Exploring the Link Between Identity and Analogue Cameras:

Why do consumers use film cameras to shape their identity?

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Abstract

This research aims to explore how identity is shaped through the consumption of film cameras. Identity can be formed in numerous ways, through norms and values, social relationships, and much more. In the digital era, there is a lot of pressure on creating and maintaining identity quickly, as social media speeds up identity building practices. To explore how identity can be shaped through physical objects, film cameras are used. Pictures taken with film cameras are less convenient than the digital counterpart. Despite this, people still continue to use film cameras. Going back to older technologies to slow down consumption and build identity through that can show that identity has become more complex and consumption patterns are changing. There is a lot of research on how identity is becoming increasingly complex and creating and maintaining identity is a lot more varied in the current day. However, how the pressure to constantly create and maintain identity can alter the identity shaping process is not researched. Particularly in the case of film cameras, there is no research done on why consumers would pick up this analogue technology despite better options being widely available. To investigate this, the following research question is proposed: why do consumers use film cameras to shape their identity? To answer the research question, a deductive approach is used to gain further insights on the consumption of film cameras and how it contributes to the identity building process. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants who have recently started using film cameras to discover their motivation for starting to use film cameras and how it helps shape identity. The journey of using film cameras to shape identity can be seen in a journey from the past, present to the future. This process becomes a part of the identity building process, and is shaped through personal experiences, nostalgia, and the need for authenticity. This offers insights into consumption patterns, as well as ads onto existing literature.

Keywords: identity, nostalgia, authenticity, consumption, film cameras

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1. Introduction

In this chapter, the topic of the research will be introduced. This will be divided into several subsegments. These subsegments are consumption as part of identity, quest for identity in an increasingly fragmented market, film cameras and pop culture, authenticity of film cameras and film camera background. Lastly, the research problem will be addressed.

1.1 Consumption as Part of Identity

Showing identity through consumption has become an increasingly complex puzzle. Contemporary marketing literature (Arsel & Thompson, 2011; Belk, 1988; Sherry & Fischer, 2008) shows that consumption is an incremental part of identity formation and that people consume to express their identities. This means that consumption and identity go hand in hand, as identity triggers consumption, and consumption possesses the power to showcase identity (Arnould and Thompson, 2018). We are what we consume becomes a reality that we cannot escape nor surrender to, especially when markets intervene in the identity formation process. Jafari and Goulding (2008) argue that markets maintain consumer demand and economic growth by simply providing a space for consumers to feel individualistic. Furthermore, Arnould and Thompson (2005) emphasise that the markets have grown into facilitators of myths and symbols, which fuels consumers, even those "who lack resources to participate in the market as full-fledged consumers" (pp. 871) to assemble identity narratives. However, the construction of identity could be influenced by a need to reject certain consumption patterns, meanings or artefacts (Arnould and Thompson, 2018). Forming identity through consumption can therefore be a complicated process, with many aspects to consider.

1.2 Quest for Identity in an Increasingly Fragmented Market

In the case of fragmented markets, where brands and products are becoming more and more similar, consumption can be one of the methods to achieve an authentic identity. Whether it is through hobbies, interests, or skills, it is nice to have something that you can consider to be yours that shapes your identity. There are

many perspectives on what identity is and how it is formed. Fearon (1999) states that identity refers to "either (a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviours, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once)." (p. 2). This means that identity can be seen as either belonging to a social group and the norms and values that they hold, or specific characteristics or interests that distinguish an individual from other people. Many researchers tend to agree that identity is shaped not only by demographic characteristics and interest, but also by social relationships (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Stets & Burke, 2000). How someone identifies themselves can therefore be vastly different from other people, depending on their personal life. Additionally, people will compare their own social groups to groups they do not belong in and can value the social groups they identify with as more important than other groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This means that people want to find something that belongs to them and gives them a sense of community, while also wanting to be unique and superior to other individuals. But how does one distinguish themselves from others in the current digital age? With digitalisation and social media being more and more common worldwide, the quest for a unique identity becomes more prevalent than ever. With millions of social media profiles, spread over multiple different platforms, it is easy to get lost and disappear among all the other users. In the United Kingdom alone, there were over 57 million active social media users in January 2023 (Dixon, 2023). Not only are there an incredible amount of social media users, but also the choice of entertainment has also gotten increasingly large. From movies and TV-shows to hobbies and sports, and much more; there is no reason to be bored with the amount of widely available recreation. The entertainment and media market has also been growing immensely and was valued at 2.34 trillion US dollars worldwide in 2021, with an increase of 10.4 percent compared to 2020 (Guttman, 2022). This includes entertainment media such as newspapers, TV, magazines, radio, films, music and books. Consumers have the choice between more producers of goods, more disposable information, and mass customization, leading to a whole range of options that can overwhelm consumers from making decisions (Mueller-Huemann, 1992). This widespread availability of options is enhanced by

social media, as it allows for these choices to be easily visible online. The visibility of these options is supported by Firat (1997), who stated that within globalisation, communications media are helping to boost different experiences and cultures all around the world through music, tv, news, and much more. This leads to a more fragmented market, with an increasing amount of options to pick and choose from. With the market being increasingly fragmented, how do consumers still attempt to differentiate themselves from others to show their own identity? Additionally, the speed at which information can be shared online has increased immensely, and keeping up with building your identity online becomes a time-consuming process (Seargeant & Tagg, 2014). Therefore, showing who you are in everyday life as well as on a digital landscape becomes more and more complex.

1.3 The Popularity of Film Cameras in a Digital Era

To further the understanding of identity practices, the increasing popularity of analogue devices will be examined. Analogue devices are mechanical or electronic devices that do not use digital signals (Hope, 2022). These are devices such as film cameras, typewriters, vinyls and much more. There is an increasing amount of attention for these devices online (Osborne, 2018). From these analogue devices, film cameras will be the main focus of this research. A film camera is a type of camera that uses photographic film to take pictures, either in sheets or rolls. These cameras are also referred to as analogue cameras. Search interest in film cameras, such as disposable cameras or instant film cameras, has increased over the years (Google Trends, n.d.-a; Google Trends, n.d.-b). There are even filters that currently make digital photos taken on a smartphone look as if they were taken on an older device (Fan & Fujimoto, 2019). This shows that not only the film cameras themselves have become more popular, but that the aesthetic of film cameras is also valued more. Not only has the search interest grown over the years, but the revenue of analogue devices has also grown immensely. In 2021, the worldwide revenue for analogue devices was approximately 7.3 million US dollars, whereas the same industry had a revenue of over 12 million US dollars (Analog devices, 2022).

1.4 Analogue Cameras and Vintage Themes in Pop Culture

Despite still being considered a niche, analogue cameras can also be seen in mainstream media. Take for example the TV-show Euphoria. Choosing analogue photography over digital cameras is often a conscious decision (Biro, 2012). This popular HBO series shot most of its first season in 2019 on film and shot the entire second season in 2022 on film (The American Society of Cinematographers, 2023). When asked about the decision to shoot on film, show creator Sam Levinson says "We always imagined the show being shot on film. There is an inherent nostalgia to film. … Film has always been larger than life, and we wanted the ways in which we pushed and manipulated film stock to echo that." (Kodak, 2022). This could provide insight into why someone would choose film cameras over digital cameras. It is mentioned that nostalgia could be an inherent part of the attraction towards film. Nostalgia can be defined as "a preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favourable affect) toward objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)" (Holbrook and Schinder, 1989, p. 330). In other words, nostalgia is usually seen as a positive emotion associated with items that were well-loved in earlier time periods. If the usage of analogue devices invokes a sense of nostalgia, could it also be used as a characteristic of identity? Not only actual analogue devices but also more vintage themes are still popular. In the year 2023 alone, three major Hollywood movies are made on nostalgic or retro topics, namely Tetris, The Super Mario Bros Movie and Barbie (Lowery & Staff, 2023). The appeal of analogue devices could therefore lie not specifically in the devices themselves, but in the retro or vintage values they represent.

1.4 Authenticity of Film Cameras

Not only are film cameras simply seen online and in media, pictures and videos shot on film cameras can be perceived as more authentic (Iseli, Dux, and Loerscher, 2020). Since the number of pictures you can take with a film camera is limited, it makes you consider the pictures you take more thoroughly. The limited pictures make the user

think more about which photos to take, which can give them more meaning and provide more authentic pictures (Leiby, 2022). Furthermore, Veenstra and Kuipers (2013) argue that vintage consumption helps express a need for authenticity that is enlightened by nostalgia. In the context of film cameras, this can mean that if they are perceived as vintage they can aid in pursuing more authenticity and nostalgia. The appeal of vintage items and brands can also be seen in the photography industry. For example, Kodak decided to rebrand to appear more vintage and retro, going back to a version of the logo they used in the 70s and 80s, after they recovered from their bankruptcy (Morby, 2016). This shows that even brands can try to use a vintage aesthetic in an attempt to appear more nostalgic and authentic.

1.5 Film Camera Background

To understand the setting of this research more clearly, further information on film cameras is provided to allow for a deeper understanding of the industry as a whole.

1.5.1 Technological Advancements in the Camera Industry

The technology behind cameras has evolved enormously in the last decades. From using a mirror-based "camera" as a drawing aid in the 1500s, to the first colour photograph taken in the late 1800s to the development of digital photography and using artificial intelligence to enhance pictures, the technology has increased enormously fast in both quality and complexity (Feldman, 2019). The development of cameras accelerated towards the end of the 20th century. In 1975, the first digital camera was developed by Steven Sasson, who worked as an engineer for Eastman Kodak (Trenholm, 2021). This camera was able to provide black-and-white pictures on a screen that was specifically invented for this very camera. Skip ahead 25 years to the year 2000, and suddenly a camera is technologically developed enough to be integrated into a phone, which was then specifically called a camera phone for this extra function (Feldman, 2019).

1.5.2 Switch from Film to Digital Cameras

The transition from film cameras to digital cameras was not instant. Camera companies had to ensure that the digital cameras were easy to adapt to, as

consumers might be hesitant to adopt new technology and therefore not immediately want to switch to a new type of camera (Schiavone, 2014). To add to this, Xiao (2008) shows that easy-to-use characteristics are important in the willingness to buy digital cameras. This indicates that consumers are more likely to switch to digital cameras when the technology is easy to use, meaning that digital cameras had to conform to the already existing film cameras to make the transition easier. As the quality of digital cameras increases and the cameras become more readily available to the general market, more and more consumers switch to digital cameras (Zura, Jahan & Hass., 2001). Not every company adapted to the change to digital cameras though. Famously, the American camera company Kodak went bankrupt after they failed to adapt to the change to digital photography, despite being the first to introduce such a device (Lucas & Goh, 2009). This is a clear illustration of how digital cameras have overtaken film cameras. Even looking at the camera market now, the difference in revenue is immense. In 2022, the market segment for digital cameras led to a worldwide profit of 21.26 billion USD (Statista, 2023). Compare this to the film camera industry, which generated a total revenue of 241.73 million USD worldwide, and it is clear to see that digital cameras have completely taken over from film cameras (Mali, 2023).

1.5.3 Current Camera Industry

Currently, digital photography has evolved and even mobile phones can be equipped with cameras that can capture 12 megapixels in one single image, which means that there are 12 million pixels in one image, whereas Kodak's original model had a resolution of 0.01 megapixels in one photograph (Trenholm, 2021). This means that the camera resolution has increased by 120 times. More recent film cameras have also increased their quality. The Polaroid Go Instant Film Camera, for example, is able to capture 10 megapixels (Polaroid, n.d.). However, this is still a difference of 2 million pixels in picture quality. Additionally, in many cases digital cameras have become relatively more affordable, as the usage of film cameras continues to incur extra costs for new films and developing the pictures (Guide to Film Photography, n.d.). Whereas with digital cameras, it can be argued that no additional purchases have to be made in order to take pictures. Both film and digital photography can be

seen as a niche (Ho & Chen, 2018; Windrum & Birchenhall, 1998). Niches are generally seen as small gaps in the market with little competition (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994). Niches can be co-created with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and early consumers (Odlin & Benson-Rea, 2021). Niches could therefore provide good marketing opportunities, as there is little competition and lots of consumer involvement. This can also be seen in the evolution of niche markets, as niches have become more prevalent and can lead to increasingly tight-knit communities (Bagley, Gifford, and McKelvey, 2022). For consumers, this means that niche interests can help build communities based on common interests.

1.6 Research Problem

In the age of extreme digitisation, our lives are ruled by technological improvements. Technologies dictate the way we live, attain tastes and consume. Hence, the availability of social media platforms creates a perfect environment for people to show their identity, aided by trends that quickly spread and possibly transform people's preferences. In a world that has so much to offer, film cameras are still used despite being technologically inferior. This triggers the questions – why are we going back to the past, when the present has so much to offer? Consequently, is it just a trend or a desire for nostalgia and a need to be perceived as authentic in a mass consumption society?

Hereby, the research problem concerns identity constructions through the consumption of film cameras. Consumers have more ways to show and shape their identity than ever. It is evident that consumers are identity seekers (Arnould and Thompson, 2005) and consumption practices are Pandora's chest for them to express their true selves. Consequently, in times of mass consumption and fragmented markets, the usage of film cameras could raise prominent insights into the motivation behind the construction of consumer identities. Thus, the following research question is proposed: ***Why do consumers use film cameras to shape their identities?***

This study therefore aims to explore how the consumption of film cameras can help an individual shape their own identity. Additionally, this study intends to discover insights into consumption patterns and offer valuable findings for further research to utilise. Furthermore, knowing the consumption patterns behind analogue cameras can benefit brands in the photography industry, as they can learn whether technological advancements are worth the investments for their target group.

2. Literature review

This chapter outlines the theories and literature used that is relevant for this research. The main theories are identity theories, nostalgia theories, and theories concerning marketing through retro and iconic brands, as well as nostalgia and emotions.

2.1 Identity

The question this research is trying to answer is why consumers use analogue devices to shape their identities. But to understand that, first the concept of identity must actually be explored. When it comes to identity, there are many different perspectives and theories that can be considered.

2.1.1 Identity Theory

Identity theory shows that identity is a part of oneself and that this is shaped and developed through characteristics and relationships (Stryker, 1968). Furthermore, Stryker (1968) also shows that an individual can have several different roles that bring specific norms and values with them that shape one's identity. This is elaborated on by Burke (1980), who states that identity is not simply based on characteristics, but mainly shaped by the social interaction between people. To measure one's identity, Burke (1980) proposes the concepts of identity salience and identity control. Identity salience emphasises how important a specific part of a person's identity is to their sense of self, and identity control is the process that people take to maintain their identity. Identity control focuses on the social interactions that people have to show and regulate their identity, as well as how people deal with the discrepancy between the desired and actual identity (Burke, 1980). One thing that is not mentioned by either Burke (1980) or Stryker (1968), is that identity could also be formed around objects. If identity is formed around specific norms and values, as well as social relations, it would be beneficial to examine whether the identity can also be formed around a specific object or interest.

2.1.2 Social Identity Theory

The focus on relationships as an important aspect of identity can also be seen through social identity theory. Social identity theory is the idea that people's sense of self is influenced and shaped by interactions with people from social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). These social groups can be categorised on characteristics such as ethnicity, race, gender, nationality, and much more. Tajfel and Turner (1979) provide three steps for the forming of one's identity, namely social categorization, social identification and social comparison. Social categorization is how social groups are divided. This can be done with earlier mentioned demographic characteristics, but further research also considers interests and hobbies as a characteristic that could define a social group (Stets & Burke, 2000). When people want to find their identities, they often look at these groups and see what group they belong to. The second step is social identification. This happens when an individual starts to take over the identity of a social group. Once someone starts to identify themselves with a specific group, they will change their behaviour to conform to the group's norms and values. The last step is social comparison. This is simply the comparison between other groups. A distinction is made between "in-groups" and "out-groups", where someone will usually value their own in-groups as more important than groups they do not belong to, namely the out-groups. Social identity theory highlights the importance of social relationships of people's opinions and behaviours, and how conflict within different social groups can change social identities. While this research mainly focuses on the social relationships within the groups and the hostility towards outside groups, it does not focus on what occurs when someone from a different "in-group" socialises with their "out-group". For example, in the context of our research, what happens when one person using a film camera spends time with people who do not use film cameras?

2.1.3 Self-Categorization Theory

Building on social identity theory, there is another important theory on identity, namely self-categorization theory. In this theory, it is suggested that in self-categorization theory, on top of the identification with social groups, people also categorise themselves in different ways depending on the context and situation

(Turner et al., 1987). This means that people can switch between "in-groups" and "out-groups" depending on the context, and alter their behaviour to fit in whatever way they think is best for that specific moment. For the purposes of this research, it will be interesting to see whether people identify themselves differently based on whether or not they are participating in the consumption of analogue devices, and whether this changes based on active or passive participation.

2.1.4 Narrative Identity Theory

Another theory on identity is narrative identity theory. Narrative identity theory is developed by McAdams (1985), and suggests that individuals shape their own identity by using stories and experiences. In this theory, the cultural and social aspects are what shape personal narratives. Individuals will tell stories about themselves in a way that is culturally or socially relevant, and they express their own identities through these stories. This can be interesting to see combined with the usage of social media, as it allows consumers to build a different narrative for themselves through posts. While McAdams (1985) uses stories and experiences as a part of developing identity, it is not explored in the context of pictures that could tell stories as well. Therefore, it is interesting to see whether telling stories through pictures will also relate to identity.

2.1.5 Collective Identity Theory

Collective identity can be formed through collective action, shared meanings and social interaction (Melucci, 2013). This means that the identity of a group is shaped by the experiences that a social group has and what it means to them. Additionally, Melucci (2013) states that identity can be influenced by external events, power struggles, and conflict. This aligns with social identity theory, as social identity theory states that conflict between "in-groups" and "out-groups" can help shape the connection one has with their own social group, as well as how they identify. Collective identity theory, however, does not address how one's individual experiences affect the building of a collective identity.

2.1.6 Identity Building Processes

The main identity theories that have been mentioned are considered to be important for the identity building processes. This shows that identity can be constructed through values and norms, social interactions and self-categorization, narratives, and collective identity. While there are far more theories on identity, these theories will be relevant to the usage of film cameras as a tool to shape identity, both on an intrinsic level as well as extrinsic motivation. The majority of research tends to focus on the social aspect of identity, with how someone identifies themselves and how they want to be perceived by others. The question that arises in this research then, is to what extent can a physical shape a part of your identity?

2.1.7 Building Identity Online

One of the ways an individual can show their identity is through online platforms. Social media has influenced the way people communicate immensely, and the way identity can be formed is influenced by online networks and interactions with no geographical boundaries (Seargeant & Tagg, 2014). Additionally, Seargeant and Tagg (2014) show that the way someone presents themselves online can be different to how someone presents themselves in real life, and social media can alter the way you want to be presented. The speed at which content is consumed and shared on digital platforms has also increased immensely (Keib et al., 2022). Trends used to last a longer period of time, but due to how fast information can be shared, there are now micro-trends that can be completely over in the span of a month (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2019). Furthermore, the amount of options that are available online that can be used to build identity is huge, potentially leading to a choice overload (Chernev, Böckenholt, and Goodman, 2015). Combine the identity building practices that are done with social media and the fast-paced environment it has become, and it seems that identity building processes themselves might have to accelerate to keep up with this. However, there is no research conducted on how the pressure to constantly present and change one's identity on social media in a fast-paced environment can lead to people rejecting identity building practices online. Because of this, it will be beneficial to understand why younger people pick up

relatively old technology, despite the huge range of entertainment and technology available to them.

2.2 Nostalgia

A potential tool to help shape identity is nostalgia. In the context of analogue cameras specifically, nostalgia can be closely examined, as film cameras tend to be older and have retro characteristics to it, thus film cameras tend to be looked at through a nostalgic lens.

2.2.1 Nostalgia

The feeling of nostalgia can evoke both positive and negative emotions. Theorist Linda Hutcheon suggests that "time, unlike space, cannot be returned to—ever; time is irreversible. Nostalgia becomes the reaction to that sad fact" (Wilson, 2014; pp. 22). While nostalgia can bring melancholic emotions, it also can be perceived as a comforting feeling. To add on to this, nostalgia can relate to something that a person may not have experienced in person themselves, and is the longing feeling of a certain time. Thus, nostalgia can be interpreted as a form of escape from the world or a "slowing mechanism", i.e., "a psychological adaptation to circumstances of rapid culture change during which individuals fear becoming obsolete" (Wilson, 2014; pp. 29). This means that nostalgia can be used as a tool to cope with the fast-changing culture and acknowledge the present. So, in the eyes of consumers, nostalgia may become an important motivation to consider older or retro products. One of the earliest explanations of nostalgia in consumption practices has been provided by Holbrook (1993), who emphasises that nostalgia could be seen through three main contexts: consumers might choose products that have a vintage or retro appeal; consumers seek out products that are associated with specific times or places; and consumers may buy certain products to evoke memories from their past. Hence, these crucial contexts relate to the explanation of why people are so drawn to nostalgic consumption. In addition, Holbrook (1993) argues that nostalgia positively shapes consumer behaviour, depending on the individual's age and life stage. Therefore, nostalgia serves to provide a higher meaning to experiences that consumers have faced or have a desire to face and it can also be a stimulating

element to increase consumption positively. One of the limitations of research conducted by Holbrook (1993) is that the researcher does not include older technologies in his definition of nostalgia. Furthermore, the broad definition of nostalgia does not refer to nostalgia for a specific era or time period, which makes it a very global understanding of the concept. Therefore, more in-depth research on film cameras as a whole can help see if this theory holds up on a smaller scale as well. Specifically for this research, it is interesting to see in what consumption context nostalgia falls in when it comes to identity formation through the usage of film cameras.

2.2.2 Collective Nostalgia

While exploring the element of nostalgia it is important to notice that it can derive not only from personal experiences but shared ones too. As Zhang, Zhou, and Qin (2022) indicate, there is a clear distinction between personal- and collective nostalgia. Personal nostalgia is concerned with an individual's past experiences and is strongly defined by privacy. On the other hand, collective nostalgia is based upon a certain social identity or social group setting, through which an individual may share their past experiences and it therefore acquires an element of publicity. What is even more intriguing is that collective nostalgia possesses a characteristic of shared memory resonance. This shows that individuals who have not lived through or experienced nostalgic events can acquire nostalgic emotions from others through participating in shared memories. Therefore, it is argued that collective nostalgia can positively influence both personal and group identity, which allows individuals of the group to embrace behaviours and characteristics of such group's identity (Zhang, Zhou & Qin, 2022). In addition, according to Wildschut et al. (2014), collective nostalgia brings out the formation of an individual's social identity by resonating nostalgic experiences at a shared level, which may even make up for the loss of events that an individual may have not experienced. More evidently, the research done by Zhang, Zhou, and Qin (2022) shows that collective nostalgia can successfully establish not only group but social identity as well. This aligns with social identity theory because it shows that collective nostalgia can be formed through social relationships and experiences. The researchers used brands to collect their information on collective

nostalgia. However, the brands they used might influence the perception of nostalgia as a whole through marketing efforts. For the purposes of this research, a more specific product type is used, namely film cameras. This can add to the findings proposed by Zhang, Zhou and Qin (2022), as collective nostalgia can also be seen on a product level as opposed to a brand level.

2.2.3. Tech-nostalgia

Tech-nostalgia is a term used by Bolin (2015) to describe the emotional attachment or longing for older technologies or technological products usually from one's childhood or youth, such as vinyls, typewriters, film cameras etc.. Tech-nostalgia can manifest in various ways, such as individuals collecting analogue devices, using older versions of software or hardware, or appreciating the design and aesthetics of older technology. Hence, the motivation behind the nostalgia for analogue devices stands behind wanting to recreate vintage aesthetics, restore analogue devices in order to make a connection or sense of the older times, or take older technologies and turn them into something new for artistic purposes (Campopiano, 2014). Moreover, analogue devices can be linked not only to the feeling of nostalgia, but to a desire for a simpler and less complicated time as well. Thus, the tangibility aspect of analogue technology is by far the most apparent in the existence of tech-nostalgia. Campopiano (2014) compares the longing sentiment that analogue technology possesses to the experience of the intimacy of simply holding an analogue device or, for example, playing a vinyl record. Additionally, Campopiano (2014) argues that the definition of reflective nostalgia, which encompasses the past with the present, connotes strongly with the nostalgia for analogue technology as the usage of digital technology to translate analogue aesthetics becomes the means to reflect and empower collective memories of such. The research conducted by Campopiano (2014) focuses a lot on music, as well as vintage photography through the use of digital filters. While this offers insights into the attitude towards older technologies, a lot of this can be influenced by personal opinions on the artists and photographers instead of the process of using analogue technology. Additionally, the research emphasises the preserving aspect of the aesthetics of older technology. Therefore,

this research will investigate the process of film camera consumption in the current age and how this helps shape identity.

The duality of older technologies and the digital age provides an important component of tech-nostalgia. Chia, Jorge and Karppi (2021) express an extensive contradiction between analogue and digital technologies through the lens of nostalgia. The researchers argue that digital devices share the elements of coldness, compared to the analogue devices that maintain the warm touch: "Today, film's soft warmth feels intimate compared with cold, hard digital image, with its excess of visual information (each still contains far more detail than the human eye could ever need)" (pp.211) Thus, analogue devices are expressed as imperfect but tangible, which digital technology cannot comprehend. In that stance, digital devices and the digital world are perceived as daunting and a place where excitement and authenticity for creative practices become reserved. Therefore, in this environment, the researchers raise the question of how do we actually become ourselves to each other if the digital technologies deprive us of liveliness and unique character. So, it could be interpreted that to answer this question, people turn to tech-nostalgia as a coping mechanism from mass digitisation and to fulfil the quest of being authentic self.

One of the aspects that the researchers use is the tangibility aspect. However, the researchers do not specify what this tangibility is actually about. This could be anything, from the actual analogue devices themselves to the tools used to make the analogue device work. Because of this, it is uncertain whether the tangibility of the technology is the most important aspect of the actual aesthetic of the tangible object. To expand on this, both the tangibility of the film cameras and the tangibility of the film pictures will be discussed to add to this aspect and offer further insights.

2.2.4 Nostalgia and Authenticity

As it has been suggested that a person could combat the pressures of the digital world through the usage of older technologies, there is also an ongoing discussion that nostalgia could be a useful tactic in relation to identity formation. In this,

nostalgia and authenticity are closely related in the perspective of self-presentation. As nostalgia shares a sense of the past or certain memories a person might have, reminiscence of these experiences can elevate a sense of authenticity. Distinctively, Kelley et al. (2022) argue that reflecting on nostalgic moments creates a link to a person's sense of self, which empowers a feeling of being authentic. Consequently, nostalgia shapes the true identity in the form of an authentic self as it focuses on an individual's core values rather than external social links (Baldwin et al., 2015). Thus, authenticity stands to unify past and present self-presentation (Lasaleta and Loveland, 2019). However, the most significant finding that Baldwin et al. (2015) propose is that authenticity plays a major role in the formation of identity when it is challenged by external forces. In the times of mass digital culture, it is becoming quite difficult to express our true selves, so by using nostalgic memories, people may find a way to showcase their authentic personalities to overcome these threats, which also increases their well-being. In addition, the scholars suggest that people who feel more nostalgic in general tend to become more authentic not only when their self-project is threatened, but in everyday situations too alongside many other social roles they might possess. Nevertheless, it has been also argued by Lasaleta and Loveland (2019) that consumption practices through the prism of nostalgia add to the sense of authenticity. More precisely, people regain the empowerment of their identity when the authentic self is being challenged. As retro products are considered less authentic in nature, it perpetuates the emotion of authenticity, while the nostalgic element of such products shapes self-continuity (Lasaleta and Loveland, 2019). Therefore, the usage of nostalgia in the expression of one's identity is deeply connected with authenticity. In the research of identity and analogue cameras specifically, it is interesting to test whether authenticity is a liminal aspect of curating an identity through nostalgic emotions.

2.2.5 Nostalgic Marketing

Nostalgic marketing is focused on the usage of nostalgia in the persuasion of consumers to engage in buying behaviour (Cui, 2015). Nostalgic marketing works on the basis of incorporating certain nostalgic elements to stimulate consumers' own nostalgic feelings and capture their memories to, in return, create a purchasing desire

and motivation. However, nostalgic marketing does not only use nostalgic elements to drive up buying behaviour, it is about capturing those core memories that consumers have and turning them into a much deeper sense of why they should consume a certain product. Therefore, consumer behaviour is split into three reaction processes, containing relevant cognitive and behavioural responses. First, there is a nostalgic emotional reaction that is related to the awakening of core inner memories, such as people, events etc. Secondly, the cognitive reaction is surrounded by the examination of positive and negative inner nostalgic memories, and the possible connotation it has on the buying decisions. Last but not least, the nostalgic behavioural reaction stage implies a direct action consumers take towards nostalgic emotion in their consumption patterns (Cui, 2015). So, nostalgia marketing generally goes under the transformation of nostalgic emotion, to nostalgia cognition, which results in nostalgia behaviour and overall consumption activity. The research compiled by Cui (2015) provides a good overview of nostalgic marketing as a whole. However, as this research aims to look at shaping identity in an increasingly fast-paced digital landscape, some of this information might be outdated for the current online environment. Additionally, nostalgic marketing can vary over different industries, and the film camera industry has not yet been researched in this context.

2.2.6 Nostalgia and Identity

Nostalgia can also contribute to the feeling of identity, through social relationships and group members (Brown & Humphreys, 2002). Brown and Humphreys (2002) state "that nostalgia is often a non-specific, highly diffuse emotion, may mean that it is particularly important both to individual and group efforts at self-definition." (p.154). In other words, nostalgia could shape identity on both an individual and collective level. This means that nostalgia can be an emotion that can be examined both in an individual context, as well as its belonging to a group. The researchers focus on cultural heritage and how identity and nostalgia can bring people together. They do not discuss how individual level nostalgia can work out in a group context. To add on to the connection between nostalgia and identity, Sierra and McQuitty (2007) also find that attitudes and emotions are important in determining what

nostalgic purchases consumers make. They use social identity theory to show that emotional and cognitive factors are characteristics that lead to nostalgia purchases. This could indicate that identity characteristics can push into nostalgic purchases, while nostalgia itself can also contribute to one's identity. However, they do not discuss whether these characteristics also affect the social relationship between other people.

2.3 Branding through Emotions and Perceptions

Additionally, analogue cameras can be considered through a branding perspective, where emotional aspects of brand management or retro appeal can influence the way people consider analogue cameras.

2.3.1 Emotional Branding

Nostalgia in marketing practices has been used as a powerful tool to shape consumer choice towards certain products and brands. One of the tactics that has been noticed in recent years is emotional branding. Thompson, Rindfleisch and Arsel (2006) argue that emotional branding tactics are highly focused on the essence of a brand that connects with people's life experiences, memories and passions. Therefore, it is based on the deeper, long-term or intimate and emotional connections consumers have with brands, which perpetuates a special bond (Morrison and Crane, 2007). In this light, Jawahar and Maheswari (2009) propose that emotional branding aims to form an intimate dialogue with consumers, which also drives the credibility of the brand. The scholars elaborate that emotional branding as a marketing strategy is seen through a unique lens, which enables brands to bond with consumers on a much deeper level, capturing their feelings, minds and hearts, and injecting it into people's life. It is also noted by the authors, that emotional branding may create a space for consumers to closely relate to the brand on an identity level. Furthermore, Malar et al. (2011) suggest that brands that apply emotional branding strategy may possess a significant market differentiation objective as it allows them to acquire a central position in consumers' lives. The research done on emotional branding shows that emotions can be detrimental when it comes to the perception of brands. However, the researchers do not mention how this would operate on a product level.

If emotions affect the way brands are seen, this should also translate to the perception of specific products. Because of this, the research on film cameras can offer further insights into emotional branding.

2.3.2 Retro Brands

The concept of retro brands could elaborate immensely on the relationship consumers have with nostalgia in their consumption activities. Retro products translate the stories of a brand and that resonates greatly in the minds of consumers. Moreover, retro brands can also be upgraded to look more appealing to modern consumers, which implies that contemporary characteristics might be attached to a classic image of a product to satisfy today's demanding buyers. In addition, the metamorphosis is fueled by social media platforms as consumers share ideas of how those retro products should be perceived today, which creates a perfect environment for brand communities that might seek to influence the re-launch of their fancied brands from the past, which in fact is a distinguishing factor between retro brands and nostalgic brands (Roper and Fill, 2012). Nonetheless, it has been also argued by Roper and Fill (2012) that authenticity is a significant element that shapes a brand's strength as it allows consumers from various generations to connect with retro brands. Therefore, the significance of retro brands could be elevated through rich storytelling, which captures consumers' emotions and desire for nostalgia. As film cameras can be seen as a product with retro appeal, retro branding can be an aspect of how film cameras are perceived. There are several film camera brands that are well known, such as Kodak, Fujifilm, and Polaroid. Due to their rich history, these brands are often considered retro and bring film cameras back to life. As a consequence, the brand could have an influence on which type of camera a consumer would want to get. This is something that will be investigated in this research.

2.4 Research gap

Social media has altered how identity is shaped and the speed of identity building processes has increased. As there are so many different options to build identity, it is becoming more complex to create and maintain identity both on an individual and

group level. This research therefore offers to investigate the following gap: how do film cameras offer an escape from constant identity building practices and how can someone use that to shape identity through imperfect but genuine moments instead? Furthermore, this research adds onto existing literature on nostalgia and authenticity by examining how these feelings are evoked through film cameras. Lastly, this research adds insights into branding practices on an emotional level for retro products by examining film cameras.

3. Methodology

This chapter outlines the methods chosen to answer the following research question: "Why do consumers use film cameras to shape their identity?". Additionally, this chapter describes the measures taken to ensure validity and reliability.

3.1 Research Approach

To conduct this research, a qualitative approach is used. As this research aims to explore new motives and find new meanings in the usage of film cameras, qualitative research is the appropriate method to delve further into this (Kvale, 1994). Additionally, to gain a further understanding of how identity is shaped through the consumption patterns of film cameras and how nostalgia and authenticity play into this, a deductive approach is used. A deductive research approach is used because there are several existing theories that can apply to this phenomenon (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). Specifically, theories regarding identity are used to discover more about the consumption of film cameras.

3.2 Research Design

To answer the research question, semi-structured interviews will be conducted. Semi-structured interviews allow the researchers to gather more insight into why the participants use analogue cameras, as well as allow for further questions should certain topics need clarification (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). Additionally, laddering techniques will be used to ensure that the questions are sufficiently answered. These interviews are held online as well as in person, depending on the availability of the interviewee.

3.3 Data Collection Method

The interviews will be held with people who currently still use film cameras, such as Polaroid cameras, disposable cameras and other film cameras. The aim is to gather participants who have had little to no experience with using film cameras when they were younger, to examine the motivation on why someone would start using film cameras instead of continuing to use film cameras. To collect interviewees, purposive

sampling is used, as the participants are chosen for their specific camera consumption that is relevant to the research itself. Purposive sampling allows the researchers to find key groups that are highly relevant to the research question, as well as have the answers needed to conduct an in-depth analysis (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). To increase the sample size, snowball sampling will be used to find further participants. An assumption is made that people interested in film photography will most likely know at least one more person who could be beneficial for this research. For the sampling size, the aim of this data collection process is to reach the saturation level, where further interviews do not provide any extra findings (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). As a result, 13 interviews will be conducted, with an age range of 20-31 years old, with 10 female participants and 3 male participants. All participants are from Western and Northern European countries, with the interviews all being held in English. These interviews will be recorded and transcribed to gather the data. Additionally, the interviewees will be made aware that their responses will be anonymised and the data used for research purposes only. When the interviews are being held, one of the researchers will be in charge of conducting the research, while the other researcher takes notes and asks any questions that the conducting researcher might have missed at the end. As mentioned before, the interviews will be semi-structured, and the basic questions attempt to reveal consumption patterns on film cameras, as well as discover motives for why the interviewees use film cameras. These questions involve demographic questions, questions on habits and usage of film cameras, technical questions, and questions about the social setting film cameras can be used in. To do this, a topic guide was created, allowing the researchers to focus on specific elements that they wanted to gain information on that followed in a logical manner (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). To start conducting the interviews, a base for the questions was developed, with open questions asking the interviewees about how and why they use film cameras. The base for these questions can be found in the Appendix. These questions will be slightly altered during the interviewing process to allow for some flexibility, as well as allow for gathering more information on further topics that could arise. Additionally, some of the interview questions might already be answered in one single question by talkative interviewees, so some interview questions were not explicitly asked.

3.4 Data Analysis

For the analysis, the researchers first familiarise themselves with the collected data, and then reduced and coded into themes to allow for a better interpretation. A narrative analysis approach is used, as this allows the researchers to examine the stories and ideas that have been shared by the interviewees and draw themes from that (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). To construct these themes, the researchers look for textual context such as similarities, repetition, differences, and other hints that could indicate a theme (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Additionally, how people talk about certain topics can also be a way to analyse the data to find themes (Rennstam & Wästerfors, 2018). These themes can then be analysed to see if they provide any insights into film cameras and how it helps build identity. Excerpts from interviews will be used to support the insights gained into analogue cameras and the motivation to use them.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Furthermore, the data that is collected has to be checked to ensure its validity and reliability. To ensure validity, the researchers have to consider their own preconceived notions and biases to analyse the data as objectively as possible. Additionally, when the interviews are being conducted, the researchers ensure to have as little as possible input into the interviewees' responses, to avoid influencing them to answer a certain way. One of the researchers themselves also owns and has used film cameras before. Because of this, it is important for the other researcher to ensure that no personal experiences are reflected in any of the questions. It also has to be taken into account that the interviewees already use film cameras, and are therefore more likely to be biased towards film photography as a whole.

4. Analysis

This chapter discusses the analysis of the collected data, as well as the interpretations and insights gained from it. For further analysis, the collected data is divided into four main themes (**table 1**). The themes that are discussed are: reminiscence of the past, excitement and uncertainty of older technology, feeling the moment, and sharing the experience and results.

Table 1. Summary of interview generated themes and subthemes

Theme	Sub-theme	Explanation
Reminiscence of the Past	Evoking memories	Participants shared memories of parents having film cameras around, having childhood photos taken by a film camera and the importance of keeping a tradition of photo albums
	Old-school aesthetics	Most significant motivation for using analogue cameras, stated by the participants, is old-school and retro aesthetic of film photos that digital filters cannot emulate
	Nostalgia	Participants stated that the looks of film photos bring nostalgic feelings as well as remind them of their childhood
Excitement and Uncertainty of Older Technologies	Development process	Participants shared that the developing process brings excitement and memories of the moments captured, which adds to the overall experience
	Added value of imperfections	Interviewees argued that film camera imperfections add value to the photos, as they look more genuine and bring stronger emotions
	Technical aspects	Most of the participants noted that the issues of quality and cost of film cameras, however, at the same, combined with the simplicity of use, made them appreciate the photos and the process more
Feeling the Moment	Creating long lasting memories	Being more present while taking film pictures, capturing memories of the process and the people involved in it were reported by the interviewees as the most valuable aspects of analogue cameras
	Capturing the right picture	Limitation of how many pictures one can take with a film camera both makes participants more mindful about the moments they capture, and adds stress to make that one picture perfect
	Photo walls and memories	Majority of the interviewees expressed that they display their film photos on the walls or photo books as a part of looking at the memories more often
	The unknown pictures	Not knowing how the pictures are going to turn out is expressed as exciting and charming by the majority of the participants as it brings memories or reveals moments they forgot or did not know existed
	Feeling authentic	Some participants have expressed that in film photos they may see true selves or a part of their personality, and feel more authentic than others when using a film camera
Sharing the Experience and Results	Legacy of film pictures	As suggested by the majority of the participants, tangibility aspect of film pictures adds appreciation and value to the whole experience
	Taking photos with friends	Using analogue cameras with friends as a group activity has been emphasised the most by the participants
	Feeling more connected	The interviewees expressed that sharing film photos with their friends or knowing fellow film camera users makes them more connected

These themes have been developed to reflect the consumption of film cameras in a chronological order. First, the appeal of the film camera and why one would get into film cameras are reflected in reminiscence of the past. Secondly, the learning period when it comes to the technological aspects are seen in excitement and uncertainty of older technologies. Thirdly, the actual photo-taking process and how it makes individuals feel is captured by feeling the moment. Lastly, how the final pictures are shared and cherished are captured by sharing the experience and results. The themes are specifically chosen to show the customer journey of someone who wants to get into film photography experiences, as well as how it helps shape their identity along the way. To illustrate these themes better, several sub-themes are created. These themes will be supported by excerpts from the data and explained further in the discussion.

4.1 Reminiscence of the past

The first theme that is discussed is the reminiscence of the past. This theme focuses on the nostalgic elements that draw consumers to film cameras, as well as looking back on previous experiences and aesthetics. Several subcategories are created. These categories are evoking memories, old-school aesthetics, and nostalgia.

4.1.1 Evoking Memories

The subtheme of evoking memories explores the first film camera experiences and how they help shape the patterns and perceptions of film camera usage. The interviewees were asked to elaborate on their childhood memories and their first experience of photography. It is evident that all of the interviewees grew up in a digital era, however, the influence of parents is visible when asked about the participants' first experience with using film cameras:

> *My parents owned a film camera, I probably took a few pictures with it.*
> *(Interviewee 7)*

> *I think the first experience was probably with the film camera when I was a child. (Interviewee 8)*

[when asked whether they used film cameras when they were younger] when I was really young, I got some from my mom and dad. (Interviewee 9)

We used to have [a film camera], but I'm not quite sure if I used it. I can't remember it, but I remember having film around, not developed film. My parents used to use them, and all my childhood photos are taken in film. (Interviewee 10)

And when I turned 18 or 19, something like that, my dad gave me his film camera, and since then, sometimes I'm using that. (Interviewee 13)

However, for other participants, it was not the influences of family members but social media that was the deciding factor in getting a film camera. For these participants, the appeal tends to be more that it looks cool as opposed to learning it directly from family members:

When I started going on Tumblr and stuff. When I was like 14/13 like seeing this like. Oh, you can capture this memory, be there, and it's aesthetic." (Interviewee 2)

I was influenced by the influencers on social media. And then a friend of mine she also pretty much at the same time got the same one. So she also influenced me. And then some friends have seen me with a film camera, they thought that it was very cool and they bought film cameras. (Interviewee 8)

My first experience was literally when I saw, I think a guy online, like, you know, he made a video about film cameras and how he shoots. And I was like, because electronic cameras are so difficult. And I was like, wow, okay, that's much even easier than I thought. (Interviewee 12)

The first experience with film cameras can therefore be seen as something that is not necessarily shared by older generations, but also shared and made visible through online channels.

Moreover, one thing that was mentioned during the interviews is that the creation of photo albums was something several participants distinctly remembered when it comes to film photography:

My mom took all the pictures of us when we were kids with her film camera. And also I have this very old school album. (Interviewee 1)

I was influenced mainly by my dad, to be quite honest. You know, when the old album, I was like, Wow, okay, that's amazing. You know, it's probably more sentimental than anything. (Interviewee 12)

While not all these participants had their first experiences with film cameras through their family, they do remember the photo albums that their parents made and think about them fondly. Interestingly, four of the participants mentioned that they still create their own photo albums:

I have a photo book, of course, that I put them in. But if they're like really pretty or special, I put a lot of my pictures around my house. (Interviewee 5)

I like to have photos. I have an album and I collect them. (Interviewee 10)

Every holiday I go to I make complete picture book, so I print all of them, and then I like put them in a book myself and write things with it, and for me I love looking back at those books, showing those books to my friends, but I would never go through my phone and say hey, this was this waterfall you know. (Interviewee 11)

It reminds me of my childhood, because my dad used to take pictures, and my mom was making photo books of memories. So, I kinda like keeping on the tradition, and the they do feel more special to me. (Interviewee 13)

The photos that end up in a photo book tend to be looked at more fondly than a digital camera roll, as well as looked onto in a more positive light. Thus, memories of parents having film cameras around, having childhood photos taken by a film camera and the importance of keeping a tradition of photo albums evoke a significant motivation for the usage of film cameras even in the world of digital cameras.

4.1.2 Old-school Aesthetics

For many participants the appeal of film photography is partly due to the looks and feel of a film picture. The aesthetics are often discussed, as well as the appeal of the way the instant film pictures look:

This feature of going back in the old days, whatever it is, if it's a little bit of tone, of yellowness, or whatever it is, I think it's very fascinating, or I find that very aesthetic. (Interviewee 1)

I think it's also like the main reason that drew me to the polaroids. (Interviewee 2)

They just look older, you know, you don't even need to put a filter on it to make it look nice. I don't know, I just love the vibe of the pictures. (Interviewee 9)

There's a different feeling about it. <...> a different vibe to it, like the grain and the colours are different. (Interviewee 13)

Also having a retro look over the picture is another reason. (Interviewee 4)

They already have an old feeling to them. A different, different style than digital cameras. (Interviewee 10)

I'm very pleased with the aesthetics. Because it kind of looks like a filter even on the photos. I'm not a professional photographer, but sometimes I feel like I could take some pretty cool pictures that look very beautiful. (Interviewee 8)

The specific aesthetic that film cameras provide is therefore a characteristic that many of the interviewees felt drawn to. To examine this further, they were asked about the possibility of digital filters that try to emulate the look of film photography. While many have heard of or tried it before, it looks like they prefer actual film photos over any filters or apps that exist:

Back in the days when I was using Instagram, I always had some sort of filter that was like old school or something. I was trying to capture the same feeling that the film camera is giving to the pictures. But I don't know if they managed to really fulfil that desire. (Interviewee 1)

Why would I put energy into editing so much of a picture to make it look like it's a totally different picture if I can get a film camera? (Interviewee 5)

I feel like it's a very cheap way of trying to have the same effect, but it's so obvious that it's not the real version that it looks strange to me. (Interviewee 11)

The old-fashioned aesthetic seems to be one of the most appealing aspects of film cameras as a whole. To add to this, one participant shared that they did not like the look of the newer Polaroid cameras, and specifically got a retro-style camera because they think it looked more appealing and matched better with the overall experience:

I would add that for me the look of the camera really important cause I have the retro one which I don't know if you know what it looks like, but I prefer it to be the other ones. They're plastic, right? Yellow, green, pastel colours. But for me it doesn't fit this whole experience. (Interviewee 11)

This can relate to the iconic look of film cameras, and how deviations from that can be less attractive towards more old-fashioned consumers.

4.1.3 Nostalgia

As analogue cameras tend to be thought of through a nostalgic lens, it is unsurprising that several participants mentioned that the look of film cameras themselves and the pictures you take with them have a nostalgic appeal:

Thinking of fun, memories, things that look aesthetic in that way, perhaps maybe more casually is for analogue cameras for me because they have this kind of nostalgia and memory kind of sentiment and ingrained into the whole practice. (Interviewee 2)

When I develop film pictures, I feel surprised sometimes and nostalgic. (Interviewee 10)

I think they really like pleasing and yeah, they have like, certain nostalgia feeling about it. (Interviewee 12)

Looking at the responses from the interviewees, it can be said that they choose film cameras for their nostalgic appeal. Additionally, it reminds them of their childhood, which relates to consumers searching for items associated with previous times:

It gives me a nostalgic feel, because the film cameras are usually like older cameras and remind me of my childhood. And yeah, mostly nostalgic feelings. (Interviewee 13)

One respondent also mentioned that the quality of film cameras themselves is not as good, but that the nostalgic feelings it evokes is enough to make up for it:

The quality is not gonna be as good so that's why it's always based on the nostalgia element. (Interviewee 4)

4.2 Excitement and Uncertainty of Older Technology

The second theme focuses on the excitement and uncertainty of using older technology. This emphasises how analogue cameras tend to be harder to use, as well as have less technological options and specifications that make it generally less convenient compared to modern equipment. This theme is divided into several categories, namely the development process, the added value of imperfections, and technical limitations.

4.2.1 Development Process

One of the main aspects of film photography as a whole is that, compared to digital photography, the process of taking and developing pictures is more complicated. The majority of the interviewees used Polaroid or instant film cameras, whereas a part of the interviewees used disposable film cameras as well. While there is a difference in how long the development process takes, it is still more time and money intensive than taking pictures with digital cameras.

For film cameras with a roll that needs to be developed, there is a bigger level of anticipation and excitement when waiting to develop the pictures. In fact, the waiting adds to the process, as it adds more value from it and makes you look back on moments that you did not even think you had pictures of:

> *Excitement before getting your photos back is something that I really enjoy and you don't have that with a regular camera. (Interviewee 8)*

> *Yeah, like I have a roll of film in my closet that I didn't develop. It's from like half a year ago so it's gonna be amazing when I develop it and I see the pictures. (Interviewee 9)*

> *I like that after, uh, after some time has passed, you get the picture developed and you can relive the moment you took your picture in <...> It takes a long time, but also I think it kind of makes it special. (Interviewee 10)*

> *I really like to use film cameras when I go on holidays. Of course I'm still using like my phone. But I feel like there's some kind of different feel to it when I use a film camera and I don't see how it turned out yet. Then I get them developed, and then you get really like nice feeling to look back to it what I was doing on that vacation. (Interviewee 13)*

For instant film cameras, where the process of waiting for a picture to develop is a lot shorter, it was still seen as a positive aspect:

> *I like the whole process of taking the picture and waiting for it to develop. (Interviewee 2)*

> *I love the progress, I love to wait for those pictures. (Interviewee 5)*

> *<...> that's what makes it special. That's the mystery of it. You have no idea what it's gonna look like. It's a surprise. (Interviewee 5)*

While others may think the waiting period could be considered inconvenient, the film camera consumers liked the fact that it was not instant and added a level of delayed gratification to it.

4.2.2 Added Value of Imperfections

When it comes to taking and developing pictures on a film camera, there is a lot of room for error. It is challenging to see whether the framing of the picture is correct, there is no picture preview and the development process can go wrong as well. Because of this, it is more likely that photos taken with film cameras are less than perfect. Specifically, when compared to built-in phone cameras, which are quick and have a high-quality lens, the pictures can be seen as qualitatively inferior. However, even when the pictures do not turn out great, the pictures still have value to them:

> *I definitely also have some pictures on my wall that, I'm like, that's not my best picture but I still appreciate them. (Interviewee 3)*

> *Well, the quality is definitely worse. But I wouldn't want it to be otherwise. (Interviewee 11)*

One of the reasons why the flaws do not seem to bother the participants is because they think the feelings and reactions to the film pictures are more genuine because of the imperfections:

> *I do think that it is a better thing that the picture comes out as it was taken, and the whole setting is as it was. So I would rather have, like, a very authentic, kinda ideal or realistic picture of yourself by not fixing it afterwards, and then like trying to be okay with that. (Interviewee 1)*

It gives genuineness, you know it's not edited. So many things are edited to be perfect and with film pictures you just know it's real. (Interviewee 4)

Not only do the imperfections come across as more perfect, several participants have also mentioned that it is a part of using the film camera. Additionally, they think it makes the entire process more valuable and unique:

That's something that just comes with it, which is a charm of the camera. But also a limitation which does make me appreciate digital cameras as their own thing. <...> I think more generally gets viewed as an aesthetic that's a little imperfect. (Interviewee 2)

There's so much fun and it's part of the experience. It's kind of funny. There's a thumb in there or something or the lighting's a bit going. So it could turn out great, and it could still be a great picture. (Interviewee 9)

I have one selfie with a friend, or something which looks very imperfect, but it's because we had to take a selfie in Budapest and we asked this woman to take it. She was very old and didn't understand it at all. But then I like that about it. So I think if you wanna have the perfect aesthetic picture you shouldn't use a film camera nowadays. (Interviewee 11)

Even when participants clearly state that it is annoying that the pictures do not turn out the way they envisioned it, they still think about it positively:

[when asked about the lack of editing options for film cameras] It's annoying, but I try to enjoy it anyways, it adds a charm to the picture. (Interviewee 7)

Additionally, one participant even mentioned that the imperfections invoke a sense of nostalgia that makes the pictures more special:

I think with film there is this nostalgia feeling that comes from those imperfections as well. Like film emulates the mind, because our memories are imperfect as well. (Interviewee 12)

Therefore, feelings play a huge role when it comes to analogue cameras. People tend to think that the pictures taken with film cameras are more genuine than digital cameras. Thus, film photographs make people think they capture emotion more clearly than digital photography can. While the pictures taken could look similar, the interviewees share that they feel stronger emotions when they take film photos or see the end result:

Yeah, they're very different. I don't know why, but I feel like in every Polaroid picture I've taken me and my friends look very, very happy, and I know we are very happy, but I feel like the Polaroid pictures are the only pictures that maybe capture the emotion, and the vibe. (Interviewee 11)

When I'm with a large group of people and we want to take, like, a group photo or sometimes when people don't know that I'm taking pictures of them. So secretly. You see the full reaction because then when I'm taking the picture, it's not scripted. You get to see the full reaction of people, not fake smiles. (Interviewee 10)

You should try it because you can get the unscripted pictures that are real. You can translate the emotion better than the digital camera. (Interviewee 10)

4.2.3 Technical Aspects

The difference in usage of film photography and digital photography can be an entrance barrier to getting into film cameras. While there are differences in usage between the types of film cameras, they tend to be quite similar in how they work. For the interviewees though, this was not an issue when getting into film photography. Several people mentioned that it was easy to use and that the lack of technological aspects even made it more appealing to them:

Instax is like, very, very basic, hard to do something wrong. <...> I really like it, because it's quite easy to use, like you just have to turn a button. It's on. Take the picture, and it's done. (Interviewee 3)

Sometimes I just want simplicity. I'm not really bothered messing around with all my camera settings to get a picture. (Interviewee 4)

I think that everyone can use a film camera, it's not that hard. (Interviewee 5)

Not everyone thought it was that easy though, as the following interviewees had some issues with getting the cameras to work the way they wanted to:

I think that taking pictures is a lot harder than you can imagine because with your phone it's very easy and the people who do it with a film camera, they have to have skills, they have to know what they're doing. And it's not as simple as it looks. (Interviewee 10)

In some situations it felt easy and like that time I told you how I thought great pictures came but actually they were not so great that kinda hits me back. So in that situation it was quite hard, because I thought I did everything right, but it turned out I didn't. (Interviewee 13)

While the technological aspect of using a new type of device could be something that stops people from getting into a new hobby, in the case of film cameras it tends to be something that is not hard to figure out and even adds to the process.

However, if the simplicity aspect of film cameras is something that is appealing to some interviewees, there are other technical limitations to keep in mind when using analogue cameras. For film cameras specifically, there are limits to the amounts of pictures you can take, as well as the amount of settings you can change and that is highlighted by some of the participants:

> *You take one picture, you need to make sure your lighting's correct, and then maybe the lighting is wrong. And it's like, Oh, I have to throw this one away and have to take a new one over with a disposable camera. (Interviewee 2)*

> *The quality is not gonna be as good so that's why it's always based on the nostalgia element. (Interviewee 4)*

> *The picture that you took with film has a bit more meaning to you because it just has a certain amount of images that you can do. So yeah, it's a bit more limiting. And I think what's limited to people, you know, they would love more and appreciate more as well. (Interviewee 12)*

Not only are there technical limitations, but taking pictures with film cameras is also relatively expensive, as you constantly have to buy new sheets or rolls to take more pictures:

> *You know that every picture is costing you money. So in that like analogue cameras, also more mindful. Is this the right moment to take this picture? Because I mean, maybe there are better moments today? (Interviewee 2)*

> *That is also kind of expensive because it is like a euro per picture that you take. If I run out of film then it will take a while before I order a new package. I usually order it when I know there's like a special event coming up. (Interviewee 3)*

4.3 Feeling the Moment

The third theme that is discussed concerns feeling the moment when using analogue cameras. This theme focuses on the experience of using film cameras and how users

feel while capturing important moments. The majority of the participants used their film cameras mainly at events, such as travelling, holidays, parties or other social gatherings. The sub-themes identified are creating long-lasting memories, capturing the right picture, photo walls and memories, the unknown pictures and feeling authentic.

4.3.1 Creating Long Lasting Memories

Film cameras are tied quite significantly to the emotions consumers feel when using them. In fact, most of the correspondents identified the feeling of being in the moment while capturing a particular photo. Interviewee 6 expressed overall emotion when seeing the end photo:

> *When I look at film pictures, I feel joy.*

Another motivation for developing strong feelings over analogue photos was that due to the nature of film cameras, it transcends the moment into a memory that goes far beyond what digital camera photos may achieve:

> *Digital camera captures reality, like you could put the phone there and it's like, Oh, this is exactly what I'm seeing but it's also nice to kind of warp that reality into maybe a more sentimental memory. <...> the oldness of the analog also kind of makes it more into a memory than like a digital picture. (Interviewee 2)*

> *It makes the moment more special. (Interviewee 8)*

> *It's memories, when you take polaroids you make memories. (Interviewee 6)*

While it is clear that most of the participants have stated the importance of capturing a moment with a film camera, it has been also noted that the whole process of taking a photo could be seen as a long-lasting memory. One participant remembered an analogue picture taken with friends and how the moment leading to the picture was captured with that particular photo:

> *The picture that we have with my Swiss friends. We didn't have nice outfits. We've been in the summer cottage, everybody's, like not having makeup on. But the moment was just worth to capture. I think everybody was very copy of what we had to experience together as friends. <...> It's so much more than just taking a photo with your camera. (Interviewee 1)*

Charmingly enough, what has been seen from the interview data is that taking film pictures with friends is very important for the participants. In fact, the majority of the interviewees emphasised the worthiness of having moments captured with friends and the lasting feeling it leaves:

> It's all about making memories with friends, and having pictures of this, and that's fun. (Interviewee 5)

> I'm already very connected with my friends, you just do it to capture moments with whom you're spending it with. (Interviewee 9)

Hence, one interviewee shared a specific goal that connects to the motivation of taking Polaroid pictures, which is to capture memories with friends that are not around frequently enough and to embody those meeting moments by writing down something special on the physical photo:

> I have this specific purpose for my polaroid photos. I usually bring them when I am going to see that friend, because I have a lot of friends that I don't see, like, every week. And if I know we're gonna do something fun or special, whatever then I bring it. I can take the picture in that setting. And then usually, I write down the date, and like a little small drawing representing what we did. (Interviewee 11)

4.3.2 Capturing the Right Picture

The amount of pictures that one can take with a film camera tends to be limited. Film sheets usually come in sets of 20 and film rolls tend to be 24 or 36 pictures, and that is all the pictures someone can take without having to switch to a new roll. Because of this, there is usually only one opportunity to take the right picture. Therefore, the participants express the need to be more mindful of the photos they take as it concerns the cost and the limitation of shots a film has:

> They are taken in the moment and you only get one shot. (Interviewee 10)

> With the digital camera, um, you can snap an infinite amount of pictures while on film you either have 24 shots or 36 shots so you take much more time in composing. Like it changed my mindset about how I just compose and everything. (Interviewee 12)

<...> I do feel like they're worth more, because they're like a single shot. (Interviewee 3)

Although, when asked about the feelings the participants usually experience using a film camera, one participant mentioned that these limitations also add to the desire to capture the best photo you can at that particular moment, which may cause a certain amount of stress for the person:

Maybe some pressure that it has to be a good one because you only have one try. (Interviewee 8)

Nevertheless, the majority of the interviewees argued that due to the limited amount of film pictures you can take, it does make them feel more present in that particular moment, opposed to digital photography. The complex nature of digital cameras and fast-paced culture may motivate people to look for simplicity in capturing true moments. Thus, the participants have elaborated that the effort of taking film photos only makes the moments and experience as a whole more valuable:

I want to embrace what is going on now, here and now, rather than from my phone. I guess I'm resisting the kind of culture of capturing everything with a phone all the time or carrying your phone around all the time. (Interviewee 1)

Nowadays everything is in abundance, right? So I like that you really have to take the time and the effort. While everything else is so quick, and I also think that's because I'm very much like a vibe person. (Interviewee 11)

I think nowadays I tend to really obsess over pictures too much. If I take with my phone, when I ask someone to take a picture of me or I take pictures, someone, then I'm like checking the picture right away how it turned out, and then we end up spending so much time trying to get the perfect picture. I don't spend so much time worrying about the outcome, and I think that's the beauty of it. (Interviewee 13)

4.3.3 Photo Walls and Memories

When asked what the participants do with the pictures they take and develop, the vast majority of the participants mentioned they either had the pictures displayed on the wall or put in a photo book:

<...> it does make me always smile when I'm looking at it. It is there by my window, and when I'm doing my schoolwork I sometimes see the picture of them like, Oh, great moment! (Interviewee 1)

In addition, some participants expressed that they have been either influenced by social media to decorate their walls with film pictures:

I actually have the very first picture I ever get right in front of me, because I have a wall with all of the pictures. I had seen on Youtube videos of people making, like, picture walls like I have in front of me. And I was like, Oh, that looks really cool. (Interviewee 3)

Or they have influenced their friends to do the same by showing off their picture walls to them:

I used to have on my wall in my home where it was, like full of polaroid pictures. So, it got a lot of attention, and after that I know quite a few people who also got polaroid cameras. (Interviewee 13)

Moreover, the reason behind exposing film photos in a physical place has to do with wanting to remember them and frequently going through a memory lane when seeing them in close to eye setting:

I like to go back to the pictures and look at them. I had a display of polaroids for a while. (Interviewee 7)

Yes definitely. The tangibility aspect of film camera pictures makes me appreciate them more. I hang them on the wall in my room and I like to look back at them. It's a more special memory. (Interviewee 9)

Thus, analogue photos that are physically displayed on walls may serve as a much higher appreciation element for the memories they hold. Hence, it also could be interpreted as a daily reminder of who you want to be or who you want to be seen as.

4.3.4 The Unknown Pictures

It is evident that with film cameras you do not have the luxury of getting an exact preview of your picture before you take it. Therefore, the picture itself can be a big surprise, both positively and negatively. Specifically for non-instant film cameras, the time between taking the picture and seeing the pictures can be significant. When asked about aspects of the development process of film photos, most of the correspondents expressed it as a positive and almost charming element it adds to the whole experience:

> *You know you can never expect what comes out. You have this image in your head, how this scenery looks right now, then, you take a picture, and I don't know how it's gonna end up. So I think this has a special feel to it. It's a good thing, maybe sometimes it's a bad thing. (Interviewee 10)*

> *This is something that makes it more fun because it's like Russian roulette. You don't know if the picture is okay or not. There's so much fun and it's part of the experience. It's kind of funny. There's a thumb in there or something or the lighting's a bit going. So it could turn out great, and it could still be a great picture. (Interviewee 9)*

> *It's usually not what you expect actually, because when you take an image, you have one expectation, but when you get the image in return, sometimes you're shocked how better it looks. (Interviewee 12)*

> *Pictures came out extremely different than I imagined. So maybe it's a good thing, you know. It's not how you imagine they will come out? That's like, what's cool about film cameras. (Interviewee 13)*

However, the process of developing film photos may also bring back the excitement that a person might have felt at that exact moment. Some of the participants compared it to experiencing the memory once again when seeing the photos developed after a certain amount of time:

I like that after, uh, after some time has passed, you get the picture developed and you can relive the moment you took your picture in. (Interviewee 10)

While other correspondents emphasised that developed photos bring the element of surprise because they either forgot that they made those particular shots or did not even know that somebody took of them:

You don't remember the pictures you took so afterwards, when you develop it, you get pictures you didn't know you had. (Interviewee 9)

One time I received a Polaroid after my friend's birthday party that I don't remember. It was a photo of us in the middle of the lake. In the middle of the night in, like, spring swimming. And we were a little bit drunk, and I don't remember the photo, but when I received it in the morning, it was quite funny to look at. (Interviewee 10)

Therefore, it could be implied that both the anticipation of film photos and the initial view of developed ones brings out a significant amount of excitement, which positively resonates with the overall usage of analogue cameras and elevates the value of the pictures themselves. Nevertheless, Polaroid photos differ in terms of the developing process as users can get the pictures almost instantly. Although, when asked the participants that use Polaroid cameras, some of them mentioned that the developing process could also be considered charming even if it takes a short time, and if you have someone to wait for a photo with, it adds to the whole experience too:

You also have to wait 5 min before you actually can see the picture and stuff like that. I think, yeah, I think that does make them like a little bit worth more than just regular digital camera pictures. (Interviewee 3)

I like that It's not perfect, and I like waiting together, looking at the picture to see if it turned out well. (Interviewee 11)

The usage of analogue cameras nowadays could be considered a niche activity. However, this experience may help people reflect their personalities better than digital cameras can. One of the reasons for that could be tied to the possibility of imperfections in the film photos. While with your phone it is so easy to take photos and see the results instantly, it could create an unfavourable environment for insecurities, versus with a film camera, it is all about the moment only:

> *I feel like, if you take a picture of me with my friend on a digital camera, it first of all, I usually become super insecure because the pictures are so good and you start looking at all the details. While the Polaroid camera seems to capture the happiness and then all the other details they're not even in the picture. (Interviewee 11)*

> *<...> people are less important than the context. (Interviewee 1)*

Therefore, specifically, the inability to edit the photos or the imperfections those photos may have could be a significant motivation to experience authentic self:

> *I kinda like that aspect of it, though, sometimes with my digital camera I've edited so many pictures that some of them are like, maybe I should just let it be authentic even though they might not look good. (Interviewee 4)*

> *I think that you can see the true person with a film camera more because the moment is unscripted. More real. (Interviewee 10)*

On the other hand, some may say that moments that they have captured with a film camera are closer to who they are:

> *Yeah, I'd say so, because if you look at all of the pictures on the wall, it's completely different. It's like things I've done with my friends and events… (Interviewee 4)*

Or express a particular side of them due to the choice of experiences they have captured on a film camera:

Because I only take photos with a film camera of things that I consider really interesting or really beautiful. With a phone camera you take so many photos so maybe with a film camera it's more like a section of my personality, like aspects that could influence my personality. (Interviewee 8)

Nevertheless, what is more interesting is that when asked a provoking question of whether they have felt superior for taking film pictures, they stated that they had this feeling or a certain situation made them feel superior:

Yes, I felt superior for using a film camera. (Interviewee 9)

A lot of times at concerts especially, I look around and all of the people use their phones, filming every song and I feel like that's such a waste. Like, you're not seeing anything, you're on your phone and it's not recording anything special either. And then I'm like, hey, look at my film camera is like better than yours. (Interviewee 5)

I think once, when I was a teenager, and I went to an event. <...> I really felt maybe superior, because I was using a film camera, and I thought like I'm so cool when everyone else is taking pictures with their digital cameras. (Interviewee 13)

While, other participants identified that the word superior could be considered quite harsh, yet instead of this, they felt more authentic than others in a way:

I feel more authentic. I could see how people would feel superior, because it's like more hipster type of thing. (Interviewee 4)

I wouldn't say superior. <...> I think people are still shocked nowadays because when they see me taking pictures and they see like, wow, wow, like that's a film camera. Do they still make film cameras? I said, Yeah. So yeah, people are surprised sometimes because people think, you know, Oh, it's like an old thing, you know, like an old, you know, like thing of the past, as they say. (Interviewee 12)

Moreover, another interesting aspect of film cameras identified by the interviewees is the elimination of photos when they no longer reflect their current personalities. Few interviewees reflected on the photos they took with their former partners and the need to destroy those pictures after the relationship has ended:

I never got the film developed, because, like a lot of those pictures were with my now ex boyfriend. And then half of the role was finished, and I was like <...> I need to get the photos developed and I need to throw away half of them so that's why I gave up on that. (Interviewee 2)

<...> I had them [film photos] on display on my wall for a very long time and did a little DIY, like a photo frame, but there were a lot of pictures with my ex in it, so I took them out. (Interviewee 7)

4.4 Sharing the Experience and Results

As mentioned earlier, people feel more authentic in film pictures and look happier and it does not matter whether the photo is perfect or not, people are still sharing them either in person or by using photo walls/books to display them. Hereby, the usage of film cameras could be considered a group activity for the vast majority of the interviewees. Thus, the last theme that is discussed is sharing the experience and results. This theme focuses on the social aspect of taking film pictures and sharing the photos with friends and family. The subcategories for this theme are the legacy of film pictures, taking photos with friends, and feeling more connected.

4.4.1 Legacy of Film Pictures

One of the most stand-out attributes of film cameras is the ability to get physical photos. Especially with Polaroid cameras, a person can have a photo within seconds of taking it. Therefore, compared to digital cameras, film cameras can provide physical copies of the moments captured and the tangibility aspect of it adds value to the photo as a whole:

I think if it is developed like you have a physical photo, it is more special for me than having it on your phone or on your computer just because of the physical format. (Interviewee 10)

Honestly, I think a lot of people like having pictures and I think a lot of people like having memories that they can hold instead of just like that on a screen. (Interviewee 3)

Hence, the physical format of a photo may not only make people appreciate them stronger but look back at them more frequently than digital photos:

With my phone I have thousands of pictures and I never look back at them. With film cameras I love that you have a physical thing. <...> Everything is so easy, available, so it's nice to have something physical. (Interviewee 9)

<...> there must be so many pictures I take on my digital camera that I never look at again, whereas if I have one that prints it instantly by now, I'm gonna look at it again. That's the main reason why I want a film camera. (Interviewee 4)

In addition, a few interviewees also expressed that they tend to take digital pictures of the film photos and share them on their social media accounts so that the moments are seen by their friends online, which allows the photos to gain a certain level of legacy:

I feel like, that's also a very typical thing to do to put the polaroid [photo] in an aesthetic place and then take a picture and then post it. Also the fact that it's not just the picture that you're sharing, you're also sharing the polaroid around, and you can put it in an aesthetic place and say, edit this cool thing. (Interviewee 2)

<...> if the pictures are good, I share them on my social media. (Interviewee 13)

4.4.2 Taking Photos with Friends

Taking pictures with a film camera, for the majority of interviewees, was considered a group activity. They expressed that they mainly take pictures with or of their friends, rather than doing it themselves only. It was also emphasised that it is a significant activity during parties or other social gatherings, which makes those experiences more valuable:

I tend to take it to parties, so I can take pictures of my friends, or they can take pictures. (Interviewee 3)

I usually use the camera on special occasions when I want to be surprised with the outcome of the pictures. And when I'm usually with a group of people so that not only I can get to see the memories later, but also other people. (Interviewee 10)

Moreover, one particular participant identified that the biggest motivation for using a Polaroid camera was to only take pictures with friends and keep only one copy so it could be added to a personal collection:

With Polaroid I specifically use it to take pictures of me and my friends. So I have this thing that I want one picture with every good friend of mine, and that's the only time I use it. So I never take 2 pictures with the same person, and I collect them all. (Interviewee 11)

4.4.3 Feeling More Connected

As mentioned before, most of the participants indicated that they use film cameras with friends, therefore, the sharing aspect becomes significantly evident in this experience. Hence, due to the tangible nature of film photos, there are many ways to share them with other people:

Usually I take pictures of film pictures and share them. (Interviewee 7)

In these pictures, there's a lot of my friends so usually I make a folder, and I share the pictures with my friends. Also, if the pictures are good, I share them on my social media. (Interviewee 13)

In addition, when asked if they feel more connected to people who also use film cameras, most participants expressed that they feel closer to fellow film camera users as they can have a discussion about it, share tips or even light some inspiration on one another:

It definitely makes an easy conversation starter, you know, you both like the same thing. I like that as well like, what camera do you have? Or like, what type of pictures do you take stuff like that? And it's definitely easier to connect with those people. (Interviewee 3)

Having now 2 friends that are quite into photography kind of encourages me to also think about it more, and I think that is nice to kind of inspire each other. (Interviewee 2)

While, some participants indicate that they especially feel more connected to people who also use film cameras as they might understand their experience and what comes with it better:

<...> with the people that shoot analog, I think sometimes, when you see somebody else shooting, you feel even more connected to him as well, like, Oh wow, you know what I'm going through. I know what you're going through! (Interviewee 12)

I think it's a pleasant surprise to learn about a person if you know that they like film cameras, because not everyone does. It's like you have something in common with them. (Interviewee 13)

5. Discussion

This research aims to answer the question "Why do consumers use film cameras to shape their identities?" to provide further insights into the identity and consumption practices of film cameras. The data from this research was analysed and divided into four main themes, namely reminiscence of the past, excitement and uncertainty of older technology, feeling the moment, and sharing the experience and results. These themes illustrate the path that one takes when using film cameras, and how it becomes an identity building process.

5.1 Reminiscence of the Past

The first theme that is discussed revolves around the reminiscence of the past in relation to film cameras. This theme is developed as the first part of the journey in how identity can help shape consumer identity. Within this theme, the participants reflect on their first encounter with film cameras, and while the majority of participants grew up with digital cameras, they remember their parents using film cameras while they were younger. All of the interviewees reflect fondly on the memories that they have of film cameras. This aligns with the research done on nostalgia, where nostalgia is shown to be a positive feeling when looking back on previous times, whether or not they have been experienced first-hand or not (Holbrook, 1993). Contrastingly, it is shown that social media and online influencers also play a role in film camera consumption, as digital platforms make analogue devices more visible.

One of the aspects that was discussed when it comes to film photography is the creation of physical photo albums. The tradition of photo albums and their sentimental value resonates with the interviewees, and some of them continue to make their own photo albums, appreciating the tangible nature of film photos over the digital camera roll counterpart. This can be seen as an identity building process, as the interviewees carefully select, sort, and recreate important memories for them. The process of creating photo albums also adds to the value associated with the pictures. Not only the memories of taking the actual pictures, but the time spent

curating these pictures to represent their experiences adds to the overall worth. This aligns with narrative identity theory developed by McAdams (1985), as the interviewees create a story in a photo album that becomes part of their identity. Furthermore, the tangibility of the photo albums relates to the research done by Chia, Jorge and Karppi (2021), where it is shown that the tangibility of nostalgic products adds value to analogue products as a whole. Additionally, the tangibility can create a longing sentiment, where simply holding an analogue device can evoke a sense of nostalgia (Campopiano, 2014). Creating a photo book, therefore, is an important part of shaping identity through stories and turning it into a tangible collection of things that are dear to the individual.

Many interviewees are attracted to film photography by the aesthetics that are associated with it. They express admiration for the unique characteristics and visual appeal of film pictures, including the subtle tones, grain, and retro look. This adds to Roper and Fill (2012), who state that using retro branding can appeal to certain customers. Moreover, it adds to the retro brand perspective and why participants would look fondly at analogue cameras in general as retro brands have a distinctiveness of appealing to consumers' memories through rich history and storytelling (Roper and Fill, 2012). So not only does the retro aspect matter in brands, but it matters on the product level as well. To add to this, Campopiano (2014) and Bolin (2015) say that the vintage aesthetic is a motivation for the feeling of nostalgia for analogue devices. This is also seen in this research, as a lot of the interviewees were drawn to the older aesthetic of film cameras and film camera pictures. Furthermore, the interviewees find film photography to be aesthetically pleasing without the need for digital filters. They appreciate the genuine, vintage look that film cameras provide and consider it an essential aspect of the film photography experience. Additionally, one participant in particular mentioned their preference for retro-style film cameras, as they align better with the overall nostalgic experience.

Nostalgia is also one of the main characteristics that draws the interviewees into using film photography. The participants associate film cameras and the pictures they take with it with nostalgic feelings and memories. From this, it can be indicated

that film cameras themselves can be considered nostalgic. Holbrook (1993) states that nostalgia can be seen through three main contexts, namely consumers choosing products for their vintage appeal, consumers seeking products that are associated with times or places, and consumers buying certain products to evoke memories from their past. This is reflected in the consumers' attitudes towards film cameras, as the interviewees are drawn to the vintage aesthetic of the cameras, reflecting on earlier times and buying cameras to evoke those memories. The value of the nostalgic feelings can even outweigh the lack of quality film pictures can have. Because of this, the nostalgia that is associated with film photography becomes a part of one's identity building process.

Several interviewees mentioned that they started using film cameras after they saw it on different digital platforms. These interviewees in particular had no prior experience with film cameras, but liked how influencers shared their film pictures online. Interestingly though, these participants developed their own unique way of taking and sharing pictures. The influencers that they liked shared pictures to gain more likes and followers, whereas the interviewees themselves used the camera to capture social memories and share it only with close friends. This shows that for them, their own identity and how they interact with their friends is more important than the influencers they were inspired by. If you combine this with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), it shows that the way you interact with each other is more important for shaping one's identity than following the example of influencers.

5.2 Excitement and Uncertainty of Older Technology

The second theme that is discussed is the theme of excitement and uncertainty surrounding analogue devices. This theme is developed as a follow-up to reminiscence of the past and describes how the learning process for film photography and the limitations it offers compared to digital photography can hinder or add value to the process. Several insights are discussed within this theme. The development process of film photography is described as more complicated compared to digital photography. The waiting period for the development of film cameras is seen as a positive aspect by interviewees, adding anticipation and value

to the pictures. The delayed gratification and the surprise of not knowing how the pictures will turn out contribute to the unique experience of using film cameras.

The added value of imperfections is another significant aspect that is discussed. Film cameras often produce pictures that are less than perfect due to the absence of features like framing assistance and picture previews. However, the imperfections are appreciated by participants as they add genuineness and uniqueness to the photos. This aligns with the notion that analogue technologies are seen as imperfect (Chia, Jorge & Karpi, 2022). The interviewees even think that the imperfections make the pictures represent themselves better, and therefore see it as a part of their identity. Furthermore, Kelley et al. (2022) state that reflecting on nostalgic moments can empower authenticity and shape identity. This means that through the usage of film cameras and looking back on nostalgic moments, the user can feel more authentic and integrate this into their identity. Despite the lower quality film cameras have compared to digital cameras, the flaws are seen as a part of the film camera charm and evoke a sense of nostalgia. The perceived authenticity and the absence of editing options make the film photographs more special to the participants.

The emotional aspect of film photography is also emphasised, with participants expressing the belief that film cameras capture and convey emotions more clearly than digital cameras. This could be elaborated with the emotional branding perspective due to its nature of creating deeper and more intimate relations with consumers as it appeals to their emotions and memories (Morrison and Crane, 2007). In addition, Jawahar and Maheswari (2009) argue that emotional branding forms an intimate dialogue between brands and consumers, which would explain why film camera brands could be seen as emotional brands as a whole. The unscripted nature of film photography allows for genuine reactions and unposed moments to be captured, leading to stronger emotional connections to the pictures. The participants show that they value film cameras more for their ability to translate emotions and capture the true essence of a moment. These emotions in turn build on the usage of

film cameras as a tool to show identity. When you look back on the feelings you have had while taking pictures it adds to how much you identify with them.

The simplicity in the usage of film cameras is seen as both an advantage and a potential barrier. Some interviewees appreciate the straightforward operation and lack of complex settings, finding it refreshing compared to more complicated digital cameras. However, a few participants mention difficulties they faced in using film cameras, suggesting that it may not be as easy for everyone. These are issues such as the lack of lighting sessions, zoom options, or framing help. Overall, the simplicity of film cameras tends to add to their appeal, making them accessible to a wider range of users. However, when asked whether film cameras would be a suitable device for everyone, the interviewees specified that while they are easy to use, it takes a specific type of person to enjoy it. People who tend to be more practical would therefore be less interested in film cameras, as it is not the most convenient option for taking pictures, whereas people who are more creative appreciate the needed skill behind it and the imperfections that come with it.

Technical limitations of film cameras, such as the limited number of pictures that can be taken and the lack of adjustable settings, are acknowledged. The restricted number of images that can be taken encourages users to be more mindful and selective in capturing moments. The quality of film photographs is also recognized as being lower than digital images, but this is often perceived positively as it contributes to the nostalgic element and uniqueness of film photography. However, the cost of purchasing film rolls or sheets is noted as a disadvantage, requiring users to be more mindful of when and how they take pictures.

5.3 Feeling the Moment

The third theme discussed in the analysis is the experience of "feeling the moment" when using film cameras. Following the excitement and uncertainty of using older technology, this theme explores the actual process of taking pictures and how this helps shape identity. Within this theme, the emotional connection and unique qualities associated with using film cameras are also discussed.

The consumption of film cameras evokes a lot of emotions with the interviewees. Many participants expressed a sense of joy and nostalgia when looking at film pictures. This adds to the emotional branding aspect as it uses the basis of consumers' life experiences, memories or passions to connect with their target audiences (Thompson, Rindfleisch and Arsel, 2006). Therefore, film camera brands may create long-lasting bonds with consumers while targeting their emotional attributes of nostalgic experiences. The interviewees felt that film photography transcends reality and transforms moments into more sentimental memories compared to digital photography. The authenticity and "oldness" of analogue photos contribute to their perceived value as memories. Additionally, they mentioned that compared to digital cameras, they have a tendency to look back on their film pictures more often than digital pictures. So not only do they feel that the memories are captured better, the enjoyment of the pictures lasts longer too.

As discussed earlier, there is a limited number of shots available with film cameras due to the film capacity. While this can be seen as a technical disadvantage, it can also cause a certain mindfulness when taking pictures. Participants often acknowledged the need to be more mindful when taking photos due to the cost and the finite number of exposures. The restriction of shots makes individuals consider the pictures they take more care and therefore increases the value they attribute to each picture. This makes sure that the interviewees tend to take pictures that reflect them and their friends better, adding to the formation of their identity. Some participants did mention that they felt pressured to capture the perfect shot, as they only have one chance to get it right.

Many participants mentioned putting their pictures on walls or in photobooks. The physical presence of these photos allows them to reminisce and relive the moments captured. Social media and the influence of others also play a role in the decision to create photo walls, as some interviewees were influenced by online channels to create photo walls themselves. Participants expressed that having their film pictures displayed on a wall of another place adds a sense of joy and nostalgia to their

everyday lives. This is an interesting phenomenon, as the pictures taken become a part of everyday life. Therefore, you would want to create a wall of pictures that you feel represent you clearly. This becomes an identity building process on its own, as the selecting of pictures, hanging them up, and seeing them every day becomes a part of who you are. Chia, Jorge, and Karpi (2022) say that the tangibility aspect of nostalgic devices can make them more appealing. In this way, a photowall becomes a physical and tangible representation of their identity, through pictures that relate to who you are as a person. As the majority of the pictures that are taken with film cameras also tend to be pictures with friends, it not only shares your own personal identity, but also who you are in your own social group, aligning with both identity theory (Stryker, 1968) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Additionally, it is a rather private and intimate way of showing your identity. Only your closest friends and family members will get the privilege of seeing the pictures you have created that tell them who you are. This shows that while it can be a social aspect to share with those you hold dear, it is inherently something done for a personal reminder of who you are and who you want to be.

Another aspect that becomes a part of the picture taking process is the element of surprise that comes with film photography. Unlike digital cameras, film cameras do not provide an immediate preview of the captured image. Participants liked the anticipation and excitement of not knowing how their pictures would turn out. They highlighted that the unexpected and pleasant surprises when viewing the developed photos add to the overall process. The process of waiting for film photos to be developed adds to the charm and enjoyment of the experience. In a very fast-paced environment, it is heartening to see people take enjoyment out of waiting for these pictures to be developed. It shows that sometimes it is good to take a step back and be surprised with the result as a way of resisting the fast-paced culture. Participants expressed a desire to be present in the moment and not constantly relying on their phones or digital cameras. This aligns with Wilson (2014), who argues that nostalgia can be used as an escape from the current day and age, and used as a slowing mechanism. Additionally, Lasaleta and Loveland (2019) say that people turn to nostalgic consumption when there are threats to our identity in a digital world. As

film cameras have been established as a form of nostalgic consumption, it is therefore not surprising that the need to feel more in the moment is a direct response to the fast-paced online environment. Furthermore, digital devices can be seen as daunting, whereas analogue devices allow for more creative freedom, so people turn to older technologies as a result of the complexity of digital devices (Chia, Jorge & Karpi, 2021). As a result, the fast-paced environment and complicated technologies make film cameras more attractive as a way to show identity. Film cameras provide a more simplistic and deliberate approach to capturing memories, which allows users to fully appreciate the experience. The effort required to use film cameras is seen as a valuable contrast to the quick and convenient nature of digital photography.

Lastly, film cameras contribute to a sense of authenticity for participants. The inability to easily edit film photos and the imperfections they may possess are seen as positive attributes. Participants felt that film cameras capture more genuine moments compared to digital cameras, which can be heavily staged or manipulated. This corresponds with research conducted by Baldwin et al. (2015), who state that nostalgia can be used to shape the true identity through the authentic self. As film cameras are considered to be nostalgic by the interviewees, it can be said that film cameras shape the identity through nostalgia and results in an authentic sense of self. To add on to this, Kelley et al. (2022) say that nostalgic moments create a link to the authentic sense of self. Therefore, the combination of nostalgia and identity in film camera pictures can help capture a true version of one's identity. Some participants even mentioned feeling superior or more authentic than others when using film cameras, although others acknowledged that this sentiment might be too strong and instead expressed a sense of authenticity in their own personal experiences.

5.4 Sharing the Experience and Results

The last theme that is discussed is sharing the experience and results. This theme focuses mainly on what to do with the physical pictures that are associated with film cameras, but it also shows how the experience of taking pictures with other people can add to the identity building process. One of the most distinctive features of film

cameras is the ability to produce physical prints, instantly for instant film cameras and through a development process for other film cameras. The pictures usually have to be printed to be made visible, although modern technology has made it possible to receive scans for film rolls as well. The tangibility of these photos holds great significance for many individuals, as it adds value and a sense of uniqueness to each picture. Participants in this study expressed that having physical photos allows them to appreciate the moments captured and frequently revisit them. Unlike digital photos, which often remain hidden within the camera rolls and never looked at, physical prints serve as tangible mementos that are easily accessible and hold sentimental value. The choice to use film cameras reflects a certain niche preference, and this experience is often seen as a means to better express one's personality compared to digital cameras. Participants indicated that the imperfections and unpredictability of film photos can create a more favourable environment for capturing genuine moments. Unlike digital cameras, which allow instant review and editing, film cameras focus on capturing the present moment rather than obsessing over minute details. This aspect allows individuals to feel more comfortable and authentic in front of the camera, resulting in photos that reflect their true selves.

For the majority of the film camera users, taking pictures is a shared activity primarily involving friends. Browns and Humphreys (2002) state that identity can be shaped through nostalgia on an individual as well as collective level, as well as bring people together. This relates to the interviewees, who expressed that capturing moments with or of their friends enhances the social experience and makes the resulting photos more valuable. Taking photos together is often seen as the main reason to use a film camera to begin with, and taking the camera to parties and social gatherings creates shared memories and fosters a sense of togetherness. This aligns with collective identity theory (Melucci, 2013), as the process of taking pictures together becomes a social interaction that helps shape identity together. The group dynamic adds an element of enjoyment and provides an opportunity for collective reminiscing in the future.

The social dimension of film photography extends beyond the act of capturing photos; it also involves sharing and connecting with others. The tangible nature of film photos enables various ways of sharing, from giving the original physical copy to a friend, or showing the prints by creating folders or albums. Participants mentioned sharing photos with friends and even posting them on social media platforms to engage a wider audience. Furthermore, film camera users often feel a special connection with others who share the same interest. The common ground of film photography serves as a conversation starter, fostering connections and inspiring discussions about cameras, techniques, and shared experiences.

Collective nostalgia in this retrospective could explain participants' feelings of connectedness when communicating with people who also use film cameras. As collective nostalgia can be an influencing factor of group identity, it shapes individuals' behaviours and characteristics shared with such groups (Zhang, Zhou and Qin, 2022). In addition, Wildschut et al. (2014) work on collective nostalgia contributes to the perception of why participants feel positive about other film camera users and why some may influence their friends to use them. Collective nostalgia plays a role in an individual's social identity formation by perpetuating nostalgic experiences, whether one has experienced them first-hand or not (Wildschut et al., 2014).

6. Conclusion

This chapter offers the conclusion of the research paper, including the research summary, practical implications and further research opportunities.

6.1 Research Summary

The aim of this research is to answer the question "Why do consumers use film cameras to shape their identities?" Consumers use film cameras to shape their identity, as it provides a higher value that translates into genuine feelings and emotions in a way that digital technologies cannot do anymore. Additionally, consumers turn to film cameras as a way to seek relief from the pressure that the fast-paced digital environment demands. Users of film cameras go through a journey that takes them through reminiscence of the past, uncertainty and excitement of older technology, feeling the moment and sharing the experience and results. This journey shows the importance of nostalgia and vintage aesthetics as appealing characteristics for using a film camera. Moreover, using film cameras is one of the most accessible ways to feel nostalgic in this day and age. Furthermore, the technical limitations that film cameras have do not hinder the consumer, but instead add to the overall process. Because of this, the moment and the memories associated with the pictures become more important in shaping identity, and the analogue cameras provide a link between people to connect with. Consumers who use film cameras also have a tendency to know and influence other people to try other film cameras. The answer to this question provides further insights into consumption and identity practices and behaviour when it comes to analogue cameras.

6.2. Practical Implications and Significance

This research combines identity theories with nostalgia and authenticity and applies it to the context of film cameras. Additionally, it takes a further look into the consumption practices of film cameras and how it can be used to create one's identity. As a result, it is shown that consumption patterns are shifting and causing consumers to go back to older technologies as a way to escape the pressure of fast-changing digital landscapes. Consumers that are interested in film cameras are

looking for technologies that make them feel more grounded in the moment and present themselves in a more authentic way.

6.3 Limitations

This research aims to gain a detailed understanding of why consumers use film cameras to shape their identity. However, due to the time constraints, the amount of data that is able to be collected is limited. The interviews that were conducted later also provided more qualitatively useful answers, as the researchers grew more comfortable with the interview process and the topics they wanted more clarification on. Because of this, insights might have gone unnoticed within the first few interviewees, as the researchers evolved the questions based on data collected in previous interviews. Furthermore, there might be other aspects of why consumers would use analogue cameras that the researchers have not considered and might have missed. Furthermore, the consumers themselves might not be aware of exactly why they use film cameras, and might give answers they think are socially desirable. Moreover, there might be slight differences in reasoning between different types of film cameras. The interviewees have several types of film cameras, from instant film cameras, to professional 35mm film cameras to disposable film cameras. While all of these interviewees were treated equally, some differences were observed within the camera types. People who have only used disposable cameras, for example, were often much more excited by the fact that the pictures take a relatively long time to develop, whereas instant photo camera users liked the fact that they could almost immediately see their own pictures.

6.4 Future Research

This research uses film cameras as a tool to shape identity. For future research, it would be interesting to see whether or not these findings hold up when using different types of analogue devices, such as vinyls, typewriters, etc.. When the participants were asked for their opinions of other types of analogue devices, they often responded that they either already had different types of analogue devices themselves, or they were willing to purchase them. This could indicate that there is

an overlap of people who like analogue devices as a whole. While the majority of the sub-themes presented in this research are specific to film cameras, would the overall themes of reminiscence of the past, uncertainty and excitement of older technology, feeling the moment and sharing the experience and results still be a valid journey for other types of devices.

This study focused on discovering the motivation for the usage of film cameras as a way to shape identity. Through this, the topics of nostalgia and authenticity are also touched upon. Some of the discussed topics on marketing and branding are used as a base for why one would want to use film cameras. However, there can be further research into the marketing practices that can be developed with the usage of the current findings.

Interestingly, the majority of participants identified as female, despite trying to gain a diverse group of people to interview. In addition, when asked for friends or family members, the majority of people they mentioned were either 1) also female or 2) older male relatives. It is therefore worth looking into whether analogue devices for the younger age group is something that appeals more to women, while the older people that were referred to tend to be male. As some participants also mentioned that the vintage aesthetic is trendy, the specific target group that is into analogue devices has shifted in a way that can be researched further.

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Appendix

Interview questions

Hello,

Thank you for participating in our research into film cameras!

As mentioned before, the responses will be kept confidential and all answers will be anonymised. Should you wish to retract your answers from our research for any reason, it can be done if communicated before the research is completed. The interview will be recorded and the data will be used to analyse film cameras and how they are used. The recordings will not be shown to anyone besides the researchers.

Do you agree with this? Do you have any questions?

For the purposes of this research we will be referring to all types of analogue cameras as film cameras, such as disposable cameras, polaroids and other film cameras. Other cameras, such as built in phone cameras or other non-film cameras will be referred to as digital cameras.

Demographic questions
1. What year were you born?
2. What are your preferred pronouns?
3. Where are you from?
4. What are your hobbies?

General Camera questions
We would like to ask you a few general questions about film cameras and how you use them first.

1. What type of camera do you have?
2. What do you do with this camera?
3. Can you tell us a little bit about your experience with this camera?
4. What was your first experience with cameras overall?
5. When did you get a film camera and why?

   (note for us: laddering to make sure they answer the why)
6. Have you used film cameras when you were younger?
7. In what situations would you take pictures with your film camera?
8. And what about digital cameras? In what situations would you take pictures with those?
9. Do you have a preference for using a film camera or a digital camera?
10. How do you feel about the pictures that you take with a film camera?
11. Do you have a fun story about a picture that you took with a film camera? What did you feel when you saw that picture developed?
12. (Do you think these pictures are more valuable to you than pictures taken with a digital camera?)
13. What makes the pictures you take with this camera different from using a digital camera?
14. What do you feel when taking pictures with a film camera?
15. In your experience, is there anything you like or dislike about using a film camera compared to digital cameras?
16. Do you think using film cameras influences the way you look at cameras now?
17. If you look back on photos of when you were younger, do you know if those were shot with film cameras or digital cameras? Do you have any memories about these pictures?

Film camera options

We would like to ask you a few questions on the more technical aspects that you have to consider when using film cameras.

1. How did you learn to use film cameras?
2. Could you elaborate on this learning experience? Do you think it was easy or difficult?
3. (Did anyone help you with taking pictures?)
4. With film camera pictures it is really hard to edit the photos, how do you feel about this?
5. Does this change the way you look at the pictures you've taken? (Do you think film camera pictures reflect your personality better than digital cameras?)
6. Do you have any experience editing or taking digital pictures to look like film photos with your camera filters on your phone? (e.g. HUJI, NOMO CAM, Dazz Cam)
7. What do you think of the aesthetic of film camera pictures?
8. (Have you ever gotten a film camera purely for aesthetic reasons?)
9. Does the process of using film cameras matter to you? For example the time and money you have to put into it?

Identity and group questions

Lastly, we have some questions about how you use your film cameras together with friends or family.

1. Do you use your camera by yourself or do you take pictures with your friends?
2. Do your friends also have film cameras?
3. Have you influenced your friends to try film cameras? Or did any friends try to influence you?
4. Do you share your pictures with others? In what way?
5. Do you think you feel more connected to people who also like film cameras?
6. Have you ever felt superior for using a film camera?
7. Have you ever followed any social media accounts that focus on photography?

8. If you were to get a new film camera, how would you decide what camera to get? Are there any people or websites you would go to for recommendations?

9. If you had to recommend a friend to get a film camera, what would you say?

10. Would you say everyone could use a film camera? For example, is there a type of person that would be more interested in using film cameras?

11. Do you have anything else to share about your experiences with film cameras?

12. Have you used any other analogue devices, such as vinyls or typewriters?

13. How do you feel about them?

14. In your experience, do you think there is an overlap of people who like film cameras and people who like other analogue devices?

Do you have any more questions or topics that you think should be important for us to know?

Thank you for your time!