model to evaluate data gathered via sequential-explanatory design.

Despite SM strategies being an innovative approach to the pet care segment, the present research is in connection to previous theoretical studies from Di Donfrancesco et al. (2012), Surie (2014) and Tsai et al. (2020) – as discussed in chapter 3, who brought the understanding of emotional bonds between humans and animals to a relevant point to the business area. Findings were consistent with Hobbs and Shanoyan (2018) suggestion that sensory cues could increase customers' purchase intentions if congruent to those values identified by pet owners as likely to make their pets satisfied. However, the originality of the present research, while applying human-scale theories typically to a cross-emotional board, adds significant understanding to the body-of-knowledge to be developed by future research.

6.4. Limitations of the present study

There is no (or just a tiny) tradition and knowledge on hermeneutic phenomenology in the business area (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014). Thus, outlines from phenomenological research in the business area are likely to face resistance and severe argumentation against its validation and generalisation capability (Kagimu, 2019; Ziakas & Boukas, 2014). Therefore, the first limitation of phenomenology is that the researcher depends on the interpretations, insights and perceptions of the informant – and a broad range of circumstances (from social to psychiatric factors) can affect these elements (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014). Those aspects may potentially put strict restrictions on the generalizability of results and relativise the objective "truth" of any conclusions drawn (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014). This limitation was mitigated as the hermeneutical

aspect is given by using questionnaires to generate a primary data source, leading to contextual knowledge capable of supporting the studied phenomenon and how participants perceive it (Churchill & Wertz, 1985). In a seminal article investigating the limitations of phenomenology, Wagner (1984) listed subjectivity, bias, pure bracketing, and validation of results within the method's main problems. Once again, the choice for a hermeneutical approach of phenomenology seems to diminish these limitations considerably. Moreover, as discussed in chapter 4, all those aspects were rigorously designed to reach an epistemologically acceptable research trustworthiness level in the present study. Some practical limitations were caused by the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on imports and ports' functioning in New Zealand. Some inputs – essential oils, oil diffusers, sensory fans and coloured lamps, were purchased from abroad on the internet and imported under all legal requirements, still in November 2020, but were not delivered in time to be used in the research. This fact restricted the research scope, restricting the store atmospherics modifications to the senses of smell and hearing only. The effects of the present research considered only dog owners. Finally, the lack of a cross lexicon inventory capable of describing pets' emotions and reactions is a substantial limitation to developing the present research.

Some factors contribute to the delimitations of the present research. First, the Animates Invercargill store has a floor area too large to be entirely embraced by interplay sensory strategies. Without being supported by the company's budget, the costs of implementing such sensory strategies were prohibitive to the researcher. The visual, tactile and gustative senses were withdrawn from the research scope, and the other senses

were restricted to only certain areas in the store, as discussed in chapter 4. Only customers identified as gold customers withing Animates database were considered to participate. Due to the complexity of creating a cross-SM strategy embracing different animals species simultaneously, only dog-owners accompanied by their dogs were considered to participate.

6.5. Recommendations for future research and practice

The present study presents as potential benefits to the pet care industry a deeper understanding of the feasibility of employing cross-SM strategies in the retailing segment; a deeper understanding of cross-reactions regarding dogs and their owners; and insights about the impacts of SM strategies on customer behaviour, brand loyalty, marketing differentiation and distinguishing companies in the pet care retailing segment. Managers in the pet care segment could be attentive to brand positioning opportunities coming from the understanding of the findings presented herein. The ability to deal with an experiential logic – mistakes and adjustments-must be considered a key skill to adopt a cross-sensory marketing strategy in a pet shop: hypothetical sensory overload can potentially damage the business.

Exploring SM validating scales applicable to cross-SM strategies beyond the PAD model is an intriguing question for future studies. Including humans and pets in a single sensory scale is challenging but might not be the only way to measure a cross-SM strategy's impacts. However, innovative approaches to this subject might demand joint

research with other knowledge areas, such as neurosciences and veterinary medicine.

How the same multi-sensory stimuli environment arouses other pet species (cats, fishes, birds, reptiles, small pets and horses, mainly) and their owners is a challenge to further studies and might substantially add the findings of this research.

Investigating the emotional bond between pet shop customers' and their dogs can result in a list of common cross-lexicons capable of giving managers in-depth insights about how to address effective sensory cues in their stores and provide customers with a unique shopping experience. The findings of the present research suggested that pet shop customers have a pent-up demand for store atmospherics differentiation, embracing them and their pets in an environment noticeably different from any other department store.

6.6. Conclusion

Cross multi-sensory marketing strategies are feasible to be adopted in the pet care retailing segment. The sensory experience conducted at Animates Invercargill had a positive impact on customer behaviour – with relevant increased rates on time and money spent in the store among participants and brand loyalty – with customers expressing excitement about engaging themselves in a unique shopping experience. The phenomenological investigation conducted by the present research showed relevant gaps to be filled by future research, such as the limits of sensory overloading in multiple pet

care environments and building a lexicon understanding of animal's reactions. The emotional-eliciting behaviour created by the sensory experience suggested that managers in the segment could be attentive to the exciting opportunity of cross multi-sensory marketing strategies as a competitive advantage to their business, as it proved to be a feasible marketing approach to pet care retailers in New Zealand.

References

- Acevedo, C. R., & Fairbanks, V. S. L. (2018). Os efeitos do marketing sensorial sobre a experiência de compra do consumidor no ponto de venda. [The effects of sensory marketing on the consumer's shopping experience at the point of sale]. *Revista Interdisciplinar de Marketing*, 8(1), 51-67.
<https://doi.org/10.4025/rimar.v8il.34590>
- Ajjawi, R., & Higgs, J. (2007). Using hermeneutic phenomenology to investigate how experienced practitioners learn to communicate clinical reasoning. *The Qualitative Report*, 12(4), 612-638. Retrieved from
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol12/iss4/6>
- Animates (2020). Who owns Animates? <https://thecage.worldmanager.com/admin/modules/scorm/previewScorm.php?templateId=2205&packageId=520&logId=446143>
- Annells, M. (2006). Triangulation of qualitative approaches: hermeneutical phenomenology and grounded theory. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 56(1), 55–61. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.03979.x
- Arnould, E. J., & Price, L. L. (1993). River Magic: extraordinary experience and the extended service encounter. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), 24. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209331>

- Baker, S.E. & Edwards, R. (2012) *How many qualitative interviews is enough*. Discussion Paper. National Centre for Research Methods.
(Unpublished)
- Balaji, M. S., Raghavan, S., & Jha, S. (2011). Role of tactile and visual inputs in product evaluation: a multisensory perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 23(4), 513–530.
- Belk, R. (2014). Digital consumption and the extended self. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 30(11-12), 1101–1118.
- Bhatt, G., Sarkar, A., & Sarkar, J. G. (2020). Attractive and facilitating store atmospheric stimuli. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 48(4), 363-379. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-07-2018-0142>
- Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(2), 57-71.
- Bohrer, T. (2011, August 19). Pet food packaging: evolution, revolution & innovation. Paper, Film and Foil Converter (PFFC). Retrieved 17 of January of 2021, from PFFC online <https://www.pffc-online.com/flexpack/9770-pet-food-evolution-0819>

Booms, B.H. & Bitner, M.J. (1981). Marketing strategies and organization structures for service firms. *Journal of Marketing*, 3(2), 47-51.

Bradbury-Jones, et al. (2009). The phenomenological focus group: an oxymoron? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 65(3), 663–671. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2008.04922.x

Carbone, L. (2004). *Clued in: How to keep customers coming back again and again*. Upper Saddle River, USA: Prentice Hall.

Carbone, L.P., & Haeckel, S.H. (1994). Engineering customer experiences. *Marketing Management*, 3(3), 8-19.

Carcary M. (2015). The research audit trail – Enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry. *Electron J Bus Res Methods*. 2009(7), 11–24. Retrieved from <http://www.ejbrm.com/search/index.html?name=keywords&value=%20research%20audit%20trail>

Carr, S.M. (2004) A framework for understanding clinical reasoning in community nursing. *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 13, 850–857.

Clegg, B. (2003). *Capturing customers' hearts: leave the competition to chase their pockets*: Prentice Hall.

Companion Animals New Zealand (2011). Companion animals in New Zealand 2011.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d1bf13a3f8e880001289eeb/t/5f556cde6699dc5f7fd5f8f8/1599433968483/nzcac-can2011.pdf>

Companion Animals New Zealand (2016). Companion animals in New Zealand 2016.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d1bf13a3f8e880001289eeb/t/5f556c917d0bb54905a22858/1599433901911/Companion+Animals+in+New+Zealand+2016+Report_web.pdf

Companion Animals New Zealand. (2020). Companion animals in New Zealand 2020.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d1bf13a3f8e880001289eeb/t/5f768e8a17377653bd1eebef/1601605338749/Companion+Animals+in+NZ+2020+%281%29.pdf>

Coppin, G., & Sander, D. (2016). Theoretical approaches to emotion and its

measurement. In *Emotion measurement* (pp. 3-30). Woodhead Publishing.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-100508-8.00001-1>

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage Publications.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1975). *Beyond boredom and anxiety*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: the psychology of optimal experience*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., and Csikszentmihalyi, I. S. (eds) (1988). *Optimal experience: psychological studies of flow in consciousness*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press

Cushing, J. T. (1995). Hermeneutics, underdetermination and quantum mechanics. *Science & Education*, 4(2), 137-146.

Cypress, B. (2018). Qualitative research methods. *Dimensions of critical care nursing*, 37(6), 302–309. doi:10.1097/dcc.0000000000000322

Di Donfrancesco, B., Koppel, K., & Chambers IV, E. (2012). An initial lexicon for sensory properties of dry dog food. *Journal of Sensory Studies*, 27(6), 498-510. <http://doi.org:10.1111/joss.12017>

Eagleton, T. (1983). *Literary theory: An introduction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Ehrich, L.C. & Knight, J. (1998). *Leadership in crisis: restructuring principled practice*.
Flaxton, QLD. Post Pressed.

Eriksson, E., & Larsson, N. (2011). A Multi-sensory brand-experience – sensorial
interplay and its impact on consumer’ touch behaviour. (Master’s thesis,
Linnaeus University, Kalmar, Sweden). Retrieved August 06, 2020, from
<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.461.7416&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Euromonitor, 2020. Pet care in New Zealand 2020. <https://www.euromonitor.com/pet-care-in-new-zealand/report>

Finlay, L. (2012). Debating phenomenological methods. *Hermeneutic phenomenology in education*, 17–37. doi:10.1007/978-94-6091-834-6_2

Fouche, F. (1993). Phenomenological theory of human science. Human Science Research
Council: conceptions of social inquiry, 1, 87-112.

Gates, M. C., Walker, J., Zito, S., & Dale, A. (2019). A survey of opinions towards dog
and cat management policy issues in New Zealand. *New Zealand Veterinary
Journal*, 67(6), 315-322.

Gates, M. C., Walker, J., Zito, S., & Dale, A. (2019). Cross-sectional survey of pet ownership, veterinary service utilisation, and pet-related expenditures in New Zealand. *New Zealand Veterinary Journal*, 67(6), 306-314.

Gergen, K. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40(3), 266-275.

Grbich, C. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis: an introduction*. Sage

Groenewald, T. (2004). A Phenomenological Research Design Illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 42–55.

doi:10.1177/160940690400300104

Gummesson, E. (2000). Qualitative methods in management research. *Journal of The Operational Research Society*, 44(1), 1-26.

Haase, J., & Wiedmann, K.-P. (2018). The sensory perception item set (SPI): An exploratory effort to develop a holistic scale for sensory marketing. *Psychology & Marketing*. <https://doi:10.1002/mar.21130>

Halcomb, E. J., & Davidson, P. M. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary? *Applied Nursing Research*, 19(1), 38–42. doi:10.1016/j.apnr.2005.06.001

Hassan, I., & Iqbal, J. (2016). Employing sensory marketing as a promotional advantage for creating brand differentiation and brand loyalty. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences*, 10 (3), 725-734.

Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), 132. doi:10.1086/208906

Helmefalk, M., & Hulten, B. (2017). Multi-sensory congruent cues in designing retail store atmosphere: effects on shoppers' emotions and purchase behavior. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 38, 1-11.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.04.007>

Hobbs, L., & Shanoyan, A. (2018). Analysis of consumer perception of product attributes in pet food: implications for marketing and brand strategy. In *the Proceedings of the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting*, Washington, Washington, United States of America. Retrieved August 11, 2020, from <https://ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=17052>

Holloway, I. (1997). *Basic concepts for qualitative research*. Oxford: Blackwell Science.

- Hulten, Bertil. (2011). Sensory marketing: the multi-sensory brand-experience concept. *European Business Review*, 23. 256-273. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09555341-111130245>
- Husserl, E. (1980). *Phenomenology and the foundations of the sciences*. Boston, Martinus Hijhoff Publishers. (Original work published 1952, nd)
- Iqbal, J. (2016). Employing sensory marketing as a promotional advantage for creating brand differentiation and brand loyalty. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences*, 10(3), 725-734.
- Jick, T.D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 602-611.
- Kafle, N. P. (2013). Hermeneutic phenomenological research method simplified. *Bodhi: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 5(1). doi:10.3126/bodhi.v5i1.8053
- Kagimu, I. (2019). The role of phenomenological research methodology in management research. *Monarch Business School Switzerland*, 27. 09.
- Klein, P., & Westcott, M. R. (1994). The changing character of phenomenological psychology. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 35(2), 133–158. doi:10.1037/0708-5591.35.2.133

Kotler, P. (1973). Atmospherics as a marketing tool. *Journal of retailing*, 49(4), 48-64.

Krey, N. L. T. E. (2016). Enough is enough! understanding environmentally driven multisensory experiences. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. Retrieved August 04, 2020, from <https://ezproxy.sit.ac.nz/login?url=https://ezproxy.sit.ac.nz:2082/docview/1861059401?accountid=46872>

Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment and behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22(3), 332-351. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2011.08.003>

Laird, D. A. (1932). How the consumer estimates quality by subconscious sensory impressions. *Journal of Applied psychology*, 16(3), 241.

Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: a comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(3), 21–35. doi:10.1177/160940690300200303

Lee, N., Broderick, A.J., & Chamberlain, L. (2007). What is “neuromarketing”? A discussion and agenda for future research. *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, 63(2), 199-204. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpsycho.2006.03.007>

Leung L. (2015). Validity, reliability, and generalizability in qualitative research. *Journal of family medicine and primary care*, 4(3), 324–327.

<https://doi.org/10.4103/2249-4863.161306>

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (2000). *Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences*. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2, 163-188. Sage.

Lindstrom, M. (2006). Brand sense: how to build powerful brands through touch, taste, smell, sight and sound. *Strategic Direction*, 22.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/sd.2006.05622bae.001>

Mattila, A. S., & Wirtz, J. (2001). Congruency of scent and music as a driver of in-store evaluations and behavior. *Journal of Retailing*, 77(2), 273-289.

Maslow, A. H. (1964). *Religions, values and peak experiences*. Ohio: Ohio State University Press. 64.

Master of applied management – SIT (Southern Institute of Technology) NZ. (n.d.). SIT – Southern Institute of Technology, New Zealand – Invercargill, Queenstown, Christchurch, Telford, Gore & SIT2LRN Distance Learning

<https://www.sit.ac.nz/programme/course/Master%20of%20Applied%20Management>

- Medeiros, J. F. D., & Cruz, C. M. L. (2006). Comportamento do consumidor: fatores que influenciam no processo de decisão de compra dos consumidores. [Consumer behaviour: factors that influence the consumer purchase decision process]. *Teoria e evidência econômica*, 14, 16-58.
- Merz, M.A., He, Y., & Vargo, S.L. (2009). The evolving brand logic: a service-dominant logic perspective. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 37, 328-344. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-009-0143-3>
- Mishra, H. G., Sinha, P. K., & Koul, S. (2014). Impact of store atmospherics on customer behavior: influence of response moderators. *Journal of Business & Management*, 20(1), 45-65.
- Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Mukhi, S., Hampton, D. & Barnwell, N. (1988). *Australian management*. Sydney, NSW. McGraw-Hill.
- Nadanyiova, M., Kliestikova, J., & Kolencik, J. (2018). Sensory marketing from the perspective of a support tool for building brand value. *Economics and Culture*, 15(1), 96–104. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jec-2018-0011>
- Olahut, M. R., El-Murad, J., & Plaias, I. (2012). Store atmosphere: conceptual issues and its impact on shopping behavior. In *the Proceedings of the International Conference Marketing-from Information to Decision*. <https://www>.

ceol.com/search/article-detail?id=170152

Osborne, J. W. (1994). Some similarities and differences among phenomenological and other methods of psychological qualitative research. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, 35(2), 167–189.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0708-5591.35.2.167>

Parwath, R. R. (2019). Pet showroom. Master's thesis, Kansas State University, Manhattan, United States of America. Retrieved July 28, 2020 from <http://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2097/39500/RakshandaReddyParwath2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Sage.

Patton, E. & Appelbaum, S.H. (2003). The case for case studies in management research. *Management Research News*, 26(5), 60-71.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/01409170310783484>

Pfadenhauer, M., & Grenz, T. (2015). Uncovering the Essence. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 44(5), 598–616. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241615587382>

- Petit, O., Velasco, C., & Spence, C. (2019). Digital sensory marketing: integrating new technologies into multisensory online experience. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 45, 42-61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2018.07.004>
- Pine II, B. J., & Gilmore, J. (2016). Integrating experiences into your business model: five approaches. *Strategy & Leadership*, 44(1), 3–10. doi:10.1108/sl-11-2015-0080
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1989). Phenomenological research methods. In R.S. Valle & S. Halling (Eds.) *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology*, 41-60. Plenum.
- Poncin, I., & Mimoun, M. S. B. (2014). The impact of “e-atmospherics” on physical stores. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 21(5), 851-859. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2014.02.013>
- Poulsson, S. H. G., & Kale, S. H. (2004). The experience economy and commercial experiences. *The Marketing Review*, 4(3), 267–277. doi:10.1362/1469347042223445
- Privitera, G. J., & Ahlgrim-Delzell, L. (2019). Quasi-experimental and single-case experimental designs. *Research Methods for Education*, 333–370. Retrieved from <https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm->

binaries/89876_Chapter_13_Quasi_Experimental_and_Single_Case_Designs.pdf

Rajain, P., & Rathee, R. (2017). Sensory marketing: investigating the use of five senses. *International Journal of Research in Finance and Marketing*, 7(1), 124-133.

Riedel, A., & Mulcahy, R. F. (2019). Does more sense make sense? An empirical test of high and low interactive retail technology. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 33(3), 331–343. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-12-2017-0435>

Robley L.R., et al. (2004) This new house: building knowledge through online learning. *Journal of Professional Nursing* 20(5), 333–343.

Rodrigues, C.A.M.C.S. (2014). *Brand sensuality and consumer-based brand equity*. (Doctoral thesis, Faculdade de Economia da Universidade do Porto, Porto, Portugal). Retrieved February 9th, 2021, from <https://repositorio-aberto.up.pt/bitstream/10216/76153/2/31376.pdf>

Rundle-Thiele, S., & Bennett, R. (2001). A brand for all seasons? A discussion of brand loyalty approaches and their applicability for different market. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 10(1), 25-37. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10610420110382803>

Russell, J. A., & Mehrabian, A. (1978). Approach-avoidance and affiliation as functions of the emotion-eliciting quality of an environment. *Environment and Behavior*, 10(3), 355-387. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916578103005>

Schellemborg, S. (2010). Ontological minimalism about phenomenology. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 83(1), 1–40. doi:10.1111/j.1933-1592.2010.00421.x

Schwandt, T. A. (1997). *Qualitative inquiry: a dictionary of terms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Same, S., & Larimo, J. (2012). Marketing theory: experience marketing and experiential marketing. 7th International Scientific Conference Business and Management, Vilnius, Lithuania. <http://doi.org/10.3846/bm.2012.063>

Scarpi, D. (2020). *Hedonism, utilitarianism, and consumer behavior: exploring the consequences of customer orientation*. Springer Nature. <https://doi.org/10.100007/978-3-020-43876-0>

Seymour, R. G. (2006). Hermeneutic phenomenology and international entrepreneurship research. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 4(4), 137-155. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-007-0011-5>

Silverman D. (2009). *Doing qualitative research*. Sage.

Sliburyte, L., & Vaitieke, J. (2019). Exploring the effect of ambient scent on consumer impulsive buying behaviour: theoretical insights. *Management of Organizations: Systematic Research*, 81(1), 101-118. <https://doi.org/10.15-15/mosr-2019-0007>

Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential Marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15(1- 3), 53-67. doi: 10.1362/026725799784870496

Schmitt, B. (2000). *Experiential marketing: How to get customers to sense, feel, think, act and relate to your company and brands*. New York: The Free Press.

Sikma S.K. (2006) Staff perceptions of caring: the importance of a supportive environment. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*, 32(6), 22–29.

Smith, D. G. (1991). Heremeneutic inquiry: the hermeneutic imagination and the pedagogic text. In E. Short (Ed.), *Forms of curriculum inquiry* (pp. 187-209.). New York: Suny Press.

Southern Institute of Technology. (2020) MGT910 research project study guide: a guide for students and staff.

Spence, D.G. (2005) Hermeneutic notions augment cultural safety education. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 44(9), 409–414.

Spiegelberg, E. (2012). *The phenomenological movement: A historical introduction*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Surie, M. L. (2014). An exploratory study on the pet food purchasing behaviour of New Zealand consumers (Doctoral dissertation, Lincoln University, Lincoln, New Zealand). Retrieved July 29, 2020, from http://dspace.lincoln.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10182/6407/Surie_BCom%28Hons%29.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

Tarssanen, S.; Kylänen, M. (2007). A Theoretical model for producing experiences – a touristic perspective, in Kylänen, M. (Ed.) *Articles on Experiences 2*, Lapland University Press, 134–154.

Thurmond, V.A. (2001). The point of triangulation. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33(3), 253-258.

Tsai, W., Talavera, M., & Koppel, K. (2020). Generating consumer terminology to describe emotions in pet owners and their pets. *Journal of Sensory Studies*, e12598. <http://doi.org/10.1111/joss.12598>

- Valle, R., King, M., & Halling, S. (1989). An introduction to existential-phenomenological thought in psychology. In R. Valle & S. Halling (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological perspective in psychology* (pp. 3-16). Plenum Press.
- Van Doorn, M. (2006). An inside story on the experience economy. Available from Internet: <http://www.experience-economy.com/wpcontent/UserFiles/File/InsideStoryOnExperienceEconomy.pdf>
- van Manen, M. (1990) *Researching lived experience: human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- von Eckartsberg, R. (1988). Existential phenomenological research. In R. Valle (Ed.) *Phenomenological inquiry in psychology: Existential and transpersonal dimensions*, 21-61. New York: Plenum Press
- Verhoef, P.C., Lemon, K.N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M., & Schlesinger, L.A. (2009). Customer experience creation: determinants, dynamics, and management strategies. *Journal of Retailing*, 85(1), 31-41. doi: 10.1016/j.jretai.2008.11.001

- Wagner, H. R. (1984). The limitations of phenomenology: Alfred Schutz's critical dialogue with Edmund Husserl. *Husserl Studies*, 1(1), 179-199.
- Walls, A. R.; Okumus, F.; Wang, Y.; Kwun, D. J–W. 2011. An epistemological view of consumer experiences, *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 30(1): 10–21. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2010.03.008>
- Walsh, K. (1996). Philosophical hermeneutics and the project of Hans Georg Gadamer: Implications for nursing research. *Nursing Inquiry*, 3(4), 231-237.
- Walters, A. J. (1995). The phenomenological movement: implications for nursing research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 22(4), 791–799. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2648.1995.22040791.x
- Webb, C., & Kevern, J. (2001). Focus groups as a research method: a critique of some aspects of their use in nursing research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 33(6), 798–805. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2648.2001.01720.x
- Wilson, V. (1997). Focus Groups: a useful qualitative method for educational research? *British Educational Research Journal*, 23(2), 209–224. doi:10.1080/0141192970230207

Wright, J. H., & Hicks, J. M. (1966). Construction and validation of a Thurstone scale of liberalism—conservatism. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 50(1), 9–

12. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0022811>

Yuan, Y–H.; Wu, C. 2008. Relationship among experiential marketing, experiential value, and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 32(3), 387–410. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1096348008317392>

Ziakas, V. & Boukas, N. (2014), Contextualising phenomenology in event management research: deciphering the meaning of event experiences. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 5(1), 56-73.
doi.org/10.1108/IJEFM-08-2012-0023

Appendix C. Questionnaire

Store Atmospherics at Animates Invercargill

Kia ora, my name is Rodrigo Teodoro, and I am a student at the Southern Institute of Technology in Invercargill studying the Master in Applied Management program. You might also know me as a team member at Animates Invercargill as well, so thank you in advance for your support to my Master research project.

This questionnaire asks you about your perceptions of the Animates Invercargill store environment. That means how you feel when in the store regarding some of your human senses, especially sight, smell and hearing senses. It also asks you about how you could describe your dog's reactions, feelings and emotions. There are no right or wrong answers. It will only take a few minutes of your time, and your answers will remain confidential and anonymous.

Please answer the questions as best you can. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. No one else will know what you write. You do not have to fill out this questionnaire if you do not want to. You do not have to answer every question, but that would be much appreciated. If you do complete the questionnaire, then you agree for your answers to be used in the research project. The completed questionnaires will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and the processed data in a password-protected computer for five years, and then destroyed. Animates' team members will not have access to the questionnaires, only to the final report, where anonymity is guaranteed.

Thank you very much for helping me with this research.

Rodrigo Borges Teodoro
Southern Institute of Technology

If you have any questions, you can contact my supervisor, Dr Sally Bodkin-Allen, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ethical approval for this research has been granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at SIT.

1. 1. It was easily perceptible that some sensorial stimuli (sounds and smells) were differently displayed in the store today. The store "sounded" and "smelled" different today

Mark only one oval.

						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

2. 2. In general, the new set of sensorial stimuli turned the visit to Animates today a more pleasant shopping experience, if compared to the usual store environment (how the store normally is) *Mark only one oval.*

					0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

3. 3. In general, the sounds and smells perceived in the shop today brought me pleasant/unpleasant memories, feelings, sensations or instincts

Mark only one oval per row.

	Pleasant	Unpleasant	Neutral
Feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sensations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instincts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Memories	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other. Please write:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. 4. In general, how could you describe your dog's reactions to the sensory stimuli present in the store today. If you can, please some adjectives that better describe your dog's reactions regarding each element (write bellow each element)

Mark only one oval per row.

	Pleasantly aroused	Unpleasantly aroused	As usual	Not applicable
Excitement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wiling to explore the store	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interaction with environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interaction with people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interaction with dogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any aggressivetrace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Calm and sociable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. 5. In general, the new set of sensorial stimuli made me feel emotionally closer to my dog by evoking memories of our past and present parental bond (me and my dog, or me and my dog including diverse situations, places, people, etc.). This made me wish to be a better dog parent.

Mark only one oval.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

6. 4. In general, the new set of sensorial stimuli somehow contributed to make my decision to buy products for my dog easier when compared to how I felt during my last visit to the store

Mark only one oval.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

7. 5. In general, the shopping experience with olfactive and hearing sensory stimuli somehow made me prone to expend more money or buy more

products today when compared to how I felt during my last visit to the store

Mark only one oval.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

8. 6. The sounds and smells in the store made it easier to merge my personal perception of product quality with what I believe would be my dog feeling/need/reaction/preference to the same product *Mark only one oval.*

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

9. 7. My dog expressed more interest/excitement when exposed to the sensory stimuli in the dog dry food aisle if compared to how it usually behaves when visiting Animates *Mark only one oval.*

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

10. 8. The increased level of excitement of my dog during the visit to Animates today made me more aware of the joy of sharing a shopping experience with him/her.

Mark only one oval.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

11. 9. The smells and sounds made the shopping experience at Animates Invercargill noticeably different from the shopping experiences I have had in other local pet care stores.

Mark only one oval.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

12. 10. The sensory shopping experience contributed to create a strong recognition in my mind of Animates Invercargill as a unique brand and a pleasant place to come shopping with my dog

Mark only one oval.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

13. 11. If Animates Invercargill adopt regularly different sensory stimuli in its store, I am likely to return more frequently to the store in the future if compared to the frequency I have been visiting it up to now *Mark only one oval.*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

14. 12. Please classify the sensory stimuli listed bellow from 1 (more important) to 5 (less important), regarding the influence on your buying decision today. You can attribute the same number to different stimuli

Mark only one oval per row.

	1 (more important)	2 (less important)
Sense of smell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sense of hearing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Compared to my normal spending with products/services at Animates, my spending today was increased/decreased by a rate of:

Mark only one oval per row.

	-50% or less	-20%	As usual	20%	50% or more
Purchased value	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Compared to the time I normally spent inside Animates Invercargill store, the time I spent exploring the store today was increased/decreased by a rate of:

Mark only one oval per row.

	-50% or less	-20%	As usual	20%	50% or more
Time spent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. 13. Please write a list of words that could better describe your feelings, emotions, instincts, and perceptions in general that were somehow aroused by the sensorial experience at Animates today

18. 14. Now, please write a list of words that you believe could better describe your dog's feelings, emotions, instincts, and perceptions in general that were somehow aroused by the sensorial experience at Animates today

19. 15. Finally, use the space below to shortly describe your perceptions of the store atmospherics during your visit today or to tell us about some memories, feelings and emotions aroused by the sounds and smells present in your shopping experience at Animates today. Don't be shy and tell us how your experience today linked to your emotions. If you would like

to share more of your felt experience, memories or feelings, please call the researcher (Rodrigo) at any time and he will be glad to record your stories

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix D. Focus group questions

Focus Group Questions

1. Q1. Briefly describe how the lived sensory experience at Animates regarding its modified store atmospherics (sounds and smells) was perceived and stimulated your five senses, and which emotions were aroused by that stimulation

2. Q2. Briefly describe how you perceived your dog's reactions when exposed to the lived sensory experience at Animates regarding its modified store atmospherics (sounds and smells)

3. Q3. Have the sensory lived experience brought you any memories? Were they pleasant or unpleasant? How these memories contributed to create an image of Animates in your mind?

4. Q4. Have any of the sensory stimuli made you feel uncomfortable? If yes, explain how this perception would impact your future visits to Animates.

5. Q5. To which extent this kind of sensory experience impacted the time spent and the purchase value of your visit to Animates, if compared to your last visit to the store?

6. Q6. Experiences like these are likely to make you feel like Animates environment is different from what you have seen in other pet shops and make you prioritise visiting Aniamates first instead of coming to another pet shop?

7. Please, feel free to add any other relevant perception, fact of anecdote related to the sensory lived experience at Animates Invercargill.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix E. Focus group's consent form



**Declaration of consent to be in a focus group for
The role of cross multi-sensory marketing strategies in pet care stores: a
phenomenological investigation at Animates Invercargill**

I have had the scope and nature of the research thoroughly explained to me. Any questions about the research have been satisfactorily answered, and I understand that I may request further information at any stage.

I accept and note that:

1. My participation in this research is entirely voluntary.
2. I may withdraw from participation in the research at any time up to the point at which the data is anonymised and amalgamated, without explanation, disadvantage or disincentive.
3. Any information given during the interview is being utilised solely for the purpose of the specific research project and will not be disclosed to any other person or agency without my express consent.
4. The focus group will be recorded for later transcription.
5. This information may be incorporated into the research report, but actual names or other characteristics that may lead to the identification of individuals or organisations will not be disclosed.
6. I may request to view any completed drafts or sections of the research report to which I have contributed, at any time.
7. A copy of the completed research report will be made available to me, on request, at the conclusion of the research.

DECLARATION

I have read and understood the information set out on this form, and give my informed consent to be interviewed in accordance with the stated terms and conditions.

Name of Research Subject/Participant Name of Researcher

.....

.....

Signature

Signature

Date

Date

Appendix F. Focus group's information sheet



The role of cross multi-sensory marketing strategies in pet care stores: a hermeneutic phenomenological investigation at Animates Invercargill

Information Sheet for Participants

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, I thank you. If you decide not to take part, there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind, and I thank you for considering my request.

Kia ora, my name is Rodrigo Teodoro, and I am a student at Southern Institute of Technology in Invercargill studying the Masters in Applied Management program. You might also know me as a team member at Animates Invercargill as well, so thank you in advance for your support to my Master research project.

This project aims to describe how sensory stimuli interfere with customer behaviour in pet care shops and their pets. The research is conducted within the Animates Invercargill in-store environment and involves different phases. I want to evaluate the more effective ways to arouse dog owners (and their dogs) feelings and perceptions in order to create a unique, remarkable in-store shopping experience.

For this focus group, only gold customers who have attended to one of the multi-sensory events at Animates Invercargill are eligible to participate. The "gold" segment is the most influential within Animates Pet Points Club, so understanding the behaviour of customers classified as gold is essential to this research.

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to attend a focus group, which is a round-table conversation involving other people who have been in the same sensorial event as you. You will be asked a few questions, and you are invited to express your feeling and perceptions about it freely. Talking will be conducted by the researcher, and you will be asked to raise your hand each time you want to participate in the discussion, as well as be silent and respect other's speaking. Please be aware that you may withdraw from participation in the project at any time up until the point at which the data is anonymised and amalgamated into the report, without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

The focus group session will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes and will be recorded on a mobile phone. Any record will be played to people outside the research group. Your name will not be used in the final report, and you will not be able to be identified in any

way. All information will be kept confidential, and the researcher will use the data only for this study.

The results of the project may be presented at conferences and published in an academic journal, and a copy of the report will be available in the Southern Institute of Technology library (Invercargill, New Zealand). You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project should you wish.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only the researchers will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project, any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by SIT's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depends will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:-

Researcher: Rodrigo Borges Teodoro
Southern Institute of Technology

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

If you have concerns about the **ethical conduct** of this research or the researchers, the following procedure should occur.

Write to the following:

The Secretary of the Human Research Ethics Committee
Southern Institute of Technology
133 Tay St
INVERCARGILL 9840 NZ
Tel: 03 211 2699

All information is confidential and will be handled as soon as possible.

Tēnā rawa atu koe,

Rodrigo Borges Teodoro
Researcher
Master's in Applied Management - SIT